*Gražina Miniotaitė**
*General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania*
*Culture, Philosophy and Arts Research Institute*

# The Construction of the Model of the Army in Lithuania's Political Discourse

This paper considers the peculiarities of the construction of the image of the army and the soldier in Lithuania's political discourse. It raises the question regarding whether the conception of Lithuania's army as part of NATO military forces and the objective of transforming Lithuania's army into a professional one can be reconciled with Lithuania's domestic policies' general orientation to the nation state. The changes in the image of the army and the soldier are analyzed in the broader historical/cultural context in order to relate them to the interaction of modern/postmodern normative attitudes in Lithuania's political discourse and to the peculiarities of Lithuania's attempts at creating its international identity. An analysis of public opinion polls on issues of the transformation of the military supports the conclusion of our analysis of the main strategic documents, namely, that Lithuania is currently undergoing a transition from the normative attitudes of a modern nation state to those of the postmodern model of society. This circumstance should be heeded in reforming Lithuania's armed forces.

## Introduction

Recent years saw a proliferation of studies on the transformation of the image of the army and the soldier in democratic countries after the Cold War.[1] In the words of Moskos and Burk, "The ideal form of a national military, associated with universal male conscription, masculine virtues, and national patriotism, has been transformed into a 'high-tech' professional armed force, providing military power for temporary international coalitions".[2] These changes in the military are often conceptualized as the transition from the

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* *Dr. Gražina Miniotaitė* is a professor of the Political Science Department of the Military Academy of Lithuania and a researcher of the Culture, Philosophy and Arts Research Institute. Address: Šilo 5a, LT-10322 Vilnius, Lithuania tel. +370-5-2103569, e–mail: grazina.m@gmail.com

[1]  See.:Latham, A., "Warfare Transformed: A Braudelian Perspective on the "Revolution on Military Affairs", *European Journal of International Relations*, 2002, vol. 8(2), , p.231-66;  Moskos Ch. C.,  Williams J., Segal D., eds., *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War*, New York: Oxford: Oxford University press, 2000;  Heurlin B., Kristensen K., Rasmussen M. & S. Rynning, eds., *New Roles of Military forces*, Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2003; Clearly L.R., McConville T., eds., *Managing Defence in a Democracy*, London: Routledge, 2006; Jabri V.,  *War and the Transformation of Global Politics,*  Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

[2]  Moskos, Ch., Burk, J., "The Postmodern Military" in Burk J., ed., *The Military in New Times. Adapting Armed Forces to a Turbulent World,* Boulder: West View Press, 1994, p. 145.

modern to the postmodern military. The source of the conceptualization is the division of societies into modern and postmodern that is now prevalent in social sciences and the humanities.[3]

The criteria used in characterizing the military as either modern or postmodern, are not only those of the technological capacities of military forces, but also those of their functions - of their relation to the society at large and of their image of the soldier[4]. These specific features are linked to the different conceptions of the relation of the nation to the state, of the basis of sovereignty and of the international system entertained in the modern and the postmodern epoch. Modernity, which is associated with the industrial revolution in Europe and with the normative attitudes of the Enlightenment[5] is said to have created the Westphalian states system, in which identity is stabilized as a nation state, with borders as clearly defined territorial lines and with order as a stable distribution of power among sovereign states[6]. This system remained dominant until the end of the Cold War; the essential dichotomies that constitute it are those of "inside/outside", "anarchy/hierarchy", "self/other". The world is divided into the safe, rationally controlled inside of the national state and the dangerous, anarchic, unpredictable outside, into the zones of peace and threat.

In the Westphalian model, sovereignty is the main principle for the organization of the political system. The state is seen as the ultimate goal of any nation, not a mere means for its cultural and social development.[7] In a modern state the source of the legitimacy of its sovereignty is the nation. The idea was expressed by the theoretical founders of the modern state, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, in their metaphor of the hypothetical contract between the nation and the government. In order to provide for the security of the nation and the state the nation, via the social contract, grants the government monopoly in the use of force. This conception of the source of sovereignty led to a profound change in the way the army and the relation of the state and the citizen was legitimized. As the source of the state's sovereignty, the nation imposes upon itself the duty of defending the state. This view on the relation of the nation to the state led to the emergence of a new conception of the soldier and to the emergence of the institution of military draft (conscription). In conjunction with the *duty* to defend the state the soldier was granted the *right* to kill in the name

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[3]  Historically some scholars divide societies to pre-modern, early modernity, modern and postmodern. See: Baudrillard J., *Simulacra and Simulation*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994; Moskos Ch. C., "Towards A Postmodern Military: The United States as a Paradigm" in Moskos Ch. C., Williams J., Segal D., eds., *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War*, New York: Oxford: Oxford University press, 2000.

[4]  Moscos (note 3), p. 15.

[5]   See Habermas, J., *Modernybės filosofinis diskursas,*  Vilnius: Alma littera, 2002.

[6]  Mathias A., Jacobson D.,and  Lapid Y., eds.,  *Identities, Borders, orders: Rethinking International Relations Theory*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001, p. 7.

[7]  Browning, Chr. "From modern to Post-Modern Region_Building: Emancipating the Finnish Nation from the State" in Lehti M., &  Smith D., eds.,  *Post-Cold War Identity Politics: Northern and Baltic Experiences*, London: Frank Cass, 2003, p.108.

of the state and the nation. In the modern state the issue of national defence, its justification and the institutions involved has become a major factor in the construction and maintenance of the nation itself, a part and parcel of national solidarity (identity).

The postmodern epoch is associated with the contemporary processes of international integration and globalization, and with the decrease of the role of the nation state as the main form of the organization of the political space. National identity is losing its ontological naturalness and comes to be seen as just another social construct. The emergence and the spread of the idea of overlapping identities have been destructive of Herder and Hegel's notion that the essence of the individual is the nation and that the essence of the nation is the state. These changes have been accompanied by calls for the tolerance of otherness, by attempts at justifying decentralization and fragmentation, all based on the postulate of universal human rights. The severing of national identity from territorial sovereignty led to changes in the conceptions of national security, sovereignty and the role of the state. Accordingly, this led to changes in the conception of the social role of the military and in the image of the soldier.

As many authors have emphasized, a contemporary postmodern society that accords the highest value to human rights finds itself in a difficulty when faced with the issue of social solidarity. Can respect for human rights be the basis for solidarity with the distant "alien"? Is a global social contract, based on human rights, possible? Is the postmodern soldier ready to die for humanity?[8] Making tolerance of "otherness" the ultimate value seems to lead to the erosion of distinction between good and evil. The soldier, in the current image, is not so much fighting a concrete evil as fighting for an abstract good (force for good). With tolerance being extolled and with the ensuing political correctness one finds that there is no way to precisely define the enemy. The concept requires cultural determinacy that is being avoided, as after 9/11, with the enemy defined as global terrorism. A paradoxical situation is thus created, with the postmodern soldier, embodying the "force for good", who makes use of it in pre-modern and modern societies based on opposite conceptions of security and threats, and the result is the growing alienation between the soldier fighting for that good and those he is protecting from threats. The soldier fighting for the spread of *global* human rights and democracy finds himself confronted with *local* problems of a population in Somali or Afghanistan for whom piracy or poppy growing is just a way of surviving, not at all a criminal activity.[9]

Lithuania's political analysts and the society at large are quite concerned

8   Kaldor, M., *Global Civil Society. An Answer to War,* Cambridge: Polity, 2003, p.136.
9   See.: Enterline A.J.and J. M. Greig, "The history of imposed democracy and the future of Iraq and Afg-hanistan", *Foreign Policy Analysis*  2008, vol.4/4,  p. 321-347. The paper investigated 43 cases of the imposed democracy in 1800-1994.  It concludes that " the survival of imposed democracy is by no means assured", p. 322.

with the changes in Lithuania's military. Restored after 1992, Lithuania's armed forces soon had to reorient from the idea of self-relying territorial defence of the nation to the requirements of the idea of a collective defence. Kęstutis Paulauskas, Vaidotas Urbelis, Algirdas Gricius, Tomas Jermalavičius and others have studied these changes and the ensuing problems.[10] Jūratė Novagrockienė argued that the dichotomy of modern/postmodern army could be effectively used in analyzing the transformation of Lithuania's armed forces.[11] This paper, based mostly on the analyses of other authors, deals with the question of whether the official discourse that construes Lithuania armed forces as part of NATO and is intent on remaking the army as a cohort of paid professionals does not conflict with the attitude of extolling the nation state that is prevalent in the discourse on domestic policies. In the paper, as in the works referred to above, we analyze the changes in the image of the army and the soldier within a broader historical/cultural context; we also relate these images to the mingling of the modern/postmodern normative stances in Lithuania's political discourse and to the peculiarities of Lithuania's quest for international identity. As argued in our previous studies,[12] since Lithuania joined ES and NATO, the Lithuanian state has acquired ever more features of a postmodern state. And yet the construction of the country's political identity has followed the vision of a modern state. Our analysis of the transformation of the image of the army and the soldier, based on the constructivist analysis of current political discourse in Lithuania, is supplemented by an excursion to the history of Lithuania's armed forces.

Discourse is here understood in the broad sense of the unities of discursive practices creating and organizing social relations according to a definite structure of meanings.[13] The theory of discourse analysis is premised on the idea that discursive practices are ideological, since they buttress the naturalization of arbitrary distinctions. Though ideological discourse contributes to the maintenance of current social and political order, it can also lead to its transformation. The aim of a discourse analysis is an exposure of the links of the meaning of public statements to institutional formations, to

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[10] See: Paulauskas K. ‚The Driving Logic Behind the Defence Reform in Lithuania: Building the Future Military', *Baltic Defence Review*, 2003, vol.9/1, p. 126-134; Urbelis V., "Impact of NATO Membership on Military Service in the Baltic States / Service to Country" in Gilroy C., Cindy W., eds., *Personnel Policy and the Transformation of Western Militaries*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006; Urbelis V. "Democratisation and integration: DCAF in the Baltic states" in Vankovska B., ed., *Legal aspects of Civil-Military relations in Central and Eastern Europe*, Geneva: Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, 2002, 109-124; Jermalavičius T., "Karo prievolė Lietuvoje: orientyrai diskusijai" in Novagrockienė J., sud., *Profesionalioji kariuomenė: Vakarų šalių patirtis ir perspektyvos Lietuvoje*, Vilnius: Lietuvos karo akademija, 2005, p.8-29; Gricius A., Paulauskas K., "Democratic Control of the Armed Forces in Lithuania", *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2002*, p. 233-253.

[11] Novagrockienė J., "Armed Forces Transformation in the 21st Century: a Case of Lithuania" , *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2004*, p. 189-207.

[12] See: Miniotaite G., "The Baltic States: In Search of Security and Identity" in Krupnick Ch.,ed., *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003, p. 261-296.

[13] Žr.: Foucault M., *The Archaelogy of Knowledge*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.

political decision-making and to the constraints on their implementation. This kind of analysis can reveal discrepancies between the ideas and the structures created for their realization, and thus make it possible to judge the effectiveness of the structures as to the goals they should attain.

In the constructivist theoretical context, one can plausibly treat the transformation of Lithuania's armed forces as the result of the interaction of the modern and the postmodern discourse. In our analysis of official documents on security and on the functions of the army we have attempted to find out which of the two discourses is the dominant one. A text's belonging to either the modern or the postmodern discourse is shown by the different ways that the nation, the state, security/defence, threats, the structure of the military, the mission of the military and of the soldier are conceptualized.[14] These differences do not exhaust the whole list of criteria suggested by Ch. Moscos. As the author himself notes, his model only covers the military of developed Western democracies. By contrast, here we consider the evolution of an army that came into existence only in 1992. Having ascertained which concept of the military is being constructed in official documents we then compare it with the popular image of the soldier and the army as revealed in public debates and public opinion polls. Accordingly, the paper is divided into three parts. The analysis starts with an excursion to the inter-war history of Lithuania's armed forces. The focus is mainly on those features of the military that have influenced the construction of the current model of the armed forces. Next we analyze the official documents defining Lithuania's security and foreign policies as well as some other official texts revelatory of the promoted image of the army and the soldier. The third part of the paper is devoted to an analysis of the public attitudes towards Lithuania's military forces.

# 1. The Role and Status of Lithuania's Army in the First Republic of 1918-1940

The transition from modern to postmodern military, though characteristic of most contemporary developed states, acquires specific features in particular countries depending on their historical narratives and the mythologies of motherland's heroic defenders. For Lithuanians, the key story is that of the defence of the Pilenai castle related in the crusader chronicles. In 1336 the defenders of the castle, after a long and shifting battle, unwilling to surrender to the crusaders, set fire to the castle and burned themselves alive together with the people gathered in the castle. Later, the Great Duchy of Lithuania won a number of spectacular battles with the crusaders, and yet it was that lost battle, portrayed in numerous artistic works, that has become part of Lithuanians' identity. The story eminently features the spiritually unflinching, deeply patriotic figure of the

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[14]  See Novagrockienė  (note 11), p.194.

soldier as the defender of the country. Despite the hoariness of the story it was a source of inspiration for the defenders of Lithuania's independence in January 1991, when the very survival of the Lithuanian state was at stake.[15]

The vitality of the Pilėnai story in Lithuania's political discourse shows that Lithuanians tend to conceive national defence as total defence, with every inhabitant of the country taking part. The armed forces are a tool in the country's defence whose effectiveness can be boosted in critical situations by the support of the whole population. On the other hand, there was another image of the 'defender of Motherland', alongside this one, that of the professional warrior. This is related to the historical peculiarities of the Lithuanian state. After its formation in the 13th century the Lithuanian state was, for several centuries, among the most powerful European states. Being a pagan realm, it ruled over Christian territories several times its size, which was unique for the historical period. During the period of its flourishing Lithuania "maintained the dual policy of vigorous defence against the Teutonic Order in the West and territorial expansion into Russian lands in the East, the latest being affected by a series of victories against the Tatars and a policy of judicious intermarriages with Russian princely families".[16]

Such an expansionary policy required a well-armed professional army that was recruited from different ethnicities living on the territory of Lithuania at the time. In Lithuania's contemporary political perceptions, the dual character of the policies of that time finds its reflection in being proud of the heroism of the defenders of *ethnic land*, but also in the admiration for the professional army for its victorious exploits in *conquering new territories* (expanding one's security space, in current jargon). One can say that Lithuania's medieval history legitimizes both the image of warrior-defender and that of the warrior-conqueror. However, the formation of the image of the contemporary military was most directly affected by the experience of security and defence policies of interwar Lithuania (1918-1940), the story of the formation and the collapse of its military.

Since the very first days of Lithuania's declaration of independence in 1918 the existence of the state was in grave danger. Lithuania's ethnic territories were militarily claimed by both Poland and Soviet Russia. A speedy creation of viable armed forces was absolutely necessary for the survival of the state. In the spring of 1918 the army was formed from volunteers. In 1918-20 Lithuania's

[15] In January 11-13, 1991 the Soviet Union made an attempt at a *coup d'etat*, with the aim of suppressing Lithuania's independence declared on March 11, 1990. There was little doubt that Soviet commandos would try to seize the parliament. Had the assault been attempted the parliamentary building, equipped with 'Molotov's cocktails' and other defensive weaponry, would have become another burning Pilėnai. Despite the grave danger the parliamentarians remained within, with numerous volunteers. The building was surrounded by a live wall of people from all of Lithuania, determined to defend Lithuania's independence. Probably because of this determination of the people to enact another feat of Pilėnai, no assault on the building was attempted.

[16] See.: Smith D., Pabriks A., Purs A., Lane T., *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, London and New York: Routledge, 2002, p.XX.

armed forces successfully fought the Bolshevik Russia, the Bermontians, and the Polish armed forces. Lithuania's armed forces were created under most extreme conditions: the state borders were defined not by the League of Nations, but drawn by the armed struggle between Lithuanians and their adversaries. By defending the country's independence the soldiers defined its territory. Because of tense relations with Poland, Lithuania had to maintain a large military force. Early in 1922 Lithuania had 52 965 soldiers on the alert. The army comprised 13 infantry, 3 cavalry, 4 artillery regiments, an aviation squadron (12 aircrafts), a regiment of armoured vehicles, an engineering battalion, and border control units.[17]

The structure of the military, its place and role in the society were tightly linked to Lithuania's political regime whose particular characteristics found expression in the Constitutions of 1922 and 1938. The first Constitution was expressive of the "founding fathers'" orientation towards West European constitutions: "The result was a highly democratic form of government in which the legislature was dominant, the executive was week, and the President was largely a figurehead".[18] The democratic principles of the Constitution of 1922 found their reflection in the relations of the military and the society at large. The decree of April 1919 by the Minister of Defence prohibited the military to participate in politics; the armed forces were gradually downsized.

However, it soon became obvious that the Western democratic model fitted badly Lithuania's realities. The inefficiency of the executive, the immaturity of the party system, the frailty of the civil society, as well as the discontent of such influential social groups as the Church and the military[19] created conditions for the coup d'etat of 1926. The regime that was introduced by the coup was legitimized by the Constitution of 1938. In contrast to the first Constitution, this one legitimized the priority of the executive, controlled by President Antanas Smetona. The Smetona regime can be defined as authoritarian nationalism. It was characterized by restraints on political and civil rights and by the cult of the leader, all based on such ideas as national will, national solidarity, loyalty to the common cause, and discipline.

The Smetona regime effected a gradual militarization of the society, with the military gaining ever more prominence. This is evidenced by the outlays on the military: during the years of independence they grew from 17,50 (1930) to 25,95 percent (1938) of the state budget.[20] The meddling with politics by the military is indirectly indicated by the participation of high-ranking military officers in the Valdemaras' putsch of 1934. The ban on the participation of the military in politics was only reinstated in the 1930s, as Stasys Ra tikis became commander in chief of the army. At the time particular attention was paid to the

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[17] Surgailis G., *Lietuvos kariuomenė: 1918-1998*, Vilnius: LR kra to apsaugos ministerija, 1998, p.21.
[18] Smith ( note 16), p. 19.
[19] The reduction of the military that began in 1922 and that was sped up after the 1926 elections provoked intense discontent on the part of army officers. The top military supported the coup of December 1926.
[20] Surgailis (note 17), p.26

improvement of the army's public image, to the closing of the gap between the military and the public at large. In order to boost the authority of the military in the wider society the government used the radio, the press, it organized various public events and "open doors" days. Most popular were annual festivals promoting the solidarity of the military with the society. However, the interwar Lithuanian press was practically "blind to the issues of soldiers' professional responsibility, to both individual and collective responsibility of the military to the larger society".[21]

Love for the Homeland, patriotism, and discipline were considered as highest virtues of the soldier. The institutions of military training were required not only to instill professional military skills but also "to educate young officers in the spirit of committed Lithuanians, reflecting the heroic spirit of our great ancestors".[22] Military officers were supposed to constitute the elite of new Lithuania. Yet, as the historian Petrauskaitė notes, ultimately "an officer's mind was dominated by the conviction that soldiers were beyond society (i.e. above it), and that the soldier's profession was not so much a profession as a "way of life"".[23] Colonel Žukas wrote: "the so called 'military honour' is a distinct kind of honour, for it is the honour of a 'caste', the virtue of an 'estate'", since "we, the officers, the professionals, constitute a distinct estate, even more than an estate – a caste, so that alongside the common understanding of honour and virtue we have our own understanding as a caste".[24] The detailed and rigid regulation of the soldier's behaviour by disciplinary statutes and courts of honour buttressed the exceptional status of the military profession. Family members of the officers were also subject to the regulation.

The military under the Smetona regime were expected to perform two functions: first, to be the guarantor of the state's independence, of its security against the main external enemy, Poland, and, secondly, to be the force for the consolidation of the state (nation) conceived as an organism. However, after 1920 the army has never been used in its direct function of defending the country's independence. There was no military resistance to the Polish ultimatum of 1938, to the German invasion of Klaipeda in 1939, or to the ultimatum of the Soviet Union in 1940. The army served not so much as a means of counteracting external threats as a means of guaranteeing internal stability of the country under Smetona's authoritarian rule. The army performed the merely instrumental role of supporting the regime.

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[21] Petrauskaitė A.. "Karininkijos dorovinių problemų sprendimas Lietuvoje 1918-1940 m." in Ažubalis A., R. Kazlauskaitė-Markelienė, A. Petrauskaitė, B. Puzinavičius, F. Žigaras, *Karo pedagogika Lietuvoje (1918-1940m.)*, Vilnius: Lietuvos karo akademija, 2007, p. 291.

[22] Žigaras F., "Lietuvos kariuomenės karininkų rengimo ir jų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo sistema (1918-1940m.)", ." in Ažubalis A., R. Kazlauskaitė-Markelienė, A. Petrauskaitė, B. Puzinavičius, F. Žigaras, *Karo pedagogika Lietuvoje (1918-1940m.)*, Vilnius: Lietuvos karo akademija, 2007, p.27.

[23] Petrauskaitė (note 21), p.287.

[24] Ibid, p. 286.

The army's passivity in 1940 is a painful reminiscence in contemporary Lithuania. The foreign policies pursued by the Baltic States at that time are a matter of dispute among the historians[25] and public figures. Most of them, convinced that the international situation in the 1940s left no chances for Lithuania to keep her independence, nevertheless maintain that "Lithuania had an alternative to the shameful capitulation."[26] In 1940 Lithuania's had a fairly well equipped army of 32 thousand soldiers (with mobilization, the number could reach 150 thousand), supported by 70 thousand men of Siauliai paramilitaries,[27] and the population at large was highly patriotic. However, in the critical situation both national and military leaders demonstrated a lack of confidence in the nation, leaving the nation no role in their own political calculations. In his appeal to the army (March, 1939) S. Ra tikis, commander in chief of the army, pronounced: "Independence is the most precious asset of the nation that should be defended by any means available, including the military ones. In this fight it is better to die with honour or to honestly lose the armed struggle with the stronger enemy than to surrender impotently".[28] And yet in June 1940 General Ra tikis, at that time no longer commander in chief, was among those who argued for the acceptance of Moscow's ultimatum. The invasion of the Red army into Lithuania in June 1940 was the death toll to the Lithuanian armed forces. The liquidation and destruction of the Lithuanian military was effected by arresting and sending about 2000 officers and 4.5 thousand soldiers to Soviet concentration camps where most of them were killed or died because of unbearable conditions.[29] A part of the military was incorporated into the Soviet army.

In judging the tragic events of that time, Finland's stance is often referred to as the alternative to Lithuania's surrender policies. The stiff resistance of the Finns to the Soviets is presented as the example of there being alternatives. Yet those presenting this alternative are forgetful of the fact that Finland was a democratic presidential republic while Lithuania lived under an authoritarian rule. In the period of independence, Lithuania was mostly ruled by a military regime that was hostile to the emergence of civil society. This is why at in the crucial junction no alternative political forces were to be found in Lithuania. The fact that the military, held in such high esteem during the whole period of Lithuania's independence, at the critical moment for the existence of the state, complied with the command of not resisting the invasion of a foreign army is now commonly interpreted as a historical blunder and felt as national trauma. The resolve not to repeat it has found its reflection in most strategic documents

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[25] See: Kirby D., "Incorporation: The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact" in Smith G., ed., *The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, London: Macmillan, 1994, p.80-81.
[26] Truska L., *Lietuva 1938-1953 metais*, Kaunas: Šviesa, 1995, p. 58.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, p.55. (LVVOA. – F. 1771. – Ap. 1. – B. 23- L. 2-3).
[29] Surgailis (note 17) p.72.

of the re-emerged Lithuanian state. The lost dignity of Lithuania's military has been partly recuperated by acknowledging the valour of its soldiers and officers in the guerrilla fight against the Soviets in 1944-1954.[30]

After this brief historical excursion one gets a mixed impression of the interwar Lithuanian army. On the one hand, the army was a typical institution of a modern state oriented to the task of defending the nation and the state from well-defined enemies. The army was also the school for the fostering of national feeling and patriotic education, and as such it was a major factor in buttressing national identity. On the other hand, the fact that at a crucial moment the army became a hostage of irresponsible politicians is an indictment against top commanders of the army, who have distanced themselves from the very people they were trained to defend. As Vytautas Vardys, former professor at Wisconsin university, notes, the interwar Lithuania's army was "too much dependent on the politicians".[31] However, this dependence was not dependence of the military on civilians, as is customary in democracies, "it was rather the use of the military for partisan agendas, for politicking in the struggle for posts, and thus was not at all democratic but mostly demoralizing".[32] These contradictory judgments on the army of interwar Lithuania have their repercussions in contemporary attempts at constructing an updated model of Lithuania's armed forces.

## 2. The Grounding of the Contemporary Model of Lithuania's Army in Strategic Documents

Lithuania was the first republic of the former Soviet Union to declare its independence on 11 March 1990. However, it was only after the bloody events of January 1991 in Lithuania and the failed Moscow putsch in August 1991 that Lithuania received widespread international recognition. On 17 September 1991 Lithuania was granted membership in the United Nations. The declaration of independence was met by Soviet threats to destroy Lithuania's economy, to rip off some of the country's territories and to spark an internal strife in the society. Lithuania's government asked for negotiations, and despite the threats proceeded with the formation of institutions buttressing the state sovereignty. The next day after the declaration of the restoration of the Republic of Lithuania Lithuania's Supreme Council adopted a resolution making the Soviet law on conscription invalid for Lithuania's citizen. A law on the certificate of the citizen of the Republic was adopted, the demarcation and control of the borders was set off, and the Department for Land Defence was created (April 25, 1990). As in 1918 Lithuania's army was to be formed not only as the symbol of the

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[30] See: Gaškaitė N., Kuodytė D., Kašėta A., Ulevičius B., *Lietuvos partizanai 1944-1953 m.*, Kaunas: Šviesa, 1996.

[31] See: Vardys V., "Generolo Raštikio memuarai ir jo vaidmuo Lietuvos politikoje", *Aidai*, 1973, no 4, http://aidai.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=870&Itemid=126,  2008 11 03.

[32] Ibid.

state, as the guarantor of democracy, but also as the defender and protector of independence. In November 1992 Lithuania's Supreme Council solemnly declared the reestablishment of Lithuania's armed forces.

The formation of an army, its structure and its functions depend on the general vision of the state, on the perception of threats and on conceptions of security. The reestablishment of the Lithuanian proceeded under very complicated conditions, with Russia's troops remaining on her territory till autumn 1993, other vital tasks of social and institutional transformations were urgent. So from the early days of the Lithuanian state building security was of utmost concern. This is evidenced by the profusion of official documents related to security and defence policies. The shifting international environment and the changing status of Lithuania on the road to NATO and EU constantly demanded new revisions of the security situation and adjustments in state policies. The documents constitute a kind of condensed history of the state after the restoration of independence. They reflect not only the story of Lithuania's integration in NATO and EU but also the processes of the country's Westernization and Europeanization accompanied by shifts in security and defence conceptualizations. From this point of view let us consider the following documents: *Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania*, 1992 (Constitution); *Law on Fundamentals of National Security 1996* (LFNSL 1997), *Law on organization of the National Defence and the Military Service, 1998; National Security Strategy* (NSSRL 2002, NSSRL 2005), *Military Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania* (MSRL, 2004).

## 2.1. Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992

The new Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, adopted by the referendum of October 25, 1992[33], laid the foundation of Lithuania's political, legal and economic system and defined the principles of state security and defence. The Constitution, in stressing that its legal roots are "the Lithuanian Statutes and the Constitutions of the Republic of Lithuania" (*Constitution*, Preamble), emphasizes the historical continuity of contemporary Lithuania with the Great Duchy of Lithuania and interwar Lithuania. In its main provisions the current Constitution resembles Lithuania's Constitution of 1922 which was based on the Westphalian model of state sovereignty. Security is conceived as national security, while defence is "the defence of the state of Lithuania from foreign armed attack" (Article 139). The Constitution employs a rather static concept of the external enemy, based on Lithuania's historical contingencies. Indirectly, this is confirmed by the appendage to the Constitution (adopted on 8 June 1992), the Constitutional Act "On the Non-Alignment of the Republic of Lithuania with post-Soviet Eastern Alliances" (Article 150). The intention behind it is to legally dissociate once and for all from Russia and the post-Soviet space.

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[33]*Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania* 1992, Vilnius: Publishing house of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 1996.

The basic constitutional provisions on national defence (chapter 13) outline the character of the civilian/military relations. According to Article 140, the State Defence Council, consisting of the President (Head of the Council), the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Parliament, the Minister of National Defence, and the Commander of the Armed Forces co-ordinate the main issues of national defence. The Constitution establishes direct accountability of the government, the minister of national defence and the commander of armed forces to the Parliament for the management of the armed forces of Lithuania. The Parliament is also granted the right to impose martial law, to declare mobilizations, and to decide on the employment of the armed forces for the defence of state or for the implementation of international commitments (Article 142). The Constitution forbids the appointment of active servicemen as ministers of national defence and names the President as the Supreme Commander of the armed forces. These constitutional provisions constitute the legal basis for the application of the principle of civilian control over the armed forces. The constitution calls for one year of compulsory military training or alternative service. Article 139 of the Constitution states: "The defence of the state of Lithuania from foreign armed attack shall be the right and duty of every Citizen of the republic of Lithuania". In essence, this is a fairly typical Constitution of a modern state establishing the principles of territorial defence.

## 2.2. The Basics of National Security of Lithuania (1996)

*The Law on the Basics of National Security of Lithuania* was the outcome of protracted discussions on issues of security and defence.[34] The envisaged structures and the functions of defence and the armed forces are highly expressive of Lithuania's security concerns of that time. The document is an attempt at grounding security and defence policy of Lithuania both as a nation state (modern discourse) and as a potential member of NATO and EU (postmodern discourse). On the whole, in the document the modern conceptions of the state and the nation, of security and defence are predominant. The task of national security is conceived as that of identifying and neutralizing of the objective threats to the state and the nation. One can discern in it, normative tensions between the orientation to the nation state in domestic policies and the integration with the West (at the expense of losing some sovereignty) in foreign and security policies, even though concerns for the security of the nation state predominate. This is particularly evident in the conception of defence as based on the principle of total and unconditional defence:[35]

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[34] See.: Miniotaitė G., Jakniūnaitė D., "Lietuvos saugumo politika ir identitetas šiuolaikinių saugumo studijų kontekste", *Politologija,* 2001, vol. 2,  p. 21-43.

[35] Lietuvos respublikos nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas ,(*Law on the Basics of National Security of Lithuania) Valstybes zinios*, 1997, 2: 2-20.

Total defence means that Lithuania shall be defended with arms by the armed forces, that all the resources of the state shall be employed in the defence effort and that each citizen and the nation shall offer resistance by all means possible.

Unconditional defence means that defense of Lithuania shall not be tied to any preconditions and no one may restrict the right of the Nation and each Citizen to resist the aggressor, invader or anyone who encroaches by coercion on the independence the territorial integrity or the constitutional order of Lithuania (Chapter 7).

In the event of aggression or other forms of coercion against the State of Lithuania, no State institution or official shall be allowed to make a decision or issue an order forbidding the defence of the sovereignty, the territorial integrity or the constitutional order of Lithuania. Such resolution or order shall be considered null and void, and defiance towards them shall incur no liability" (Chapter 7).

As the quotations show, the concept of defence is obviously influenced by the spirit of the Pilėnai story and the polemics with the defeatist policies of 1940. One can also notice the contrast drawn between the Nation and the State, one that grants the nation the right to resist state institutions if they refuse to defend Lithuania's sovereignty and its constitutional order. This means that defence comprises defence against both external and internal enemies. Such a conception of defence naturally leads to the division of defence into military defence, guerrilla warfare and civil defence. The latter comprises "non-violent resistance, disobedience and non-collaboration with the unlawful administration, as well as armed resistance". The role accorded to civilian resistance in the document representing Lithuania's defence policy is quite unique in defence conceptualizations currently predominant in the world.[36]

Besides providing the definitions of security and defence the document defines the goals and the functions of the armed forces. The Armed forces "shall be loyal to the Republic of Lithuania, its Constitution, serve the State and society, obey the state government democratically elected by the Lithuanian citizens" (chapter 18). The armed forces comprise regular armed forces, the Voluntary National Defense Service (SKAT) and active reserve forces. The structure of the armed forces indicates that they are oriented towards territorial defence. The backbone of the armed forces are the servicemen whose "civil consciousness and morale, professional skills and military ethics" have to be fostered. The "mutual understanding and trust between servicemen and the civilian population" should also be encouraged.

A section of the document is devoted to issues of "democratic control over the armed forces" (chapter 8) and is based on the relevant provisions in the Constitution. It is stressed that all decisions on defence policy and armed forces are to be made by the democratically elected civilian government. The document underwrites the publicity of decisions on defence policy and defence expenditure; it also establishes the main principles and procedures of the civilian control of the armed forces. However, as Paulauskas and Gricius emphasized,

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[36] See Miniotaite G., "Civilian resistance in the security and defence system of Lithuania", *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review 2003*, p.223-238.

the document "failed to establish a clear definition of the parliamentary over-view and provided only limited tools of accountability and control".[37]

In general, one can say that *The Basics of National Security* universalized and legitimized the conception of political reality prevailing in 1992-1995. At the time Lithuania's membership in EU and NATO seemed to be a distant and hardly attainable aspiration. No wonder that the document is focused on territorial self-defence and on the appropriate vision of the patriotic soldier. The document was eventually superseded by the *National Security Strategy* and the *Military Strategy*, more consonant with the spirit of the time.

## 2.3. National Security Strategy
## of the Republic of Lithuania (2002, 2005)

*The National Security Strategy* (2002), though still keeping the main provisions of the *Basics of National Security*, was much more expressive of Lithuania's transatlantic orientation. In the new document the referent object of security remains "state sovereignty and territorial integrity" while the main objective of security arrangements is threat prevention to be achieved by joining the "common European security and transatlantic defence systems", i.e. "The Republic of Lithuania considers international security indivisible and seeks own security as an inseparable part of the wider regional, European and global security of the community of nations".[38]

In delineating security threats, dangers and risks the document blends together the conceptions of cooperative security and national security. On the one hand, it is stressed that under conditions of globalization security is "indivisible", that "the fight against terrorism, corruption, organized crime, trade in people, drug trafficking, illegal migration, and smuggling" is a high priority for Lithuania. The document emphasizes: "Republic of Lithuania does not perceive any immediate military threat to its national security and so does not regard any state as its enemy". On the other hand, the document is indirectly bent on Russia's securitization because of the "overwhelming dependence of the Republic of Lithuania on the strategic resources and energy supplies of one country". Though not explicitly named, Russia is considered the main security threat for Lithuania. The document also keeps in place the principle of total territorial defence, comprising both military and civilian resistance. A comparison of the 1996 document on national security and the 2002 security strategy shows a turn towards the concept of collective security, though defence is treated as a problem for particular states, not as a common one (for NATO, EU). In the document's amendment that was adopted when Lithuania joined NATO and EU, an attempt was made at eliminating this ambiguity.

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[37] Gricius (note 10), . *p.241.*

[38] *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania* (2005), http://www.kam.lt/index.php/en/34381/, 30 09 2008.

First of all, the new edition is premised on a more extensive legal basis. *The Strategy* is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on the Basics of National Security, *the North Atlantic Treaty and the Treaty on European Union* (my emphasis - G.M.). As a member of NATO and EU, Lithuania perceives its national security as a constituent part of the security policy of these organizations and refers to the analysis of threats set out in NATO Strategic Concept, the Strategy of the European Union, and other strategic documents of NATO and EU. The definition of Lithuania's security interests now comprises not only "sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic constitutional order of the Republic of Lithuania" but also wider concerns: "global and regional stability", "security, democracy and welfare of NATO Allies and European Union Member States", and "freedom and democracy in the neighbouring regions of the European Union".

In the new document, the concept of military defence is quite radically modified. The principle of total unconditional defence that pervaded all previous documents is dropped.[39] The principles of defence are supplemented with the principles of "deterrence and collective defence" and "crisis prevention and stability development". With the principle of total defence gone, the idea of civil resistance is also dropped. It is replaced by the requirement of "civil training" that would help "consolidate democratic and civic values and to strengthen civil society". The law asserts: "Civic training enhances patriotism, resolution to defend the Homeland, national freedom. Awareness of the importance of national identity and civic training is a condition of ensuring national security".

## 2. 4. The Military Defence Strategy, 2004

The evolving attitudes towards the foundations of national security and strategies of national defence were made more explicit in the *Law on Organization of the National Defence and the Military Service*[40] (1998) and in *The Military Defence Strategy*[41] (2004). The law of 1998 sets forth the fundamentals of organization, command and control of the national defence system, and establishes the procedures for the implementation of military and civilian service within the national defence system. The law defines the status of the serviceman: „A serviceman is a defender of the Lithuanian State" (Article 21). Military service "requires a high degree of loyalty to the state". The servicemen enjoy the constitutionally

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[39] A statement of National Security Strategy of 2005: "To secure vital interests, every possible means of protection are employed" (note 38, 3.1) can be treated as some allusion to a principle of total and unconditional defence employed in the document of 2002.

[40] *LR krašto apsaugos sistemos organizavimo ir karo tarnybos įstatymas 1998 (Law on Organization of the National Defense and the Military Service)*, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter2/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=56646, 11 10 2008.

[41] *The Military Defense Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania 2004* http://www.kam.lt/EasyAdmin/sys/files/military%20strategy.doc, 10 11 2008.

guaranteed human rights and liberties. The "serviceman's human dignity" should be respected, a serviceman may not be "forced to serve another person or group of persons". Moreover, he need not blindly comply with orders; he should not comply if the order violates "universally recognized principles and norms of international law" (Article 27). On the whole, judging by its contents the law is transitory in nature. It blends together the elements of national and collective defence. The structure of the national defence system is still oriented to total territorial defence and the serviceman is conceived as the defender of the state: these constructions are expressive of the earlier stance on national defence. On the other hand, the envisaged preparation of the military for the "interoperability with NATO structures" shows that the law is also responsive to the needs of collective defence.

By 2004 Lithuania's military strategy was already firmly based on the idea of collective defence: "By participating in international peacekeeping and crises response operations, the Armed Forces of Lithuania, an active member of NATO and the European Union, strengthen the national security as well as the security of the whole Euro-Atlantic community".[42] There is a shift from a defence policy based on the perception of threats to the one based on capacity. Accordingly, there are changes in the goals of Lithuania's military forces; they are now oriented to action unrelated to Article 5, and not only in the Euro-Atlantic area, but also beyond it. This leads to radical changes in the structure of armed forces. Priority is given to the development of the Reaction Brigade

These changes and the accompanying problems were quite accurately portrayed by Renatas Norkus, former Secretary of the Ministry of National Defence: "Armed forces should be ready for deployment anywhere in the world when dealing with problems caused by terrorism. The defence of Lithuania today starts in Afghanistan rather than within Lithuania's borders."[43] However, in his view, such concepts as crisis management, peacekeeping or reconstruction of a remote Afghan province are slow to enter Lithuania's public mind. People find little reason in having armed forces engaged in forest fire extinction or an environmental cleaning. The soldier is losing the image of the nation's and the country's defender. And it is becoming more difficult to obtain public support for the increased funding of the military: "One of the most difficult challenges has been a mental one: to start thinking in terms of collective defence of the Alliance instead of a collective defence for Lithuania".[44]

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[42] Ibid.

[43] See: Norkus R., "Defense Transformation: A Lithuanian Perspective", 11 April 2006, Garmisch-Parten-kirchen, Germany, http://www.kam.lt/index.php/lt/96062/, 25 10 2008.

[44] Ibid.

# 3. The Transformation of the Army as Perceived by Lithuanian Society

Let us consider how the transformation of the military – the shift from a conscript army defending the nation to that of flying squads of professionals engaged in social and political "fire fighting" all over the world – is perceived and received by the society. Is the society convinced by the claim, employed in NATO strategic documents and widely used by local politicians, that in a global world it is the spreading and defending of Western values (i.e., human rights), which is the most effective way of securing peace? Does not the transformation in fact erode national self-consciousness, an important component of which is the national army of a sovereign state? An exhaustive answer to these questions would require a wide-ranging investigation of the current political and social transformation. I will confine myself to a brief comment on public debates and public opinion poll concerning two issues directly related to the reforms of the military: 1) public attitudes towards compulsory military service and professional army and 2) attitudes towards Lithuania's military participation in international operations.

## 3.1. An Army of Conscript or/and Professionals?

The principle of total defence, as espoused in the strategic documents of 1996-2002, requires a large reserve for mobilization. Total defence is based on the conscript army, on the draft law and compulsory military service. A preparation for this kind of defence imposes significant costs on wide strata of society, so it is no wonder that public opinion polls show considerable public interest in the matter. Before Lithuania's membership in NATO and the subsequent reforms the Lithuanian armed forces had 22,796 servicemen, among them 4,497 conscripts. In 2008 the total number of servicemen in the national defence system dropped to 13,534, with mere 1,874 of them being conscripts.[45] It is planned that by 2009 the transition to a professional army will be complete. However, such a transition would contradict Lithuania's Constitution that envisions compulsory military or alternative public service.

The government, favouring the transition to a professional army, initiated a discussion on the issue in Seimas in 2006. The proposed program involved a gradual reduction of the number of conscripts in the army, so that only those willing would do compulsory service. The proposal was favoured by both the

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[45] Factis and Figures: Personnel size in 1998-2009. See: http://www.kam.lt/accessibility/index.php/en/154585/ , 02 09 2009.

serving conscripts[46] and the society at large.[47] According to the analysts of the Ministry of Defence, compulsory military service in time of peace would no longer be a universal duty but only a necessary condition for becoming a service-man in active reserve or for getting employment in other defence structures (e.g. border control). The conservatives held a similar view, considering a complete abandonment of compulsory service inexpedient, for a purely professional army would become self-absorbed and lose its ties to the society.

The Conservative party (renamed as the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats since May 2008) elaborated the idea in its election pro-gram of 2008. The army is envisaged as a three-pronged structure consisting of: (1) mobile forces of professional (8-8.5 thousand strong); (2) active reserve of volunteers (12 thousand strong); (3) individual reserve of volunteers and conscripts (7 week long training courses for young men in the age of 18-24). Supposedly, in a year's time it would be possible to train up to 7 thousand men in individual reserve fit for mobilization in case of a conflict. Professional army is also considered an important part of the system of national defence; it would consist of 8-8.5 thousand servicemen, supplemented by 12 thousand servicemen of the active reserve.[48] It seems that after the 2008 Seimas election the stance on the issue by the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Demo-crats is going to be the dominant one. This issue, though seemingly local, has in fact questioned the compatibility of certain strategic approaches of NATO and Lithuania. As Laurynas Kaščiūnas has pointed out, the traditional threat of Russia is much more important for Lithuania than the global threats referred to in NATO strategic documents.[49] The discussion has shown that Lithuania's politicians consider the issues related to Lithuania's armed forces not merely from the functional but also from the normative point of view. The contents of the discussion are indicative of the fact that Lithuania's political discourse is still dominated by the value orientations of modernity.

## 3.2. Participation in International Missions

Since 1996, Lithuania has been participating in international peacekee-ping missions. In the period more than two thousand Lithuanian soldiers have participated in ten international operations and two OSCE missions. Lithuania

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[46] Žr.: Novagrockienė J., Janušauskienė D., Kaminskaitė A., Mokslinio tyrimo "Būtinosios tarnybos karių nuostatos" ataskaita [Report on the research "The Attitudes of Army Conscripts"] , Vilnius, 2002. According to the data of the research, 52,1 percent of the respondents favor the army of hired service persons.

[47] *Lietuvos gyventojai apie Lietuvos kariuomenę*, [Lithuania's Public on Lithuania's Armed Forces], Baltijos tyrimai, June 2006, Vilnius 2006. According to the data of the research, 39 percent of Lithuania's popu-lation, of more than 18 years of age, consider that Lithuania needs both a professional and a conscript army, while 51 percent favor the purely professional army. 10 percent of the adult population have no opinion on the issue.

[48] Tėvynės sąjungos – Lietuvos krikščionių demokratų programa, Vilnius, 2008.

[49] See.: Samoškaitė E. "Koks skirtumas, kokia bus kariuomenė?" www.delfi.lt, 18-08-2008.

now plays a particularly important role in Afghanistan. In 2005 Lithuania assu-
med the leadership of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan
as a part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Lithuanian
soldiers assist the central government of Afghanistan in strengthening its control
over the Ghor province, in reforming its security forces, and they help maintain
the dialogue between the central government, international organizations, and
local leaders. Presently, more than 200 Lithuanian troops are active in Afgha-
nistan, Iraq and Kosovo. The troops on the missions are usually replaced each
half-year. The international missions are manned by professionals, volunteers
and also by persons in the civilian defence service.[50]

Lithuania's population is divided on the issue of missions abroad.
According to the opinion poll carried out by *Spinter tyrimai* in April 2007, 40
percent of the respondents approve this policy, while half of the respondents
do not. At the same time 52 percent of the respondents consider that Lithuania
benefits from participation in military missions abroad because its troops get
more experienced, because the country contributes to the strengthening of
international security and thus improves its own international image. When
queried specifically about the mission in Iraq, more than half of the respondents
(56 percent) favoured the withdrawal of Lithuanian troops from that country.
Withdrawal is more often favoured by women, older, less educated, lower
income people[51]. Readers of the DELFI website have also been polled on the
issue. From 12 thousand participants of the poll 74 percent were against the
troops being sent to Iraq.[52]

The changes in the armed forces have not affected the generally positive
attitude of the population towards Lithuania's military. The dynamics of trust
in the army for the period 1998-2006 show that the trust grew from 30 percent in
1998 to 54 percent in 2006. Accordingly, distrust fell from 28 to 12 percent. On
the data provided by "Baltijos tyrimai" (June 2006) the Lithuanian population
considers Lithuania's military as *youthful* (80%), *positively representing Lithuania
to the world* (63%), *better than the Soviet army* (59%).[53]

## Conclusions

This brief analysis of the ways the vision of Lithuania's military is cons-
trued in official documents and of the public response to the ideas propounded

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[50]  See: http://www.kam.lt/index.php/lt/144606/, 03 11 2008.   Since July 1, 2004 service persons have been
    *appointed* for service in international missions, *not chosen according to consent*. As Valdas Tutkus, com-
    mander in chief, observed, since Lithuania has joined the system of collective defense "participation in
    international operations has become a duty" (Stasys Gudavičius, "Lietuvos kariai nenori į Iraką", *Kauno
    diena*, February 19, 2007).
[51]  See: "Spinter tyrimai", http://search.delfi.lt/cache.php?id=F55643E2C4B28568, 2008-10-25
[52]  See: "74 proc. DELFI skaitytojų prieš karių siuntimą į Iraką", 21 02 2007, http://www.delfi.lt/archive/
    article.php?id=12216401 , 20 10 2008.
[53]  See: note 47.

there shows that the conception of the army and the soldier has not transcended the extant cultural images of the soldier, those of the soldier as the patriotic defender of Homeland (Pilenai) and the soldier as a mercenary [professional] fighting battles on foreign lands. This is indicative of the power of historical stereotypes and normative assumptions in any construction of the model of the exemplary soldier. The republic of Lithuania, restored in 1990, was from the outset oriented to the experience of interwar Lithuania. In setting up the armed forces and tackling the issues of the relations between the military and the society at large such interwar institutions as Riflemen's Union (*Šaulių sąjunga*), *Ramove* (a network of officers' clubs), and [military] press have been restored. Quite in line with interwar Lithuania, the army was perceived not so much as a neutral defender of democracy as rather the institution for instilling patriotism and loyalty to the state.

The image of the soldier as a patriot, an unreserved defender of Homeland as well as the idea of total defence are expressive of Lithuania's orientation towards the modern nation state. In official political discourse this orientation has been dominant till about 2000-2001. The commencement of Lithuania's negotiations for membership in EU and a more active participation in NATO action plans were the chief incentives for changes in the normative assumptions of Lithuania's strategic documents. The most recent documents, still partly characterized by contradictory attempts at reconciling the idea of defending the closed space of a nation state with that of defending the space of common values, are indicative of the transitory character of the state. A survey of public opinion polls on the transformation of the military confirms the conclusion of the analysis of the basic strategic documents, namely, that contemporary Lithuania is in a transitory stage leading from the value assumptions of a modern nation state to the political discourse of a postmodern society based on common civic values.

The generally positive attitude to Lithuania's armed forces, to their renewal and becoming more professional, does not necessarily [contradict] [clash with] the modernist image of the army as the defender of the state. The much less enthusiastic attitude to the Lithuanian military participation in military operations abroad shows that the image of the soldier as the defender of human rights anywhere in the world is still quite alien for the contemporary Lithuanian society. The rhetoric of universal human rights and a global prevention of threats is not much welcome in a society bent on keeping its national identity. The shift from the army of conscripts to the army of professionals is not merely an institutional reform leading to the reduction of the number of soldiers. It depends on the character of the shift whether the army will remain an important part of national identity or will become just another profession.