

# THE PROFILE OF THE STRATEGIC LEADERS OF THE BRAZILIAN ARMY IN ITS PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

O PERFIL DOS LÍDERES ESTRATÉGICOS DO EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO EM SEU PROCESSO DE TRANSFORMAÇÃO

EL PERFIL DE LOS LÍDERES ESTRATÉGICOS DEL EJÉRCITO BRASILEÑO EN SU PROCESO DE TRANSFORMACIÓN

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present the profile Brazilian Army (EB) strategic leaders should demonstrate while engaged in the development and implementation of the process of Force transformation. In terms of methodology, information on the subject was collected in articles, specialized websites and papers. An opinion poll was also conducted among Brazilian Army (DB) generals and colonels, specializing in strategic leadership, to assess the key leadership competencies the profile of the Brazilian Army (EB) should include in order to carry the Transformation forward. The answers provided by the specialists were added to collected data, and thus contributed to the end result of our work, where the profile of the strategic leaders of the EB, in its process of transformation, can be summarized in three large areas of qualification that are integrated and interrelated to a set of fifteen core competencies built upon moral principles and values, integrity of character and ethics, as competencies that depict the moral profile of strategic leaders. Last, it was concluded that this work can contribute to perfect the skills of the current strategic leaders of the Institution, and enables an assessment of the profile of future leaders, once strategic leaders are the actual drivers of the process of transformation and, without effective action by each one of them, transformation is unfeasible.

**Keywords:** Profile. Strategic leadership. Strategic environment.. Process of transformation. Brazilian Army.

## RESUMO

O presente artigo tem o objetivo de apresentar o perfil que os líderes estratégicos do Exército Brasileiro (EB) devem evidenciar na condução e implantação do processo de transformação da Força. Metodologicamente, procedeu-se a coleta do material sobre o assunto em artigos, sites especializados e monografias. Foi dirigida, também, uma pesquisa de opinião a oficiais gerais e coronéis do EB, especialistas em liderança estratégica, a fim de levantar as principais competências que devem compor o perfil dos líderes estratégicos do EB para a condução da Transformação. As respostas dos especialistas foram integradas aos dados coletados e contribuíram para se chegar ao resultado final do trabalho, onde o perfil dos líderes estratégicos do EB, em seu processo de transformação, pode ser sintetizado em três grandes áreas de qualificação integradas e inter-relacionadas a um conjunto de quinze competências, alicerçadas sobre os princípios e valores morais, a integridade de caráter e a ética, como competências do retrato moral do líder estratégico. Por fim, concluiu-se que o trabalho é útil para o aprimoramento das habilidades dos atuais líderes estratégicos da Instituição e permite levantar o retrato do perfil dos líderes do futuro, uma vez que os líderes estratégicos são os autênticos indutores do processo de transformação, pois, sem a competente ação de cada um deles, é impossível transformar.

**Palavras-chave:** Perfil. Liderança estratégica. Ambiente estratégico. Processo de transformação. Exército Brasileiro.

## RESUMEN

El presente artículo tiene por objeto presentar el perfil que los líderes estratégicos del Ejército Brasileño (EB) deben mostrar en la conducción e implantación del proceso de transformación de la Fuerza Armada. Para ello se ha procedido, de forma metodológica, a la recopilación de material sobre el asunto en artículos, sitios web especializados y monografías. Asimismo, se realizó una encuesta de opinión dirigida a oficiales generales y coroneles del EB —especialistas en liderazgo estratégico— con el fin de conocer las principales competencias que deben componer el perfil de los líderes estratégicos del EB para conducir la transformación. Las respuestas de los especialistas se integraron a los datos recopilados y contribuyeron para llegar al resultado final del trabajo, con el perfil de los líderes estratégicos del EB, en su proceso de transformación, sintetizados en tres grandes áreas de cualificación integradas e interrelacionadas a un conjunto de quince competencias del retrato moral del líder estratégico, basadas en principios y valores morales, integridad de carácter y ética. Por último, se concluye que el trabajo es útil para mejorar las habilidades de los actuales líderes estratégicos de la Institución y permitir obtener el retrato del perfil de los líderes del futuro, ya que los líderes estratégicos son los auténticos inductores del proceso de transformación, pues sin la competente acción de cada uno de ellos, es imposible transformar.

**Palabras clave:** Perfil. Liderazgo estratégico. Ambiente estratégico. Proceso de transformación. Ejército Brasileño.

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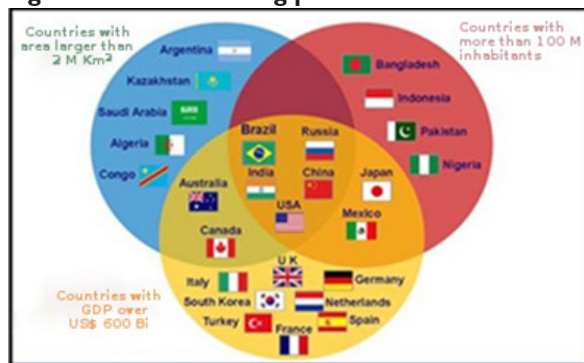
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## I INTRODUCTION

The world is in a constant process of change that leads to diffuse strategic scenarios, thus generating uncertainty and insecurity. Prospective analyses and trends place Brazil among the ten largest economies in the world, already in this new decade, and having acquired a more relevant political status, in the International System, by 2030. Till then, independent from having or not reached the condition of permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, for its geopolitical and strategic projection in the world, Brazil will be at the same level of the leading global players (TRINDADE, 2010, p. 1-2).

**Figure 1. Brazil's landing position**



Source: Vasconcelos (2013).

In face of this scenario, the question that naturally comes to mind is if the Brazilian Army (EB) has the capabilities needed to empower the Country to uphold its decisions, support its foreign policy and safeguard the Brazilian interests in the international scenario (COSTA, 2011, p. 10; BRASIL, 2008b, p. 169). In other words, the Army needs to become a Force suited to the political-strategic prominence status of Brazil and prepared to face the challenges this uncertain future has in store.

The process of transformation is a consequence of this diagnostic that has led to the conclusion that the Army lacks a capacity compatible with the quick evolution of this political-strategic prominence Brazil has achieved. It was also evidenced that by itself Force modernization would not be enough to meet the requirements of the existing scenario, leading the strategic decision makers to engage in a much broader process of change, the Institution has named Transformation (BRASIL, 2010, p.11).

In other words, most of all, the Transformation has its origins in the need to take the EB of the Industrial Era into the Knowledge Era. According to this vision, the key challenge strategic leaders need to face is to make this arduous task, which involves a complex planning process that will drive integrated sets of strategic actions, effectively contributing to the sought Transformation, that is, to the design and in the evolution of a Force that will be

called to act in the scenario envisaged for 2030.

Consequently, the time has come to think about the type of profile these leaders must evidence, if this objective is to be effectively reached, and this is the key issue approached in this article.

It must also be noted that the approach to the profile of strategic leaders that will be investigated is based on the following definition of profile: "description or information about the characteristics of individuals, especially the professional ones; as well as, the description or depiction, in quick strokes, of the moral portrait [...] of a person"<sup>2</sup>. These professional characteristics were translated into competencies. According to Ferreira (1995, p. 353), competency comes from the Latin word *competentia*, and means "a quality of a person capable of examining and solving a certain issue, doing a certain thing, capacity, skill, aptitude and integrity". Silva J. (2011, p. 19) stated that to the Brazilian Army, competency is the "the knowledge, skills and attitudes expressed and evidenced when performing a task". Ávila e Balceiro (2003, p. 6) affirmed that the concept of competency is closely related to qualification and with the tasks performed by an individual, so that, when applied to the present subject, it is translated in the ability leaders need to have to be able to simultaneously and in an interrelated manner mobilize, knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and experiences.

Based on these considerations, for the purposes of this article profile is the set of competencies, skills or professional qualifications and the image leaders need to evidence in performing the assigned duties, to decide and to act at the strategic level.

Thus, the key objective of this article is to present the profile the strategic leaders of the Army need to evidence, in order to be able, while exercising strategic leadership, to conduct and implement the process of Force transformation.

## 2 DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 Theoretical basis

#### 2.1.1 The process of Brazilian Army transformation

According to Castells (1996 apud MOTA, 2011, p. 1), the growing and current pace of technological development has been spreading across all sectors of endeavors, generating almost instant flows of information and capital that have become the most dynamic sectors of global economy, marking what is now called the "Era of Knowledge", "Information Era", "Networked Society" or "Knowledge Society". This development appears as

<sup>2</sup> The definition of profile presented here is available at:

a. <<http://www.priberam.pt/dlpo/Default.aspx?pal=perfil>>. Accessed on: Apr 28, 2013.

b. <<http://aulete.uol.com.br/perfil#ixzz2RmhwB3U3m>>. Accessed on: Apr 28, 2013.

an element of rupture or marked difference relatively to the preceding standards of the Industrial Era (LASTRES; ALBAGALI, 1999 apud MESQUITA, 2012, p. 27).

In this sense, relying on by such technological breakthroughs, the global economy acquired unprecedented dynamics, while at the same time evidencing to have brought in new elements of uncertainty and instability. The technological revolution that is now in progress leads to a faster pace of sector dynamics and to easier access to state-of-the-art technologies, thus contributing to the universalization of the threats to peace and to international security, to make them stronger (BRASIL, 2010, p. 7).

In order to face such challenges and threats, that tend to increase in the future, Brazil intends to develop its own methodology to transform its Armed Forces (FA), making them ready to promptly respond to the needs imposed by the current global scenario (SARMENTO, 2004, p. 136). This political will was to become a reality on December 18, 2008, when the President of the Republic signed the first edition of the National Defense Strategy - END (BRASIL, 2008a, p. 5).

The END appeared, then, with the purpose of making Brazilian society aware of the need for further involvement in defense-related matters, encouraged new demands and approaches to defense-related matters and created favorable opportunities to trigger the necessary transformation of the Armed Forces.

Thus, the END provided that, within a term of six months, each one of the Armed Forces was to prepare an Equipment and Coordination Plan. A major opportunity then came up, but it also represented one of the major challenges ever faced by the Institution, since from the Ground Force 1990 (FT 90)<sup>3</sup> up to END ratification, the Brazilian Army had never planned changes of similar reach and significance (RIBEIRO, 2010, p. 187).

In his definition of what an actual transformation means, Sarmento (2004) offers an improved view of the complex challenges the Force will have to overcome.

In these moments, therefore, the Armed Forces are reconsidered in their full extent, their philosophy and their systems. This process was named Transformation. Transformation means to provide a new shape, feature or character to; to change, modify, transfigure. It is a concept that transcends mere of state-of-the-art technology to be used against a potential enemy. It means to break paradigms, to apply military power with novel nuances, but without losing its millennium-old concepts. The decision to transform involves an in depth work of acculturation.

<sup>3</sup> The FT-90 was the broadest project of modernization of the Army since World War II. The project was designed by Minister Leônidas Pires Gonçalves, in the nineties, and comprised, among other actions, modification and standardization of new uniforms, the enlargement of the Agulhas Negras Military Academy, procurement of defense products, construction and refurbishment of barracks and the establishment of the Army Aviation (RIBEIRO, 2010, p.51).

And, undoubtedly people react strongly to culture changes. The inner core of the Transformation is based on this understanding. (SARMENTO, 2004, p. 128).

According to Pereira (2011, p. 43), the process of Army transformation resulted from studies, diagnostics, formulations and perceptions that came from the Army Joint Chiefs of Staff (EME), and initially resulted in the Strong Arm Strategy and several discussions, while working on the END and the revision of the Army Strategic Planning System (SIPLEX 2011/2014). This stage was critical to the strategic decision makers of the Army, as they grasped that the "Modernization" of the Force", included in the 2009 Strong Arm Strategy (EBF/2009), was incipient and the existing scenario required a much broader process of change.

The diagnostic of the Brazilian Army, carried out in the years 2009/2010, revealed the existence of critical issues that represented constraints to the evolution sought in the EBF/2009. It was also concluded that the projects that were part of the EBF/2009 resulted in modernizations, but the necessary institutional transformation leading to the development of new capabilities that would enable the achievement of new missions, or performance of new combat functions, was missing. Modernization impacts the physical structures of the Force, pulling it from the past to the present; but transformation is a radical change that transforms concepts - such as doctrine, management, the desirable profile of the military, etc. - propelling the Force into the future and speeding up the process of Brazilian Army evolution (BRASIL, 2011a, p. 13).

Once the path to be followed had been chosen, a comprehensive scope debate was initiated by the Army Command with a diversified group of sources, comprising active service and retired officers, officers of friendly nations, civilians and specialists in a full range of sectors with the purpose of looking for solutions to supplement the concepts formulated by the General Managing Body of the Force (ODG), the EME, which is in charge of carrying out Brazilian Army transformation. The key focus of these initiatives was to review the structures and the organization, assess costs and design projects in order to redirect and prepare the Force for the Future (RIBEIRO, 2010, p.188).

It was at the 268th meeting of the High Command of the Army, held on May 20, 2010, that the process of Army transformation was formally launched. The then Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff of the Army remarked that the leaders and those led by them in all sectors of the Army would be indispensable in order to achieve the depth and the amplitude that were critical if success was to be achieved and set objectives reached (COSTA, 2011, p. 53).

On the occasion, it was decided that the Transformation was to be carried out based on seven Transformation Vectors (VT)<sup>4</sup> that contributed to the development of the various efforts in specific areas, corresponding to the critical points or "bottlenecks" detected by the diagnostics that had been produced.

According to Pereira (2011, p. 43), the actions related to the implementation of the process of transformation of the Army should be completed in 2015, and their chief purpose is to create conditions to increase the operational capacity of the Force, rendering it strong enough to uphold the decisions made by the Country in the international scenario.

While the work on the Transformation Vectors was in progress, the Force Command evidenced the need to create a Force Project establishing goals and guidelines for the current vectors. This initiative contributed to the synergy of the efforts then in progress, enabling effective results to be achieved already in the initial stage of implementation of the process of transformation.

Once the National Defense Strategy was ratified, consistent planning was consolidated in the Strong Arm Strategy. Now that the situation analysis has been up dated, actions must be redefined and the main effort focused. It was in this context that the Brazilian Army Force Project (PROFORÇA) was created, where our priority objectives are identified and broken down into target phases, according to the 2015, 2022 and 2030 time horizons (BRASIL, 2011a, p. 1).

The Brazilian Army Force Project (PROFORÇA) was then designed to produce a concept for Brazilian Army evolution, with a time horizon going up to 2030, with intermediary targets in 2015 and 2022, and also to steer the process of transformation, which is now in progress in the Institution (BRASIL, 2011b, p. 8).

The guideline that was to regulate and guide the design of the PROFORÇA project was approved by the Brazilian Army Joint Chiefs of Staff on February 16, 2011 (BRASIL, 2011c, p. 20). However, in the following year, the Army Command determined that the EME was to have this guideline for the implementation of the process of transformation updated until March 30, 2012, which instead of carrying on the process based on the seven VT, would now adopt nine VTs<sup>5</sup> (BRASIL, 2012, p.4), as shown in Figure 2.

Costa (2011, p. 56) also underlines that the products of the PROFORÇA are the guidelines for the strategic design of the EB; the new articulation and structure of the Ground Force; the new capabilities, listed for each one of the missions of the EB; the guidelines for each one of the VTs; the guidelines for the future Basic Organization of the Army; and the guidance for the integration to the SIPLEX, once the SIPLEX, will be the tool the EME will use to implement all Project phases.

Thus, based on the considerations above, it can be inferred that the strategic leaders of the EB will need to evidence a profile that will enable them to lead a complex and long term process, such as the process of transformation of the Force, set up in a scenario defined as volatile, uncertain, unpredictable and ambiguous.

Figure 2. The PROFORÇA Transformations



Source: Mayer (2013), adapted by the author

4 As conceived in 2009, the seven Transformation Vectors were: I- Doctrine; II- Preparation and Use; III- Education and Culture; IV- Human Resources Management; V- Current and Strategic Management; VI- Materials S&T and Modernization; and VII- Logistics (BRASIL, 2010, p.31).

5 The nine Vectors established by the new PROFORÇA guidelines are the following I- Science and Technology; II- Doctrine; III- Education and Culture; IV- Engineering; V- Management; VI- Human Resources; VII- Logistics; VIII- Preparation and Use; and IX- Budget and Finance.

## 2.1.2 Strategic Leadership

The strategic leadership is developed at the levels in charge of establishing the policy and the strategy of an organization, and it is, therefore, typical of the strategic echelons, composed of the individuals responsible for directing the higher destiny of the institution (MACEDO, 2006, p. 10).

Ozires Silva, the former Minister of State (2013), defined strategic leadership as the set of methods and processes whereby visions are created to enable an enterprise or organization to motivate its team and convey to all an intent, an aspiration, as well as to share an objective and to implement the actions required to accomplish the goal that has been set by the organization.

According to Army General Adhemar Machado Filho (2013), Command is not an abstract art, it is actually contextual and depends on the existing circumstances. Hence, the actual exercise of strategic leadership requires command and presence actions, associated to dialogue, and are critical to strengthen relationships inside and outside the organization, because no relationship is fully ready when it is born.

The United States Army defines strategic leadership as the process employed to influence the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision of the future, acting on the organizational culture, allocating resources and providing guidance, by means of policies and guidelines and by creating consensus in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous global environment, marked by opportunities and threats (UNITED STATES, 1998).

Aware of the needs and objectives of the Army, the strategic leaders of the United States strive to convince personnel in key positions of what they want for the Force right now and in the future. To the United States of America those are the most significant personal skills to be found in its leaders: communication, dialogue, ability to obtain consensus and team or staff formation (COSTA, 2011, p. 18).

These definitions and concepts indicate how the strategic leaders will develop the art of leading their organizations, without, however, losing sight of principles and values, once the essence of military leadership, at the strategic level, is above all oriented by this premise (CASTRO, 2012, p. 5).

In referring to principles and values General MacArthur says that before anything else strategic leadership is moral leadership (KINNI; KINNI, 2008, p. 15). In his considerations about the moral ethics of leaders in his guideline, the Army Commander stated:

Command action, visible to anyone who enters any military environment, is critical to preservation of cohesion and unity in the Force. It is mostly exercised by example. **Setting example is the number one commandment of those who command. [...]. The words and the life of a commander, at all level, should march to the right cadence.**

Authority actually comes from coexistence of both of them (PERI, 2011, p. 32, text highlighted by author).

In this sense, "as he must be heard and respected a leader needs to know how to use its influence inside the organization, as he must be heard and respected" (DIAS, 2010, p.10). So, in line with the concept of the transformational leadership theory, this influence is only possible when the leader is familiar with the beliefs, the values and the expectations that are at stake. From this type of interaction a leader is vested with true authority and has available resources that will allow him to make changes and at the same time disseminate the organizational structure. Transformational strategic leaders must know how to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, as well as to harmonize them in face of the opportunities found in the environment, finding out ways of inspiring those he leads to face such challenges (SILVA M., 2004, p. 3).

Yet, in the strategic environment this is not an easy task, as Jacobs (2009 apud MESQUITA, 2012, p. 40) states, in the Information Era, the environment where nations, organizations and institutions are in operation is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

United States Air Force Colonel W. Michael Guillot (2004, p. 2), one of the authors who conceived the concept of strategic leadership, adds to Jacobs words by saying that this environment encompasses four distinct parts – the national security, the domestic, the military and the international environments, as shown in Figure 3.

In can, then, be inferred that the strategic environment is interrelated, complementary and contradictory.

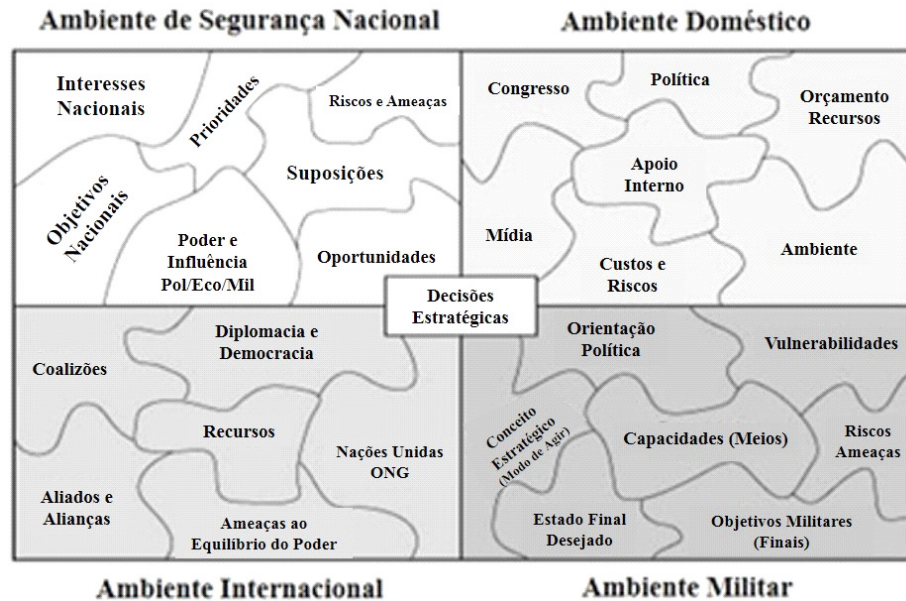
These features require strategic leaders to act both in the national and international political domains as well as in the domestic and military, with consequences that may influence the decision making process of the organization, as in several situations, decisions must be made without a clear understanding of the circumstances imposed by the environment and the risks associated to it.

This aspect contributes to make the nature of the strategic environment extremely complex, requiring from leaders unique competencies to be able to perform this challenging function.

Such competencies are verified by Villaça (2002, p. 15) who, when writing on the profile of 21st century leaders, declared that leaders need to be capable of working in permanent conditions of ever growing ambiguity, as chaos and confusion are increasingly common, and the pace of change is dramatically increased.

Therefore, it can be said that to strategic leaders falls the task of establishing new directions that will take their organization to the enforcement of policies and strategies, with the purpose of reaching the final state desired for the institution in the future. Oftentimes, these directions point to the path of organizational transformation that requires from leaders a suitable profile to tread this

Figure 3. The strategic leadership environment.



Source: Guillot (2004, p.2).

hard path, once, as Dr. Myles Munroe (2009) says, nothing happens without leadership, no development is feasible without leadership, no improvement happens without leadership, nothing is set right without leadership, and last, nothing changes, that is, nothing can be transformed without leadership.

## 2.2 Methodology

The method adopted for this work consisted of the collection of the materials needed to study the different leadership models in biographies, classical works, manuals, texts in magazines, journals, articles and specialized websites. Next came the review of the literature and of the most important documents where the process of Brazilian Army transformation is discussed. Subsequently, both subjects, strategic leadership and the process of transformation, were reviewed in the academic papers produced at the Escola de Comando e Estado-Maior do Exército (ECEME), Fundação Getúlio Vargas, the portal of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) and specialized websites, followed by an interpretative analysis of collected materials, both individually and as a whole.

The survey also included reading of articles and papers about the profile of strategic leaders found in the Brazilian academic literature, as well as studies on processes of transformation in civil organizations and their respective link to strategic leadership.

Bibliographic and document surveys of articles, journals and scientific works on the subject and also a review of the theory and studies based on the text of the works listed in the References section of this article were also carried out. The method was limited to content

analysis and interpretation of fundamental data based on the structuralist approach according to Theiry-Cheques (2006)<sup>6</sup>.

The survey reports on the leading aspects that characterize the strategic leadership, establishing its relationship with the process of transformation of the Brazilian Army in the Information Era. The survey also aimed at the analysis of the reasons and the key aspects of the profile of the strategic leaders, by identifying and analyzing their causes and effects in the process of transformation of the Brazilian Army.

As to its nature this is a qualitative research, however, in order to certify and validate collected data a questionnaire was prepared to be used in an opinion poll<sup>7</sup>, whose purpose was to assess the most important

6 In his article Theiry-Cheques presents a program for application of the Pierre Bourdieu mode of investigation to researches on human and social sciences. Bourdieu was a researcher who offered an invaluable contribution to epistemological discussions (also called the knowledge theory) and greatly enlarged the themes of human and social sciences. In the Bourdieu research, structural analysis and empirical survey happen simultaneously. The construction of the matrix of relationship, the structure of connections between the positions, accompanies, adjusts and gives the finishing touches to the analysis of field logic. In the empirical investigation, Bourdieu employs both qualitative and quantitative conventional techniques, always by reference to the epistemological significance of the treatment to which the object will be subject (THEIRY-CHEQUES, 2006).

7 The Opinion Poll consists of an assessment of attitudes, points of view and preferences people have about a given subject, aiming at making decisions. "It aims at finding the opinion of a community, check for faults, describe conducts and recognize interests and other behaviors for decisions making" (ALMEIDA, 1996, p. 105 apud PINTO, 2010, p. 11). The tool used to prepare the opinion poll questionnaire was the "Google Docs" product available at: <<http://www.google.com/intl/pt-BR/about/products/>>. The abovementioned questionnaire and the results can be found at: <[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1PvEpXjYkOYfrXHUNYZq\\_xje2QldQl5ghqK-Qwn2cFG0/viewanalytics](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1PvEpXjYkOYfrXHUNYZq_xje2QldQl5ghqK-Qwn2cFG0/viewanalytics)>.

competencies to be evidenced in the profile of the strategic leaders of the Army, in order to carry out the process of Force transformation (ALMEIDA, 1996 apud PINTO, 2010).

The questionnaire used for the survey was comprised in two sections. In the first one, whose purpose is to offer specialists a situational view of the object of the survey, and the ultimate objective of the research, with additional information provided about the how the core problem was formulated. The second part comprises thirty questions about the researched competencies, and its chief purpose was to pinpoint, according to the specialists, the competencies that characterize strategic leader profile within the context of a process of transformation.

The Likert Scale was the measurement tool used to assess the reality of the problem object of the study. Four levels of answers were used for this work (fully agree; agree; disagree and fully disagree). A field was provided in the questionnaire for specialists to offer other ideas related to the subject they felt were pertinent, thus contributing to the integration and to the interpretative analysis of collected materials.

Last, the universe of the opinion poll was limited to Brazilian Army officers specialized in strategic leadership subjects, and are EB colonels who are taking or have already taken policy and strategy courses of the same level as the Army Policy, Strategy and High Management, whether in Brazil or abroad, and the generals. These officers are in positions and had assigned functions of advisers and/or are command/leadership positions at strategic level, and constitute the potential leaders to carry out and move the process of Force transformation forward.

**2.3 Presentation of Results and Discussion**

Once all data needed to investigate the problem were collected, such data were analyzed, interacted and supplemented by the opinion poll directed to specialists in strategic leadership subjects. A total of 170 questionnaires were sent to a universe of 106 generals and 74 colonels of Brazilian Army; out of this universe, 56.5% of the specialists answered the questionnaires, that is, 96 specialists, 51 generals and 45 colonels, answered and offered comments on the questions,.

The answers provided by the specialists were integrated to the research data that had been collected, and constituted the basis for the presentation of the results and discussion of this article, allowing the inference of the corollaries that will be presented next.

As to the process of transformation of the EB, it started with the diagnostic that the Force needed to adjust to the fast-paced evolution of the political-strategic structure of the Country. Process design was based on the END and

on inputs collected from a broad range of sources and specialists in several fields and areas of knowledge.

The transformation of the Brazilian Army is the end result of a detailed diagnostic of the Institution to effectively take it to Information Era. The Transformation is based on a portfolio of actions integrated and consolidated in the Brazilian Army Force Project, set with the 2015, 2022 and 2030 time limits.

In the EB, the exercise of strategic leadership is linked to the sphere of action of the generals who are part of the High Command of the Army who in charge the design of the policies, strategies and guidelines that govern the Institution. Nonetheless, Castro (2005, p. 2, 3) underlines that on occasion, this task can be performed by other Force generals, depending on the role or duty assigned to them.

Strategic leaders have an enormous achievement capacity, but what really distinguishes them are the principles and values they stand for. Bearing in mind that one of the definitions of profile says it is " a description or depiction in quick strokes of the moral portrait of an individual", this moral portrait, in terms of strategic leadership, has to do with actions that are, above all, grounded on honor, as a personal integrity imperative and on the values this individual conveys. Then, independent from situational changes, there are certain values, especially those linked to morals, unblemished character, ethics and military honor, which are non-negotiable attributes of strategic leaders that do not allow any type of questioning, elimination or decrease of significance.

In the opinion poll, 97% of the specialists stated that values as honesty, loyalty and integrity are unchangeable and constitute the pillars on which the specific competencies required for leadership performance at the strategic level will be developed, as shown in the pyramid named by Guillot "the anatomy of a strategic leader" and shown in Figure 4.

From the study of the systemic view, it was evidenced that this competency helps leaders to develop a holistic view of issues, as parts of a whole, and not as separate parts. This skill helps leaders to understand the interrelation between the parts, the dynamics of processes, control the indirect effects and envisage how and where the rationale applies (MESQUITA, 2012,

**Figure 4. Anatomy of a Strategic Leader.**



Source: Guillot (2004, p. 7).

p. 46). The result of the survey revealed that 100% of the specialists feel that being able to take a systemic approach to issues is critical to those who lead a process of organizational transformation.

As to the decentralization of the decision making power or empowerment, it was clearly evidenced that this capability is mandatory for the actual exercise of strategic leadership, since a fast solution for certain situations, a specific characteristic of decentralized decision making, contributes decisively to the survival of the institution (ALCARAZ, 2010). Where feasible, delegation of authority by a strategic leader is indispensable to the achievement of the process of transformation of the Army, and 100% of the specialists agreed with this premise.

The study Gonçalves (2005, p. 55) carried out based on the Jones theory (1942, p. 14) on the attributes necessary to military leadership, revealed that the personal skills sought in the leaders of current organizations are related to strength of character, intellectual development and high communication potential. Therefore, the ability to present arguments and to persuade others of his opinions are competencies the strategic level military leaders must master to be able to influence the different audiences they interact with. The opinion poll revealed that 100% of the specialists believe that these competencies are pertinent to strategic leaders who are in charge of leading a complex process of transformation, where in several instances, they will be required to seek consensus in order to implement certain strategies.

To negotiate is the process whereby two parties reach an agreement about issues or lines of action about which they initially had different degrees of interest, objectives, values or beliefs (JACOBS, 2009 apud MESQUITA, 2012, p. 50). The study of negotiation has evidenced that core function of a negotiator is to build the credibility needed with the purpose of convincing the other party to support results that are favorable to him. Thus, to 99% of the specialists, negotiation skills are critical to strategic leaders who lead a process of transformation.

Vision is the expression of what an organization needs to be and is capable of becoming at a given point in the future. This is a challenging view of how the institution will be once strategies are implemented (WALL, 1995 apud BRAGA, 2012, p. 16). According to 98% of specialists, the vision that depicts the desired ultimate state of the organization is a competency inherent to strategic leaders and should be reinforced by their decisions and actions.

Yet, as important as creating the vision, strategic leaders must be able to disseminate it across the institution, and motivate each one of its members to implement and execute it in all of their actions (ALCARAZ, 2010). On this aspect, the strategic capability contributes to this objective, once to 99% of specialists, leaders who accrue these competencies will be able to consider and deal with many issues and complex problems that are inherent to an

organization in a subject to a process of transformation.

Innovation represents the pathways and the means whereby something already exists can be furthered and, with creativity, innovation enables the discovery of new frontiers in still unexplored territories (KINNI; KINNI, 2008, p. 226). The survey revealed that 98% of specialists believe that, by their very nature, strategic leaders are innovative. Organizations need innovation to survive and prosper, particularly when going through a process of transformation.

Trust, translated into self-assurance, was validated by 97% of specialists as a critical competency to strategic leadership. Strategic leaders trust themselves, since confidence is how they show their absolute faith in their beliefs. Self-confidence becomes particularly important in face of the disagreements and criticisms that are bound to appear when leaders blaze new trails, and, above all, the path to transformation (KINNI; KINNI, 2008, p. 209).

As to flexibility, the survey clearly evidenced that strategic leaders must avoid two pitfalls often found when planning, austerity and detailing, bearing in mind that the process of Force transformation was conceived based on a strategic planning that took into account future scenarios, which seldom accurately represent future reality. Validating the above mentioned result, the survey revealed that 98% of specialists view flexibility as a fundamental competency of Brazilian Army strategic leaders, being essential to carry on the process of transformation.

Initiative, according to 97% of the specialists, is a competency inherent to the profile of the strategic leaders of the Army, most of all in its process of transformation, because of the need to act before events take place and not in response to them. Initiative is a basic competency in the profile of the strategic leaders of an organization undergoing a process of transformation.

The study of emotional intelligence reveals the following critical skills<sup>8</sup>: self-knowledge; self-control, emotional balance or self-restraint; empathy; and the correct use of authority, patience and tact. Emotionally intelligent leaders are capable of acting in the group, with the purpose of inspiring and generating the courage necessary to overcome uncertainty and fear in an uncertain and diffuse scenario (BRASIL, 2011d, p. 5-9). Hence, to 98% of specialists, strategic leaders must pay attention to the emotional intelligence aspects, as this will allow them to establish strong leadership ties with their subordinates, which is indispensable in any organization engaged in a process of transformation.

<sup>8</sup> The definitions of these skills thought to be primordial are the following: self-knowledge is to know one's emotions; self-control, emotional balance or self-restraint is the ability to control these emotions; empathy is to recognize the emotion of others or groups; and the correct use of authority, patience and tact is related to the ability to manage relations with individuals or groups.



Effective leadership requires courage, 95% of specialists said. Strategic leaders need courage to manage personal and organizational risks, and to accept responsibility for failures, without losing faith in the cause. The courage of strategic leaders constitutes the basis of all successful actions (KINNI; KINNI, 2008, p. 194).

To 95% of specialists, strategic leaders must be endowed with transformational leadership skills, as they lead the changes in the institution to quickly adapt it in the strategic environment (MESQUITA, 2012, p. 15). Transformational leaders turn their eyes to the desired ultimate state of the organization, and decide how to deal with the internal and external changes, being, therefore, responsible, above all other, for meeting the needs of their subordinates in order to enabling them to achieve the objectives that will ultimately result in the organizational transformation.

To conclude the presentation of results it was evidence that Complex Systems Engineering currently appears as one of the most effective tools to manage the processes involved in the life cycle management of an organizational system, most of all in complex organizations such as the EB. Its effectiveness lies in the capability to direct, control and coordinate the life cycle stages of the system in a process of transformation. To 91% of specialists, the strategic leaders of the Army should have a profile that will allow them to supervise project governance practices<sup>9</sup>, which according to Bahia (2013, p. 30), are part of the management of portfolios, programs, projects and processes that will design Force transformation.

To introduce the discussion, it is important to stress that at the political level, in its preamble and in the following articles of Title I, the 1988 Constitution sets out the Brazil's aspirations as a Country and as a Nation, and establishes the national concept, the fundamental principles and objectives that will allow these aspirations to be fulfilled. As a result, article 142 provides on the constitutional mission of the Armed Forces to enable them to enforce these principles and contribute to the attainment or maintenance of such aspirations and objectives (BRASIL, 1988, p. 4, 5, 32; 2011e, p. 4).

On its turn, the EB has been assigned the mission of "contributing to guarantee the national sovereignty, the constitutional powers, law and order, safeguarding the national interests and cooperating with national development and social wellbeing" (BRASIL, 2013). In order to achieve this goal, the Institution must be prepared and permanently kept in a state of preparedness. Hence, Transformation is critical to enable the Force to effectively accomplish its mission and constitutional mandate.

<sup>9</sup> Project Governance "is the driving force that directs the fulfillment of organizational objectives and strategies, through portfolios, programs and projects. Project Governance deals with the need to establish structure, hierarchy, support, responsibilities and communication, so as to ensure full consistence of both the implementation and delivery" (BAHIA, 2013, p. 30).

Nonetheless, the transformation of a century old and traditional institution, such as the EB, which exists in a constantly evolving environment, represents a major challenge to its strategic leaders.

In face of these considerations, it is appropriate to think about the question presented below, which, despite being outside the ultimate purpose of the research, requires consideration, once this question appears as a relevant strategy to be implemented by leaders and will contribute to evidence some of the skills and competencies that will be discussed later on, and which they must have in their profile.

The question is: How will these leaders be able to accomplish this transformation with efficiency?

About 200 years ago, Paul said: "Do not be conformed to this world, but *be transformed* by the renewal of your mind that ye may *experience* what is that good and well pleasing and perfect will of God" (SHEDD, 1997, p. 1599, text highlighted by the author).

What we wish to take from and emphasize in this millennium old truth is that the basic principle of an actual transformation is the renewal of the mind. It is impossible to transform without renewing the mind, and in the case of the transformation of the Army, the minds of the internal and external public of the Force.

When the strategic leaders of the EB decided to implement the process of Force transformation, they soon realized that the above mentioned principle was one of the pillars of the success of the whole process, once transformation was defined by them as:

The process of developing and implementing new concepts and joint operational capabilities, modifying the preparation, the use, the minds, the equipment and the organization, in order to meet the operational demands of an environment in constant evolution (BRASIL, 2010, p. 46, text highlighted by author).

Outside the Force, the END detected that the lack of awareness of Brazilian society of defense matters represented one of the strategic vulnerabilities of the current defense structure of the Country (BRASIL, 2008a, p. 42). While resulting in unfavorable impacts on the implementation targets of the process of transformation of the Force, this fact has been evidencing to the strategic leadership of the Army the need to develop a profile capable of broad and energetic action to explain how the organization thinks to the political leaders, to the internal and external public and to society in general, in order establish consensus and negotiate the future, thus fostering the development of an environment favorable to the Institution.

Changing minds and breaking paradigms to be able to implement a process of organizational transformation is not an easy task and requires time and efforts from the strategic leadership. With this in mind,

which is the profile the strategic leadership of the EB needs to demonstrate to be able to carry forward such a complex process of transformation?

In this article, profile means the set of competencies, skills or professional qualifications and the moral image that strategic leaders must evidence in performing their duties, making decisions and taking action at the strategic level.

Therefore, being able of systemic reasoning, allowing a holistic view of the systems, the interrelations between the parts and process dynamics; knowing how to act in the group with emotional intelligence, in order to inspire and generate, most of all among those he leads, the courage needed to surpass uncertainty and fear, in the uncertain and diffuse scenario where the EB Organization exists; having strategic capability to know how to simultaneously deal with different issues and complex problems; knowing how to innovate efficiently in a timely manner; and knowing how to manage processes, as sponsor authorities<sup>10</sup>, employing Complex Systems Engineering tools, especially those related to Life Cycle Management and Strategic Planning of the Force of the Future, are all competences the strategic leaders of the EB must evidence in their profile in the context of the process of transformation of the Force.

Qualified commitment will require strategic leaders to be able to make a full commitment to the Projects of the Force, vehemently avoiding individualism and actions driven by personal interests. This qualification is related to:

- leader commitment to a strategic vision that depicts what the Institution needs and wishes to become by 2030;
- decentralization of the decision making processes, or empowerment, that contributes to speed up the decision making process, besides valuing and motivating subordinates, leading them to full commitment to the process, thus enabling the strategic leaders of the EB to dedicate time and efforts to the most relevant tasks related to the process of Force transformation;
- courage to decide, despite personal and organizational risks, assuming the responsibility for his actions, thus contributing to motivate, influence and engage his subordinates in the process of Force transformation;
- commitment to the specificities of transformational leadership, when the leader points to the desired final status of the organization, while at the same time meeting the needs of his subordinates, to allow them to achieve the objectives that ultimately will result in the transformation of the Force; and

<sup>10</sup> In the project language, this authority is called sponsor. In the EB, it is the sponsor authority that controls and allocates the most important human resources, materials and funds for the project. The sponsor fights for the project inside and outside the organization, looking for support and supplementing the necessary means. The sponsor exercises the strategic leadership of the whole process, motivating people (BRASIL, 2013b).

- negotiation that consists of the ability of the strategic leaders of the EB to keep a clear view of the objectives they intend to reach in the various stages of the transformation of the Force, aiming at obtaining the commitment of the other party in the search for a joint solution, despite the level of their different interests, values or beliefs.

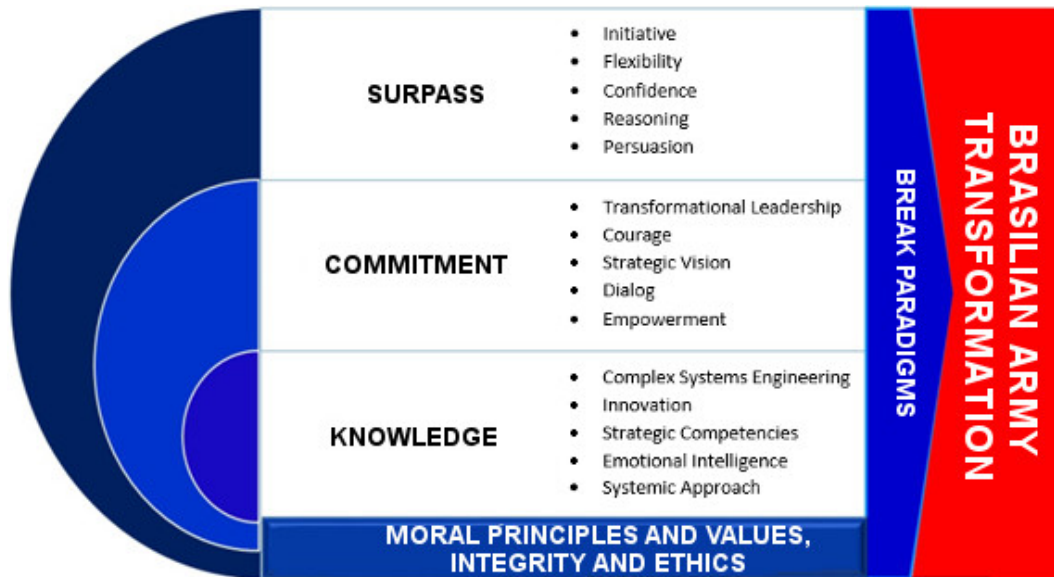
Qualification surpass will require the strategic leaders of the EB capacity to learn from the past, and not simply accept the present, and to challenge the future. This qualification is linked to:

- initiative, which is the ability of Force leaders to be proactive, always taking action before the events take place, and not simply responding to them, once the operational effectiveness of the Force, sought from the process of transformation of the Army, will only be reached by leaders qualified and encouraged to act with a level of initiative that will enable a leader to overcome all and every obstacle;
- flexibility to introduce the required changes, in order to overcome the threats to the smooth process of transformation of the Force, and to reach the goals established based on the scenario conceived for 2030;
- trust, based on self-confidence, confidence in the Army and in the completion of the projects designed for the process of transformation of the Force. It is trust that allows the strategic leaders to go beyond the criticism generated by discordant opinions resulting from the uncertainties that are characteristic of the strategic environment; and
- argumentation skills and ability to persuade, which are competencies leaders need to be able to influence other players with their opinions and views. Through consistency and logic reasoning and correct use of concrete data, as instruments of persuasion, the strategic leadership of the Army will be able to win over to their cause important players of the internal and external public, responsible for the management of all the resources needed to overcome the various barriers to the implementation of the process of transformation of the Force.

Thus, in the light of our research, it can be inferred that the image of the profile of the strategic leaders of the EB, in its process of transformation, can be summarized in three large areas of qualification integrated by a set of competencies, supported on principles and moral values, honesty of character and ethics, as competencies of the moral image of the strategic leaders, as shown in Figure 5.

From the above it can be said that knowledge, commitment and the will to overcome are qualifications interrelated and integrated to the previously described competencies, which are critical to enable the strategic leaders of the EB to implement the process of Force transformation until 2030, in an environment characterized by a scenario of uncertainty, unpredictability, volatility and ambiguity in all of its aspects.

Figure 5. Profile of EB strategic leaders in its process of transformation



Source: Author.

### 3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The process of transformation of the Army was conceived to restructure, reorganize and redirect the Force, in order to develop the competencies needed to effectively and efficiently fulfill its mission and its constitutional mandate, ensuring the required operational autonomy to safeguard the interests of Brazil and Brazilian society in a fully globalized world.

In a complex institution such as the EB, its strategic leaders, the generals, should have unique competencies in the different fields of action and be skilled to handle issues related to changes in the Organization in a prevailing volatile, uncertain, unpredictable and ambiguous environment such as the strategic one.

As the actual drivers of the process of transformation, these leaders are aware that a renewal of the mind of both the internal and external public is critical to transformation. Changing minds and breaking paradigms require perseverance and a profile with a whole set of personal and professional qualifications, skills and competencies that are inherent to high level leaders.

Thus, the data collected during our research and that were subsequently supplemented by the questionnaire prepared for the opinion poll that was answered by 96 specialists in strategic leadership subjects, pointed at the profile of the strategic leaders of the Brazilian Army in its process of transformation. This profile should include fifteen critical competencies, synthesized in three large areas of qualification, grounded on the moral principles and values, honesty of character and ethics, as competencies of the moral image of the leader.

The evidenced qualifications and competencies were, first of all, knowledge qualification expressed in the

capability to manage processes using Complex Systems Engineering tools; capability to innovate; capability to act with Emotional Intelligence in groups; strategic capability to manage different issues and complex problems, and capability to take a systemic approach to issues.

Second, by the commitment qualification that was characterized by the ability to exercise transformational leadership; courage strategic visions; negotiation skills; and decentralization, or empowerment.

And, last, by the qualification of the being able to surpass, translated into the competencies represented by initiative; flexibility; confidence, argumentation skills and ability to persuade.

Consequently, the results presented in this article constitute a legacy that can contribute to the improvement of the doctrine of Force leadership stated in the Military Leadership Manual (BRASIL, 2011a), and to optimize the professional skills of the current strategic leaders of the Institution. Such results also allow an assessment of the profile the strategic leaders of the future will be required to evidence, therefore, serving as inputs to the selection of such leaders by the High Command of the Army, most and foremost in the process of selection for promotion of officers to the rank of general.

The research has also evidenced that, in view of the specific features of the strategic environment, often the leaders acting at this level need to make decision without a clear view of the situation as a whole and of the associated risks. Thus, the competencies that were described appear as indispensable skills to enable the strategic leaders of the EB to make prudent decisions and, as a result, efficiently lead the process of transformation.

A subject that was not discussed in this article, but is nonetheless fundamental to the success of the

process of transformation and Force Project Life Cycle Management, is the influence of knowledge management<sup>11</sup> on the different stages and on the risk management of the whole process (DAVENPORT; PRUSAK 1998, p. 6; UNITED STATES, 2008; EURE, 2009 apud LOPES, 2013a; LOPES, 2013b). Therefore, an assessment of the role of strategic leaders in the above mentioned management, in the course of the implementation of the process of transformation, and its impacts on the Force Project is now proposed.

Last, the strategic leaders of the EB are in charge of taking the Force to the final state sought by 2030, and to this end, they must act on the organizational culture; allocate all and every kind of resources; set in place policies and strategies aiming at maximizing strengths and optimize weaknesses; achieve consensus inside and outside the Organization; in sum, work with perseverance, in order to maximize the opportunities, neutralize threats and convince individuals in key positions of what they wish to achieve for the Institution, both in the present and in the future. The strategic leaders of the EB are the actual drivers of the process of transformation of the Force, without effective action from each one of them transformation is unfeasible.

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<sup>11</sup> According to Davenport and Prusak (1998, p.6), knowledge management consists of a set of processes that guide the creation, dissemination and use of knowledge towards full achievement of the objectives of the organization. To the US Army, knowledge management is subject that promote an integrated approach in order to identify, create, evaluate, share and retrieve tacit and explicit knowledge assets of an organization in order to achieve mission objectives (ESTADOS UNIDOS DA AMÉRICA, 2008; LOPES, 2013a). Thus, knowledge management is nothing more than the connection between those who know and those who need to know (what – why – who – how), using knowledge transfer from one to many individuals across the whole organization (EURE, 2009).

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