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SPECIAL

Military Ethics – Questions and Answers

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CORE ISSUES OF EUROPEAN MILITARY ETHICS

SPECIAL: MILITARY ETHICS – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A questionnaire for international experts and teachers of military ethics

Further answers to the questionnaire can be found at www.ethicsandarmedforces.com.

EDITORIAL

In October 2023, servicemen and women from 19 nations participated in the first military exercise for the planned EU Rapid Deployment Force in Rota, Spain. The sheer practical dimensions of such multinational operations are likely to pose great challenges for the militaries involved.

Regardless of these aspects or the debate about a common European Army, this edition aims to explore the question of whether there is such a thing as European military ethics. It is a question which the International Society for Military Ethics in Europe (EuroISME) has been considering for years. To answer it satisfactorily would probably require several editions of *Ethics and Armed Forces*.

The introductory article by Lonneke Peperkamp, David Evered, Kevin van Loon and Deane-Peter Baker shows just how extensive the project would be. Proceeding from a description of military ethics principles and problems, they compare the main features of ethical education in the Dutch and Australian armed forces.

The other articles are focused more on illustrative questions intended to prompt further consideration of possible basic principles of European military ethics on various different levels. The baseline of this issue of *Ethics and Armed Forces* was a broad understanding of military ethics, encompassing questions of the legitimacy of military force as well as standards of conduct for the military personnel. It was left to the authors to choose whether to make reference to the Ukraine war, which demonstrates on a daily basis that a clear value orientation is essential in military decision-making and action. Markus Thurau, for example, firmly rejects the notion that just peace has become defunct as a guiding principle in the face of this war. Arseniy Kumankov discusses the significance of the revisionist theory of just war for today's "new wars" – among which he includes the one between Russia and Ukraine. Dragan Stanar highlights the essential role of properly conceived ethical education for members of professional armed forces, and the civil-military relations. In view of often unquestioned claims about the transformation of the military job description, Patrick

Hofstetter argues that military ethics should be evidence-based. Christopher Ankersen explains why, in his view, the "warrior" is not a suitable role model for members of modern professional armed forces. Deanna Messervey is interviewed on the question of how ethical education can take proper account of findings in neuroscience and social psychology, and prevent moral and legal transgressions. This leads us back to the claim that "although military ethics is an academic field of research, there is a strong focus on the education of military personnel" (Lonneke Peperkamp et al.). It should promote legally compliant and values-based conduct om every level, also to protect our own military personnel.

In light of these contributions from various disciplines and nations, we feel sure that this edition will inspire further reflection and discussion within and outside of Europe. The same applies to the current Special: Our editorial team asked experts who are involved in ethical education in the armed forces in various countries to provide concise answers to a questionnaire on military ethics. Of course this should not be thought of as a representative survey of "national viewpoints", but rather as an opportunity to compare and contrast the individual approaches with one's own understanding of military ethics.

A heartfelt thank you is owed to all those who have contributed to this edition conceptually, linguistically, and creatively. In particular, we would like to thank Colonel (ret.) Manfred Rosenberger, member of the EuroISME Board of Directors, who gave us his active support throughout the production process.

Rüdiger Frank
Copy Editor

MILITARY ETHICS AND MILITARY ETHICS EDUCATION
IN SEARCH OF A "EUROPEAN APPROACH"

Authors: **Lonneke Peperkamp, Kevin van Loon, Deane-Peter Baker, David Evered**

Introduction

Is there a distinctive European understanding of military ethics? This issue of "Ethics and Armed Forces" approaches the question by looking at various fundamental topics, from Just War and Just Peace to soldierly professionalism and role models. It is also the central question of the upcoming annual EuroISME conference in 2024.[1] Rather than answering the question, this short introductory paper provides an overview which can serve as groundwork for answering it, and a preliminary comparison between the Netherlands and Australia.

In general, military ethics sets a normative standard specifically for people working within armed forces, who are authorized to use violence on behalf of the state. It is, according to George Lucas, "about the moral foundations of the profession of arms, and the core values and guiding principles of the men and women who have served, or who are now serving in that profession"[2]. Ted van Baarda and Désirée Verweij define it as, "An ethic which relates to the nature, content, validity and effect of morals in a military context. As such, military ethics refers to both the conceptual creation of scientific theory, as well as applied ethics including casuistry."[3] This definition reflects that, although military ethics is an academic field of research, there is a strong focus on the education of military personnel.

When comparing views on military ethics, there will be strong similarities when it comes to those core values and guiding principles. At the same time, however, and as result of variations in culture, structure and politics of the state, organization of the armed forces, and historical experiences, there will undoubtedly be differences as well. More specifically, military ethics education can differ with regard to its perceived function or purpose, theoretical underpinnings, topics, and didactic methods. Bringing to light a distinctive European understanding requires an analysis of these aspects within European countries, comparing

Abstract

In order to distinguish a European approach to military ethics, it is helpful to refer to common definitions of the latter in the first place. Military ethics is often conceived as an academic field of research and theory building as well as an applied ethics with a strong focus on the education of military personnel. In order to lay out a groundwork for an analysis, this paper identifies four dimensions of military ethics: purpose, theoretical underpinnings, content, and didactic methods. Each of them is discussed in more detail then, with its different approaches, theories, subjects and methods. The distinctiveness of a national or regional understanding can be brought to light by comparing the these four dimensions. In the last section, therefore, this paper provides a preliminary analysis of differences and similarities between Dutch and Australian views. This permits not only to detect similarities between the two nations, e.g. a strong focus on virtue ethics and case studies, but also inconsistencies in the different national curricula themselves. However, looking for a distinctive European military ethics would mainly require empirical research, arguably also in related fields.

those in order to see whether there *is* such a common understanding, and if so, comparing that view with other countries and regions, for example American, Australian, Asian, African, and Middle Eastern views. For all these comparisons, it would be helpful to distinguish the different aspects of military ethics education – the purpose, theoretical underpinnings, content, and didactic methods. This paper provides an overview of those aspects, shows how they can be interpreted, and then uses them to briefly compare Dutch and Australian views.

Purpose

What is seen as the core function or purpose of military ethics education will influence the other aspects distinguished here. The core function of military ethics is "to assist those professions to think through the moral challenges and dilemmas inherent in their professional activity and, by helping members of the profession better understand the ethical demands upon them, to enable and motivate them to act appropriately in the discharge of their professional obligations"[4]. At a minimum, this ought to reduce the occurrence of war crimes and other grave violations of humanitarian law. That includes enabling soldiers to decline an order when that requires them to violate humanitarian law (or do something ethically inappropriate[5]). There will be plenty of grey area situations as well, where service members are confronted with conflicting obligations or values, or situations in which the rules are vague or even contradictory.[6] To cope with these situations, military ethics education aims to enhance the necessary skills to identify the moral dimension of problems, consider possible options, validate a choice, and to act. In that way it prepares service members to handle complex ethical dilemmas they can encounter on operations.

While the military forces of many countries will agree on this general purpose, there are likely to be differences that have to do with the related scope of military ethics education. Helpful here is the distinction made by Jessica Wolfendale between two contrasting purposes that determine this scope: is military ethics education perceived as functional or aspirational?[7] The functional view sees the primary purpose as ensuring that military personnel behave correctly, therefore changing character is redundant if individuals behave appropriately. Those who are educated are seen primarily in their professional role, and military ethics educations contributes to morally responsible professionals. The aspirational view focuses on improving ethical competence or character in general. In this paradigm, military ethics education has a wider scope; it is more personal and character development is critical. There can be different views, therefore, on whether military ethics education and training should "produce military personnel who are virtuous people as well as effective

Although military ethics is an academic field of research, there is a strong focus on the education of military personnel

fighters"[8]. For example, Asa Kasher is critical with regards to this aspirational view, arguing that "a military force of a democracy that includes people who are conscripts and people who are reserve officers and NCOs should […] avoid any attempt to change their character in a deep and broad way […]"[9]

Theoretical underpinnings

Military ethics is predominantly a philosophical field, but interdisciplinary as it overlaps and relates to fields such as humanitarian law, political and moral philosophy, leadership theory, and (moral) psychology. It is likely that, as the function and focus between regions and countries will vary, so too will the theoretical underpinnings of military ethics education. The 2008 edited volume *Ethics Education in the Military*[10] compared across ten democratic states: Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Israel, Japan, Norway, and the United States. A clear outcome of this study is the finding that, "The

philosophical principles behind these [national] programmes are … often very different from one nation to another, producing significant variation in the methods used to tackle the common problem."[11]

As a theoretical starting point, three familiar ethical theories are usually central in military ethics education. Consequentialism determines that the moral value of an action is contingent on its outcomes. In essence, moral decision-making entails a cost-benefit analy-

Singular virtues, such as respect, courage, or loyalty can be interpreted in a narrow or broader way

sis where positive consequences are weighed against negative consequences. Deontology is rule-based, and rather focuses on intentions and the intrinsic nature of actions. Some actions are inherently wrong, irrespective of their positive outcomes. Immanuel Kant's 'categorical imperative' is an example of deontology, as it entails the strict obligation to treat other human beings (and oneself) as ends in themselves rather than means to an end. Lastly, virtue ethics focuses on the individual that performs the action. Virtues – such as moderation, wisdom, and justice – are seen as essential for leading a morally righteous life. Rather than prescribing specific rules, virtue ethics assumes moral character can be built by a cultivation of these virtues, and that virtuous people will do the right thing. Differences in military ethics education can relate to a specific theoretical focus, as each of these theories offers distinct criteria to determine whether conduct is considered morally right or wrong: consequentialism evaluates actions based on their outcomes, deontological eth-

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ics emphasizes the intrinsic nature of actions and the importance of intentions, and virtue ethics centers on personal character development.

Military ethics education will rely heavily on the philosophical theories that focus specifically on the military profession.[12] The criteria central in the ethical theories above are reflected in applied theory on war and warfare: just war theory and military virtue ethics. Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars* is likely to be part of the curriculum at many military academies.[13] While *jus ad bellum* is primarily relevant to statesmen and political leaders, it is assumed that officers nonetheless require an understanding of the ethical principles underlying their task, the reasons for deployment, and the arguments used in the public debate. *Jus in bello* specifically addresses military personnel and relates to the ethics of the profession of arms. It determines and justifies the principle of distinction, which means that non-combatants are immune and cannot be intentionally targeted, but combatants are equally liable to be killed, and equally permitted to kill their adversaries (deontology). Attacks on combatants and military targets must furthermore be proportionate; collateral damage cannot be excessive and must be outweighed by the expected military advantage (consequentialism).[14] This central idea is reflected in international humanitarian law, which determines that its norms apply to all those concerned and imposes the same obligations on them.

Military virtue ethics is also widely taught at military academies as the theoretical basis for building character, including cultivating the virtues that help military professionals perform well.[15] Military virtues are largely interwoven and are weighed up in complex ethical environments.[16] Singular virtues, such as respect, courage, or loyalty can be interpreted in a narrow or broader way: courage can be defined as only physical and/or moral courage, loyalty can be defined as both loyalty to a principle or loyalty to a person, group, or nation, and as for respect, this can be seen as respect for colleagues or is extended to 'outsiders'.[17] Virtues are often reflected in

the 'values' formally promulgated by military forces, prescribing how an individual *ought to be*. For example, the Netherlands Armed Forces value responsibility, comradery, trust, and safety, codified in a code of conduct (although common virtues within Western democratic armed forces).[18] Also comparable with Armed Forces abroad, within the different Dutch branches units adhere to their specific values like courage, loyalty and discipline. Similarly, the Australian Defence Force values are service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence – all of which are either virtues or are virtue-proximate.

While just war theory and military virtues are fairly distinct academic fields, sometimes they are combined. Allen Buchanan, for example, assumes that the goal of just war theory is not merely to offer a 'checklist' of criteria, but must also include "directly action-guiding rules", guidance for the evaluation of institutional processes, criteria for the evaluation of the laws of war, the decisions of leaders, and social practices, plus an account of the virtues of leaders.[19] A.J. Coates also emphasises that the key determinants of justice in war are the moral dispositions of combatants.[20] Even if someone knows the correct action to take, that does not necessarily mean that this person will act accordingly. Therefore, just war theory is not only about rules and principles, but also virtues and vices. Since virtues are expressions of combatants' moral character, they are vital for incentivizing moral conduct.

Content

What sort of topics are discussed within the education and training of armed forces? Military ethics can cover a wide range of themes and topics. An important distinction can be made between peacetime and deployment related themes. Military ethics related to deployment and (being confronted with) the use of force centers around the moral standard that governs warfare, i.e. the *jus in bello*. Topics within this theme are often strongly related with international humanitarian law, the mission's mandate and the rules of engagement. Specific issues might include the principle of

distinction, the justification for civilian casualties, guerilla warfare, warrior codes, cultural awareness, perceptions of 'the other' and the risk of dehumanization, and more recently also the role of technology and meaningful human control, soldier enhancement and autonomous systems.[21] Moral disengagement is another common theme within mission-oriented ethics education. A mechanism which pushes military units on to a slippery slope of misconduct, due to the absence of checks and balances and moral self-justification (amongst others).[22] Military ethics in peacetime significantly overlaps with organizational ethics, but there are issues more uniquely connected to the military organization as well. In education and training, armed forces might focus on topics such as integrity, corruption, whistle-blowing, power relations, social safety, inclusion, sexual harassment, leadership, and moral case deliberation. More specific issues can be military codes of conduct, command responsibility, off-duty conduct, hazing and military traditions, and military leadership.

In general, all these topics fall within the ethics of the military profession. There are particular professions within the military that pose distinct challenges, such as those related to the tasks of military medical personnel, border patrol officers, or intelligence officers. Additionally, the military profession comes with an important political dimension, as the armed forces are an 'instrument of the state'. That means that the *jus ad bellum* issues are relevant, as are civil-military relations, the political goals of certain missions, foreign affairs, and topics related to international affairs. Depending on national or regional experiences, cultures and prioritizing, armed forces are likely to differ with regard to the topics that receive most attention in the curriculum.

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Didactic approach

Military ethics can be taught actively or passively and in different ways, e.g. through lectures, (interactive) classroom teaching, (personal) case studies and discussions, war gaming, self- and peer reflection. There can be divergent views as to whether military ethics education should be predominantly *theoretical* – focused on ethical concepts and principles – or *practical,* focusing on situations soldiers experience in the military profession (be it combat or peacetime duties and activities). The aim of theoretical instruction is to make soldiers aware of the justification of

There can be divergent views as to whether military ethics education should be predominantly theoretical – focused on ethical concepts and principles – or practical, focusing on situations soldiers experience in the military profession

rules and the underlying values. Thus, soldiers are equipped with a moral understanding that shapes their responses to ethically challenging real-life situations. Conversely, practical training has a similar goal, however, it aims to realize these by building the soldier's competence in ethical decision making (EDM) via experiential learning. Such training will use historical examples, casuistry, and real-life experiences, so to allow service members to strengthen their moral competence. This will involve (elaborate) assessments of ethical dilemmas and cases. Ethical theory is used in a more limited way, to recognize the ethical issues at stake, and the personal value system

of soldiers is likely to be included in these assessments as well.[23]

A less familiar debate concerns the role and effectiveness of passive education. Robinson (2007) refers to a process of 'osmosis', in which the military institution by nature, culture and instructing personnel helps instilling the values of a military professional. This is a form of education which is rarely involved in designing ethics education as an addition to theoretical and practical education.

The Netherlands and Australia

The above overview shows in what ways national and regional views on military ethics might differ. That distinctiveness can be brought to light by comparing the perceived purpose, theoretical underpinnings, content, and didactic methods. To see how such comparisons can work, this section provides a preliminary analysis of differences and similarities between Dutch and Australian views.

The Charter of the Australian Defence Force Academy includes the requirement to provide cadets with military education and training for the purpose of developing their professional abilities and the qualities of character and leadership that are appropriate to officers in the ADF.[24] This dual focus on understanding key ideas in military ethics, and on the development of character, suggests that the ADF sees military ethics education as both functional and aspirational, or (perhaps more likely) that there is no clarity of purpose for military ethics education across the ADF. A similar combination of functional and aspirational goals is found in the Dutch curriculum. Distinctions can be made between initial-, career-, and specific education within the Netherlands Defense Academy (NLDA). An analysis of documents and interviews with instructors show that there are often mixed goals for most courses, i.e. with functional and aspirational elements.[25]

In terms of theoretical underpinnings and content, a 2021 doctrinal document states that next to the just war tradition, three ethical theories ground the ADF's approach:

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natural law theory, deontology and virtue ethics. Interestingly, consequentialism is not included in this list. For the Dutch military ethics education, various theories are used depending on the type of course. In general, however, there is an emphasis on (military) virtue ethics. The bachelor courses that are part of the initial education (long track officer program) combine different theories. The common Military Leadership and Ethics course largely deals with leadership theories, but discusses the three ethical theories in the session on moral leadership, and includes sessions on military virtues and just war theory. Elective courses offer a more in-depth study of, for example, the just war tradition and the psycho-social dynamics of armed forces (combining ethics, moral psychology, and anthropology). The train-the-trainer course strengthening moral competence is an example of specific education. The starting point is the assumption that effectively dealing with moral dilemmas requires "that one is aware of one's personal moral values and the values which are important to the military organization. This can be stimulated through fundamental moral education which focuses on character building."[26] This course is built on virtue ethics.

In both countries, the educational approach is fairly similar, with a large emphasis on case studies. The Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) is the consumer of the most extensive package of ethics education in the ADF, in the form of the semester-long 'Introduction to Military Ethics' course offered there by UNSW Canberra. Central to this course has long been the textbook written for the purpose by Stephen Coleman, and its approach is highlighted in the title: *Military Ethics: An Introduction with Case Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Martin Cook (2004), when reviewing ethics as part of Australian Joint Professional Military Education (JPME), claimed there were two main subjects: ethical issues in proper and legitimate use of force for military, and broader ethical issues concerning topics such as military professionalism and civil-military relationships.[27] The bachelor courses at the NLDA consist of classroom instruction (lectures) combined with interactive tutorials and student presentations. Historical case studies are used to discuss the application of theories. The specific topics discussed vary per course. E.g. the psycho-social dynamics of armed forces includes topics such as the ethics of technology, hazing, and moral injury. In the career- and specific education courses there is more emphasis on sharing and reflecting on (personal) cases and less on transferring academic knowledge. The train-the-trainer course is a notable example, as it combines a Socratic attitude with a process of 'lived learning'. Whiting this training, there is specific attention for topics such as power relations (Foucault), moral injury, just culture and international humanitarian law.

There is a lot of similarity with regard to other more specific topics that are part of the Dutch and Australian curricula, e.g. the criteria of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*, and ethical questions related to emerging technologies, such as cyberwarfare, remote warfare, and autonomous weapon systems. Interestingly, in both the Netherlands and Australia inconsistencies in the curriculum are reported. Kevin van Loon, one of the authors of this paper, emphasized in his research the need to work on a "well-thought-out continuous ethics curriculum" in order to strengthen coherence and consistency.[28] And similarly, Jamie Cullens of the Australian Defence Force's Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics (CDLE) claimed in 2008 that "the current approach to the delivery of military ethics programmes could be summed up as containing some good ideas and appropriate intent but lacking in cohesion and focus"[29].

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David Evered has served in the Australian Regular Army and Army Reserve for 47 years. After serving in the Regular Army, he joined the Australian Public Service and worked in the Department of Defence and the Department of Home Affairs. In his final posting he served as an oral historian with the Army History Unit, where he saw active service in the Solomon Islands. David holds a DBA and MBA from the University of Southern Queensland and is undertaking a PhD at UNSW Canberra.

Concluding thoughts

There will be many similarities but also differences in the way armed forces shape their military ethics education. These differences are likely to be related to its perceived function and scope, the theoretical underpinnings, specific content, and the way the education and training is organized. Whether or not there is a distinctly European approach to military ethics is, at foundation, an empirical question. Do European military forces reflect common trends in how they view the role of military ethics education? Is the emphasis functional or aspirational, theoretical or practical? A short comparison between the Netherlands and Australia shows large similarities but also points to the internal variations; different educational approaches depend on the level of the course and the target group, with each their own emphasis on a certain focus, topics and theoretical grounding. These internal variations raise the risk of inconsistencies in the complete curriculum. Analyzing the aspects of military ethics here discussed – for the purpose of comparisons or independently conducted – might raise awareness and help armed forces to strengthen their curriculum. A point of discussion is whether the analysis and comparison of ethics educational programmes alone is sufficient to fully answer the question regarding a distinct European understanding of military ethics. Additional research regarding the effectiveness of ethics education and the actual behavior of the various servicemen within barracks and during combat would offer a valuable validation.

1 See: https://www.euroisme.eu/index.php/en/events/annual-conference (all internet sources accessed December 4, 2023).

2 Lucas, G. (2015): Routledge Handbook of Military Ethics. London and New York.

3 Van Baarda, T.A., and Verweij, D.E.M. (2006): Military Ethics. The Dutch Approach – A Practical Guide. Leiden.

4 Cook, M.L. and Syse, H. (2010): What Should We Mean by 'Military Ethics'? In: Journal of Military Ethics 9 (2), pp. 119-122, p. 119 f.

5 Coleman, S. (2013): Military Ethics. An Introduction with Case Studies. Oxford.

6 Van Baarda, T.A., and Verweij, D.E.M. (2006), see endnote 3.

7 Wolfendale, J. (2008): What is the point of teaching ethics in the military? In: Robinson, Paul, de Lee, Nigel and Carrick, Don (eds.): Ethics Education in the Military. Aldershot/Burlington, pp. 161-174.

8 Ibid., p. 162.

9 Kasher, Asa (2008): Teaching and Training Military Ethics: An Israeli Experience. In: Robinson, Paul, de Lee, Nigel and Carrick, Don (eds.), see endnote 7, pp. 138-146., pp 139 f.

10 Robinson, Paul, de Lee, Nigel and Carrick, Don (eds.), see endnote 7.

11 Robinson, Paul, de Lee, Nigel and Carrick, Don (eds.), see endnote 7, p. 1.

12 This section is based on previous work: Peperkamp, L. and Braun, C.N. (2022): Contemporary Just War Theory and Military Education. In: Kramer, E. and Molendijk, T. (eds.): Confrontations with Violence in Extreme Conditions. New York, pp. 101-117. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-16119-3_8.

13 Walzer, M. (1977): Just and Unjust Wars. A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations. New York.

14 Of course these principles are debated. For the purpose of this paper, we only highlight the core principles as set out by 'conventional' just war theory. For contrasting views and different ethical foundations, see e.g. Benbaji, Y. and Statman, D. (2021): War by Agreement: A Contractarian Ethics of War. Oxford; Frowe, H. (2014): Defensive Killing. Oxford; McMahan, J. (2006): The Ethics of Killing in War. In: Philosophia, 34(1), pp. 23-41; Rodin, D. (2003): War and Self-Defense. Oxford; Shaw, W.H. (2016): Utilitarianism and the Ethics of War. London. For comparisons of those views see e.g. Peperkamp, L. (2019): De Oorlog in de Theorie van de Rechtvaardige Oorlog. In: Algemeen Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Wijsbegeerte, 111(1), pp. 63-94; Lazar, S. (2018): Method in the Morality of War. In: Frowe, H. and Lazar, S. (eds.): The Oxford Handbook of Ethics of War. New York, pp. 21-40.

15 An excellent recent overview is: Skerker, M., Whetham, D. and Carrick, D. (eds.) (2019): Military Virtues. Havant. And for a critical view of the value of military virtue ethics see: Miller, J.J. (2004): Squaring the Circle: Teaching Philosophical Ethics in the Military. In: Journal of Military Ethics 3(3), pp. 199-215.

16 De Vries, P.H. (2015): Column Praktisch Inzicht. https://militairespectator.nl/artikelen/praktisch-inzicht.

17 Olsthoorn, P. (2013): Virtue Ethics in the Military. In: van Hooft, S. et al. (eds.) (2014): The Handbook of Virtue Ethics. Abingdon/New York, pp. 365-374.

18 https://www.defensie.nl/downloads/publicaties/2018/12/04/gedragscode-defensie.

19 Buchanan, A. (2018): Institutionalizing the Just War. Oxford.

20 Coates, A.J. (2016): The Ethics of War. Second Edition. Manchester, pp. 1-19.

21 Van Loon, K.J.C.M. (2023): Militair Ethiekonderwijs voor Officieren. In: Militaire Spectator 192 (5), pp. 248-260. https://militairespectator.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/uitgaven/inhoudsopgaven/militaire_spectator_5_2023_van_loon.pdf.

22 Van Baarle, Eva and Blom-Terhell, Marjon (2022): 'The Roof, the Roof, the Roof is on Fire'. Moral Standards and Moral Disengagement in Military Organisations. In Verweij, Désirée, Olsthoorn, Peter and van Baarle, Eva (eds.): Ethics and Military Practice. Leiden, pp. 24-39.

23 For an overview of teaching methods see Van Loon, K. (2020): Military ethics education for Royal Netherlands Army (candidate) officers: a continuous curriculum? pp. 24-25. https://www.euroisme.eu/images/Documents/Prize2021/VanLoon-Thesis_2021.pdf.

24 Australian Defence Force Academy (2004): Handbook. Canberra.

25 Van Loon, K.J.C.M. (2020), see endnote 21.

26 Wortel, E. and Bosch, J. (2011): Strengthening Moral Competence: A 'Train the Trainer' Course on Military Ethics. In: Journal of Military Ethics 10 (1). https://doi.org/10.1080/15027570.2011.562372.

27 Cook, M. (2004): Perspectives on Ethics Education in Australian Joint Professional Military Education. Leadership Papers. Centre for Defence Command Leadership and Management Studies.

28 Van Loon, Kevin (2020), see endnote 18: "All interviewees confirm that most coordination is bilateral and incidental and some even emphasise the need for an overarching structure with central aims and direction. They perceive courses and education as bottom-up initiatives within fairly isolated programmes."

29 Cullens, J. (2008): What ought one to do? Perspectives on military ethics education in the Australian Defence Force. In: Robinson, Paul, de Lee, Nigel and Carrick, Don (eds.) (2008), see endnote 7, p. 88.

JUST PEACE DESPITE WAR?
IN DEFENSE OF A CRITICIZED CONCEPT

Author: Markus Thurau

From the outset, the idea of European integration has been linked to the desire for peace and reconciliation. It is one of the essential themes and guiding principles of Europe,[1] and one of the most important lessons from its history.[2] From the Treaty of Rome (1957) to the Lisbon Treaty (2009), the aim of the European Union (EU) has been to promote peace, European values and the well-being of the European peoples. The focus on peace – which led to the EU being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 – also applies to the armed forces of its member states. For the EU sees itself as a global actor for peace within the framework of its Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and value-based foreign policy. Peace can therefore be regarded as a core European value, alongside justice.[3]

Thus, anyone seeking a frame of reference for the military professional ethics of European armed forces cannot get away from the fact that these forces are to be legitimized in terms of peace ethics. In the Christian churches, the concept of just peace has become established as an ethical approach that takes account not only of the Christian commandment of peace, but also of the demand that policymaking and the military should be oriented toward peace. However, the concept of just peace – which in essence is aimed at preventing violence – faces major challenges. At present, commentators are not afraid to use terms such as "world in turmoil" (Herfried Münkler) or "world disorder" (Carlo Masala) to describe the global situation resulting from current conflicts and wars, which they deem an attestation to the failure of the West's values-based foreign and security policy. This form of self-criticism can also be observed in the discussion of peace ethics in church circles. With the Russian war of aggression demonstrating a failure of measures to prevent violence, a growing number of voices have been heard saying that the concept of just peace has failed and that peace ethics should return to the doctrine of just war – or at least pay more attention to its core demands. The following are just a few such voices from within the Roman Catholic Church in Germany: Manfred Spieker called for a move

Abstract

In a Europe whose core values include peace and justice, the concept of just peace established in the churches forms the basis for the necessary legitimization of the armed forces in terms of peace ethics. Yet with the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, church voices are increasingly calling for a revival of the doctrine of just war. However, the two world wars had already clearly shown that the doctrine of just war had degenerated into a component of a nationalistic legitimization of war and could no longer provide adequate answers to the advancing technologization and totalization of modern warfare. Thus, after 1945, the churches came to realize that it had to be replaced by a doctrine of just peace. Consequently, this doctrine focuses primarily on the prevention of violence, civil conflict resolution and the creation of just, peace-promoting conditions and structures; it thus encompasses far more than a legitimizing criteriology, but without completely excluding military force as a last resort. In addition, a return to the doctrine of just war is not compatible with the papal magisterium under Francis. In any case, he is following in the tradition of his predecessors by advocating an international peace order as a legal order. His call for the outlawing of war, his clear rejection of just war and his consistent adoption of the victims' perspective can quite possibly be interpreted as a commitment to just peace and not (as is often assumed) as a solely pacifist stance. Just peace, for whose connectivity to the political discourse there is sufficient evidence, can therefore by no means be denied its suitability as a model for the situation after the so-called "Zeitenwende" (watershed moment). With all of the necessary war readiness ("Kriegstüchtigkeit"), its inherent change of perspective – i.e. the orientation towards peace (which originally was also inscribed in the doctrine of just war) – points to the overriding purpose of armed forces.

away from just peace in response to the Ukraine war, arguing that the concept "obscures" the Church's doctrine of just war, and makes just defense impossible.[4] Peter Schallenberg thinks that the war in Ukraine has revived the doctrine of just war, that just war and just peace are an expression of a Christian doctrine of the two swords, and that the latter cannot exist without the former.[5] Franz-Josef Bormann also believes that we need criteria for examining the legitimacy of the use of military force, which can be found in particular in the doctrine of just war, and thus holds that it has not been possible to answer the question of the legitimacy of military force solely on the basis of a doctrine of just peace.[6]

The collapse of the doctrine of just war

The criticism of just peace is understandable in view of the Russian aggression, and correlates to a certain extent with the *Zeitenwende* (watershed moment) that has taken place in politics. Nevertheless, there are also objections to the renaissance of the just war concept, which will be discussed below. Firstly, there is a historical and conceptual objection: In *Friedensethik für eine globalisierte Welt* ["Peace Ethics for a Globalized World"], published in 2018, Eberhard Schockenhoff argues in a detailed and convincing manner that at the beginning of the 20th century, i.e. before and during the First World War, the doctrine of just war had collapsed internally. It "degenerated into a theoretical legitimization of almost all wars, including total war of annihilation, both on the theoretical level and through the practical use which national propaganda and religious enthusiasm for war made of it". During the First World War, Schockenhoff continues, "theologians and bishops, but also liberal philosophers, still held onto the conviction that a just and necessary war was being waged at a time when the military conflict, in the phase of the war of attrition, had long since assumed the form of anonymized and mechanized mass killing".[7]

In recent years, historical research on the First World War and perceptions of it in the Christian churches has highlighted a morality of war stemming from the traditional body of Christian thought and expressed in the doctrine of just war. This research has described how this morality of war failed under conditions of modern warfare and how it didn't succeed in humanizing warfare and containing

Just war became part of a nationalistic legitimization of war that firmly rejected any orientation toward the common good that went beyond one's own nation

military force. Instead, just war became part of a nationalistic legitimization of war that firmly rejected any orientation toward the common good that went beyond one's own nation. In the second year of the war, the philosopher Max Scheler (1874-1928) wrote that just war would result in the moral purification of the enemy. Through their defeat, they would come to realize that their own "national and moral existence" was flawed and defective. He even thought that such a war would have a pacifying effect: "In a just war, the hurtful sword of the superior enemy is necessarily always also perceived as a healing sword of judgment."[8] However, for him it was beyond doubt that only the Germans were fighting a just war, and that the expected healing would be brought about only by their victory. The nationalization of the morality of just war prevented purification, peace and reconciliation from taking hold among the defeated.[9]

Antonia Leugers and Andreas Holzem have persuasively shown that while Christian theologians had intended that the doctrine of just war would contain hatred and violence, this did not work in Germany after the lost war. The First World War remained "a field of justice and honor for the majority of those who had taken part in it and who now interpreted it, while peace remained a non-place of injustice and ignominy".[10] In the religious interpretation, the link between justice and war was dependent on victory, which meant that defeat in war was seen as an injustice. No alternative approach to the trauma of the lost war was found. The

churches in particular, "as major religious systems, had no idea of peace that could have linked an acceptance and acknowledgement of defeat with an idea of future and reconciliation".[11] The doctrine of just war failed here, and adherence to it was part of the problem.

The Second World War further exacerbated the problem as the just war criteria had even less effect. The principle of proportionality and the balancing of conflicting interests,

The question of when and how war could be morally permissible no longer seemed to provide adequate answers to the possibilities of military force

the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, and other achievements of *ius in bello* were not only disregarded in the National Socialist policy of extermination, but were also rendered obsolete by the now more advanced degree of technologization and totalization of modern warfare. The lasting discrediting of just war due to the devastating impacts of military violence forced the churches in particular to rethink war as such. It is worth recalling the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which made it unmistakably clear as early as 1948 that the doctrine of just war had failed. The unbridled violence of modern war had reduced the link between war and justification to absurdity, with the result that this doctrine could no longer claim validity. The delegates made a theological commitment to a principle that had been formulated three years earlier, in the Charter of the United Nations, as a general prohibition of violence under international law. Criticism of the right to wage war on the one hand, and moral condemnation of war on the other – resulting from the experience of two world wars, the use of weapons of mass destruction and the high number of civilian casualties – meant that both policymakers and the churches were required to find a new form of responsibility for peace. The question of when and how war could be morally permissible no longer seemed to provide adequate answers

to the possibilities of military force.

Well-known examples of this reorientation of Christian peace ethics on the Catholic side are the encyclical *Pacem in terris* of Pope John XXIII from 1963, or the statements on peace ethics made by the Second Vatican Council two years later. This reorientation was succinctly expressed in the 1980s by the "Ecumenical Assembly for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in the GDR": "With the necessary overcoming of the institution of war, the doctrine of just war, through which the churches hoped to humanize war, also comes to an end. Therefore, a doctrine of just peace must be developed from now on (…)"[12] At the beginning of the new millennium, various churches took up this call for the establishment of such a doctrine; the German bishops' pastoral letter *A Just Peace* (2000) and the EKD peace memorandum *Aus Gottes Frieden leben – für gerechten Frieden sorgen* ["Living in God's Peace – Taking Care of Just Peace"] (2007) come to mind. The emphasis here was placed on creating structures suited to preventing wars, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and avoiding violence. At the same time – and this shows that the model of just peace was conceived as an alternative both to just war and to unconditional pacifism – it was said that peace and non-violence must not be made absolute in such a way as to legitimize unjust conditions. It is not a question of peace at any price, but about maintaining or creating just conditions, and if necessary doing so by force.[13] Because peace is more than the absence of violence: "a world that does not provide the majority of people with the basic needs of a humane life is not viable. Even when there are no wars, such a world is still full of violence. A situation dominated by long-term and severe injustice is inherently violent."[14]

Violence-prevention measures and non-violent civilian conflict management take priority in order to combat the "underlying causes of war", but according to the bishops, it must also remain possible to use military force as a last resort if peace cannot be achieved and suffering cannot be averted in any other way. Hence this concept does not rule out human-

itarian interventions. However – and here is the great advantage and difference compared to the doctrine of just war – action must essentially be aimed at peace and non-violence. This includes, centrally, working toward disarmament, strengthening international organizations, and building an international order of peace and the rule of law. The approach shows that it is about far more than a criteriology for deciding when and how the use of military force is legitimate.

It should therefore not be forgotten that the concept was developed "in conscious rejection of just war",[15] i.e. in awareness of its aporias. In this context, the pastoral letter by the German bishops marking the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War is interesting. The bishops point out that the effort of historical understanding is necessary in order to comprehend the failure of Christians in the war. Although there was no longer any explicit talk of a just war after the First World War, the German bishops of the time did not protest against the National Socialist war of extermination. "The Church's traditional view of war and the national awareness clashed with the doubts that had arisen."[16] The doctrine of just war is held partly responsible here, as "in contradistinction to its intention of limiting violence – had increasingly become a means of legitimising physical force in the modern era, and had contributed towards people becoming accustomed to the use of violent means. Even if doubts had became (sic!) louder since the experiences of the First World War as to the established political approach towards this doctrine, it nonetheless contributed to the vast majority of Christians not yet fundamentally questioning war as a form of political conflict in the first half of the 20th Century."[17] The model of just peace was a reaction to this and sought to bring the insights of the doctrine of just war to bear in such a way "that they do better justice to the intention of containing violence".[18]

The Papal magisterium under Francis – a socio-ethical counter-model?

The revival of just war in Catholic thought, stemming from the criticism of just peace, is astonishing. Not only because just peace – as opposed to uncompromising pacifism – can certainly legitimize the use of military force in the form of just defense. But also, according to a second objection, because Pope Francis not only supports the idea of overcoming war, as found in the concept of just peace, but also advocates for it in clear distinction

The concept of just peace is not a special German approach

to just war. In his social encyclical *Fratelli tutti* from 2020, the pope spoke out unequivocally in condemnation of war, focusing on its injustice. By doing this, he showed that the concept of just peace is not a special German approach.

War, the pope said, never serves to resolve conflicts. "Every war leaves our world worse than it was before. War is a failure of politics and of humanity [...]"[19] Pope Francis' focus on condemning war can to a large extent be found within his Church's teachings, i.e. in statements within the magisterium of the Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council and his predecessors in the papacy all called for the strengthening of an international legal order, for peace through law. To prevent war, Francis states, "there is a need to ensure the uncontested rule of law and tireless recourse to negotiation, mediation and arbitration, as proposed by the Charter of the United Nations, which constitutes truly a fundamental juridical norm."[20] The UN Charter is "an obligatory reference point of justice and a channel of peace."[21] He therefore strongly condemns the individual interests that some states in the UN pursue without concern for the common good. He urges honest cooperation in the UN and, in this context, also

speaks of the ease with which war is chosen as the supposed solution to problems, and justified with "allegedly humanitarian, defensive or precautionary excuses".

However, he goes a step further in his teachings by not only declaring just war obsolete, but explicitly rejecting it. In his message to the UN Security Council delivered on June 14, 2023, he repeats his criticism of national-

The condemnation of modern war on the basis of historical experience does not necessarily have to be understood as a pacifist position that excludes military force a priori

ist self-interest undermining the work of the UN. With regard to the countries represented on the Security Council, his statement is striking: "In order to make peace a reality, we must move away from the logic of the legitimacy of war: if this were valid in earlier times, when wars were more limited in scope, in our own day, with nuclear weapons and those of mass destruction, the battlefield has become practically unlimited, and the effects potentially catastrophic. The time has come to say an emphatic 'no' to war, to state that wars are not just, but only peace is just."[22]

The condemnation of modern war on the basis of historical experience, as expressed here, does not necessarily have to be understood as a pacifist position that excludes military force *a priori* – as the sharp criticism of the pope's position expressed in the wake of the Russian war of aggression implies. It can also be seen as a commitment to just peace.[23] Three points seem to support this:

(1) Despite his condemnation of war, the pope refers to the catechism of the Catholic Church, which holds open the possibility of "legitimate defense by military force". Therefore one cannot claim that the pope completely delegitimizes any such use of force, but it seems almost impossible for him to decide when it is morally permissible; i.e. when the hypothetical benefit is greater than

the feared harm. Although the catechism mentions some criteria that may legitimize military force, the context has to be taken into account: The passage is about the fifth commandment and the "avoidance of war".[24] Pope Francis therefore does not contradict the catechism, but presents a very restrictive interpretation. The focus on avoiding war, preventing violence, securing peace and strengthening the United Nations is in line with the Vatican Council and his predecessors in the papacy.

(2) This interpretation is also supported by a phrase that is found repeatedly in papal pronouncements: "Never again war!" These are the words used in 1965 by his predecessor Pope Paul VI in his exhortation to the United Nations General Assembly to work for peace. His successors John Paul II and Benedict XVI insistently repeated this phrase. Francis used it not only in his encyclical, but also in his sermon on All Souls Day in 2017, when he held a mass for the fallen of all wars at the U.S. military cemetery in Nettuno, Italy. The phrase clearly shows that despite new emphases, Francis is consciously following in his predecessors' footsteps.[25]

(3) With regard to the war in Ukraine, the pope has been accused on a number of occasions of indiscriminately condemning every war – whether a war of aggression or defense. For example, his closing speech at the International Prayer Meeting for Peace in Berlin on October 25, 2022, drew heavy criticism. He said: "The plea for peace cannot be suppressed: It rises from the hearts of mothers; it is deeply etched on the faces of refugees, displaced families, the wounded and the dying. [...] That plea for peace expresses the pain and the horror of war, which is the mother of all poverty."[26] Francis consistently adopts the viewpoint of the victims, which is more important to him than the question of the legitimacy of a war. For him, the victims are the normative standard when thinking about war: "Let us look once more at all those civilians whose killing was considered 'collateral damage'. [...] Let us think of the refugees and displaced, those who suffered the effects of atomic radiation or chemical attacks, the

mothers who lost their children, and the boys and girls maimed or deprived of their childhood. Let us hear the true stories of these victims of violence, look at reality through their eyes, and listen with an open heart to the stories they tell."[27] At first glance, this looking to the victims as the only source of insights about war may appear to delegitimize military violence. But anyone who seriously advocates this must allow the victims to have their say: the Ukrainians whose lives and country are being destroyed by Russian aggression. The 18 million or so who are dependent on humanitarian aid. The 20,000 stolen children, some of whom have evidently already been given up for adoption. The people massacred and tortured to death in Bucha and other places. The women systematically raped by Russian soldiers. The abductees who were tortured in Russian prison camps. The members of the opposition who were murdered or forced to live in exile, in the fear that they are not safe there either. The civilian population suffering from the large-scale, wanton and unlawful destruction of civilian infrastructure. Is justice really being done to these victims if, apart from compassion, they are not given any emergency assistance as proposed by the model of just peace? If they are not allowed to defend themselves against violence and war crimes, against the destruction of Ukrainian identity? What is certain is that looking at the victims means standing in solidarity with them. And that means saying who are the victims and who the perpetrators.

Just peace – also a political model

A third objection is that it should not be forgotten that there are also voices outside of church circles who argue in favor of a just peace that is not the result of a just war. This shows that the church's model and its focus on peace is relevant to the political debate. Let us recall the Ukraine resolution adopted by a clear majority of the UN General Assembly on February 23, 2023, calling for an end to violence and a "just peace" for Ukraine. The day before, Josep Borrell, Vice-President of

the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, had spoken in support of the resolution at the emergency session of the UN General Assembly. In his speech, he recalled the origins of European integration and pointed out that the EU has always been a peace and reconciliation project: "The European Union has always been a peace project. We have been quite successful in bringing peace to the European continent and promoting it around the world. It is central to our DNA; it is in our origin." Borrell left no doubt as to what such a peace should look like: It must be a "just peace", as

Looking to the victims as a source of insights about war may appear to delegitimize military violence. But anyone who seriously advocates this must allow the victims to have their say

the resolution explicitly calls for, in line with the United Nations Charter and international law. The day after the resolution, UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressed the UN Security Council in a remarkably similar way. He called the attack on Ukraine a blatant violation of the United Nations Charter and international law. He then drew attention to the numerous Russian war crimes and the tremendous damage caused by the war, and also called for a just peace: "The guns are talking now, but in the end we all know that the path of diplomacy and accountability is the road to a just and sustainable peace."[28]

A controversy in the German Parliament, the *Bundestag,* concerning the call for a "peace initiative" for Ukraine and Russia, while a side issue, is nevertheless indicative of the churches' peace work and how it ties into the political debate. In its motion of February 2, 2023, the right-wing AfD parliamentary group called on the German government to fulfill its responsibility for peace in Europe by working more actively for an end to the fighting and for a peace initiative that would

include security guarantees for both warring parties.[29] With the motion, the German parliament would also be supporting the various peace efforts and mediation attempts by individual countries and the United Nations, the proposal made by French President Emmanuel Macron on December 4, 2022, and Pope Francis' appeal for peace. During the Angelus prayer on October 2, 2022, the pope

The model of just peace is not a paradigm shift. Rather, it is a change of perspective

made a clear statement on the Ukraine war. He directly called on the Russian president to stop the spiral of violence and death, also for the good of his own people, and appealed to the Ukrainian president to be open to "serious proposals for peace". He again spoke out in condemnation of war: War can never be a solution, and leads only to destruction. "War in itself is an error and a horror."[30] During the debate in the *Bundestag* on February 9, 2023, the AfD motion was rejected with indignation across all party political lines, as it failed to mention either the perpetrators or victims. The AfD members of the Bundestag were further accused of favoring a Russian dictatorial peace. Jürgen Trittin *(Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen)* launched into a fundamental criticism of the motion, but also discussed an alternative understanding of peace: "We must have peace as the goal of our actions,

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but we must be clear that this peace cannot exist in the form of a unilateral dictate. It is not based on defenselessness, but a just peace, which is more than the absence of war. The concept of just peace, as defined by the Protestant Church, is something that, as a political model, actually also presupposes a certain ability to defend oneself and that is why it is bitter, it is difficult, but it is necessary to equip Ukraine in such a way that it is not overrun by an imperialist aggressor in the latest in a long line of wars of conquest."[31] Trittin thus placed just peace as a political model in close proximity to the 2007 EKD peace memorandum. Finally, this clear acknowledgement of the Christian origin of the concept in the political realm raises the question of whether Germany's Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier was not also making this reference when mentioning a just peace for Ukraine in his speeches.[32]

Conclusion

Peace is a contested and frequently misused term. For this reason, Christian social teaching emphasizes a specific concept of peace: Peace can only be described as such if it enables just conditions and a life in freedom. A peace that leaves people in conditions of injustice, coercion and lack of freedom is not worthy of the name. Doing everything for peace means working for such a just peace.

To do this in distinction to a just war does not mean looking and shying away from the "sharp end" of the military profession – from fighting, killing and dying. We are currently reminded in various ways that "war readiness" *(Kriegstüchtigkeit)* is an essential characteristic of armed forces. But despite all the difficulties one may have in defining precisely what this means, we must not forget that such an ability does not negate the obligation of these armed forces to focus on peace. In this context, we should remember the concept of *Innere Führung* (officially translated as "leadership development and civic education"). Because it demands that soldiers act in a morally responsible manner, it is regarded by the Christian churches

as a model for European and peace-focused armed forces. Wolf Graf von Baudissin believed that soldiers, as "individuals guided by conscience", had a responsibility for peace and that the traditional reasons for waging war were no longer valid. Nevertheless, as far back as the early 1950s, he demanded that soldiers be "ready to fight a defensive war" to the greatest possible extent, as this was the only way to prevent wars and remain focused on peace.[33]

The model of just peace is therefore not a paradigm shift – which in academic theory means that adherents of the old paradigm can no longer reach an understanding with those of the new paradigm. Rather, it is a change of perspective which brings into better focus what the idea of just war originally aimed at.[34] It is about credibly implementing the necessary "transformation from the morality of war to the ethics of peace".[35] Words matter! If you want peace, then you should also talk about peace. In the words of the UNESCO constitution of 1945: "[S]ince wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." A focus on peace must therefore continue to be part of the armed forces' mindset, alongside all of the necessary "war readiness".

With the Russian attack on Ukraine and the failure to prevent violence, the concept of just peace has not fallen by the wayside. Important elements remain: an orientation toward human rights and the rule of law; a focus on the victims of violence; the naming of human rights violations and war crimes; efforts to overcome violence; the search for constructive conflict management that minimizes violence; cooperation with civil society stakeholders; efforts to engage in dialog and reconciliation work; education about the potential of nationalist ideologies and clichés of supposed ethnic superiority to threaten and destroy peace. All of this does not have to be abandoned now; all of this is still possible, indeed more necessary than ever.

Just peace is a more appropriate expression of Christian thought on the phenomenon of war than just war. But its relevance extends beyond the religious dimension: A consistent focus on the prevention of violence is to a certain extent the response of Christian ethics to developments in modern international law, which is also concerned with preventing violence, so that international law no longer speaks of *ius ad bellum* – a central element of the doctrine of just war, but one which is considered to be deficient – but instead of *ius contra bellum*.[36] Just peace therefore does not ignore the realities of war, but rather paves the way out of the aporias into which the doctrine of just war has fallen.

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RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE
NOT A BIT OF THE OLD ULTRAVIOLENCE

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Lasting for over a year and a half, the Russo-Ukrainian War is still striking in its scale and incredible cruelty. However, it is unlikely that many people anticipated such an extensive unleash of violence. Apparently, without expecting it, Russia started what turned out to be the largest military conflict in Europe since 1945. The impression is that the Russian political and military command decided to confirm Clausewitz's thesis about the war as "the realm of probability and chance." Indeed, this war has a lot of unpredictability, which deserves to be discussed with distinction and particular attention. The invasion itself was unexpected. Despite all the warnings, it was comforting to think that the Russian government used aggressive rhetoric as a diplomatic tactic but was unprepared for a real invasion. Training and battle readiness of the Russian army appeared to be unexpectedly weak, while the qualifications of ZSU (the Armed Forces of Ukraine) and the will of the Ukrainian society to fight were unexpectedly high. The consolidation of many states around Ukraine and harsh sanctions against Russia (although not decisive enough and voluminous) came as a surprise, not least for the Russian authorities. Perhaps only the indiscriminate attacks of the Russian military, which led to many obvious war crimes, could have been predicted. However, what comes as a significant surprise is that the war has been lasting for so long, and now, reaching a stalemate, it could go on for years.

It may seem that all the reasoning about the decline of the interstate war and the advent of the era of new wars has unexpectedly become inappropriate. However, in this piece, I will focus on the character and practices of the Russo-Ukrainian War to prove that this large-scale war still does not make the arguments about the evolution of war irrelevant. Among other things, I claim that the Russo-Ukrainian War demonstrates the relevance of an updated version of the just war theory known as revisionist theory (although I would prefer that there was no war at all to confirm any theory).

Abstract

From the scale of the force used and the number of victims to the political constellation and the reasons for the war, there is much to suggest that the world is experiencing a return to classic interstate warfare with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The extensively substantiated thesis of the age of "new" wars since the 1990s seems to have been called into question at a stroke.

However, a number of factors suggest that this conflict cannot be described simply by recourse to historical models. Both strategic issues and the breaking up of the state monopoly on the use of force by mercenary troops and combat units should be mentioned here. What stands out the most, however, is the utmost moralization of war. In an unusual dialog with the enemy, the Ukrainian side appeals specifically to the moral conscience of the Russian civilian population. Each and every individual is asked to reflect on their role as a potential resister or (silent) accomplice in an unjust war. From civilian aid workers to military bloggers: they all play a significant role in the course of the war in various ways. This is evidence of the relevance of the revisionist theory of just war. The traditional doctrine of just war does not do justice to this situation because it assumes moral symmetry on the battlefield and does not grant civilians an active role. Avoiding these deeply moral questions because they are too complex or unrealistic is not a solution. Nor should it be concluded from the revisionist approach that the clear designation of moral responsibility or complicity justifies attacks on civilians. In a time of real rehabilitation of wars, however, the revisionist theory challenges politics and the public. Strategies and measures are needed that make it possible for individuals to refrain from social militarization.

Good old war?

The scale and nature of this war, its course, and the large range of weapons deployed immediately called into question all the literature on the transformation of war, which began to appear at the end of the Cold War. Martin van Creveld, Mary Kaldor, Herfried Münkler, and John Mueller, to give a few great names, published intensively covering dramatic changes in war and military culture during the last decades. Perhaps the most crucial thing was captured by Mary Kaldor, who pointed out that wars of our times, contrary to Clausewitz's famous thesis, are not a continuation but rather a refutation of politics. These new wars contest any order. Their participants aim to preserve political disorganization as much as possible since they can only earn in the fog of war. So, the culture of the new wars is anti-political and anti-social.

And, of course, all these theorists agreed that war, the good old large-scale war, is no longer a convenient political means. It involves a lot of social, economic, and political risks. Therefore, modern states, even if they wage wars, try to carry out operations on a limited scale. These may be lengthy campaigns, as in Iraq or Afghanistan, but relatively modest regarding the contingents involved. In other words, war has changed, and the great powers are incapable of large-scale militarization and mobilization, which was confirmed by the reduction of military budgets and personnel in various countries.

And suddenly, the Russo-Ukrainian war begins, which seems to take us back to the culture of old wars.

Indeed, there may be a desire to interpret the Russo-Ukrainian War as an old war. It is an interstate conflict, not an asymmetric one. One of the sides is waging an imperialist war, considering the enemy either as its colony or as its ancestral and legitimate territory. It presents itself as a great power, a regional hegemon, which implies that an infringement of its zone of interests poses a deadly danger. And unfortunately, this "deadly danger" is not just a figure of speech. The losses in this war are incredibly high. The level of losses that Russia and Ukraine have already suffered corresponds to the level of losses that can be observed in

case when irregular or paramilitary forces participate in the war. Although these figures should be treated with caution, it is claimed that Russia lost 120,000 people[1], while Ukraine lost 70,000[2]. We can compare it to the War in Afghanistan, where Afghan security forces fighting on the side of the United States also had

It may seem that all the reasoning about the decline of the interstate war and the advent of the era of new wars has unexpectedly become inappropriate

65-70,000 military killed. But the U.S. itself lost about 6200 people[3]. Over 20 years. That means they lost much less per month than the Russian army is losing per day.

Another motive typical to regular war mode would be Russia's obsession with the idea of sovereignty. Indeed, the interpretation of sovereignty revealed by President Putin and his officials correlates with the view on sovereignty that could have been found a century or two ago. We may also find modern-era political tools on the Ukrainian side where political nationalism is applied as a means of mobilization. All these issues convey a setting relevant to old interstate wars.

And yet, it is a new war!

But still, several factors indicate that the war in Ukraine is not a bit of the old ultraviolence, not an old war that makes the theories of new wars obsolete or senseless.

First of all, this becomes clear when we analyze how Russia is waging this war. In terms of goal-setting, this war cannot be compared to the old wars. I hope I will be understood correctly because in what follows, I may sound like Russian nationalists and militarists, such as Igor Strelkov. Still, the Russian political and military command has not dared to start a full-fledged war. The system of governance of the Russian state, as well as the Russian population, was not prepared for a prolonged armed conflict. Neither was the Russian army. If the task was to achieve military success in the confronta-

tion with such a strong opponent as the Armed Forces of Ukraine turned out to be, it would be necessary to carry out several waves of mobilization. Russia carried out one mobilization, but very hesitantly and only after a series of military defeats. At the same time, mobilization should be understood not only as recruitment into the army but also as a wide range of measures to develop a strategy for a long-term war and refocus the economy on military needs. It would be necessary to specify military objectives to clarify the victory conditions. Although the Russian state is gradually militarizing, this is especially noticeable in the field of education, which has become the first victim of ideological indoctrination; no program of measures to transfer the state to a military regime has been adopted. Either because the Russian political and military leadership have ceased to be proper strategists and do not understand how to wage the old conventional war (unlike their Ukrainian opponents) or because Russian leadership was sure it would conduct a military operation, not a war (which is more in line with the logic of an asymmetric conflict), or because the Russian government is not aimed at winning the war in the usual sense of the word. It is likely that the Russian side sees the freezing of the conflict and the preservation of a zone of tension in Ukraine as a success. In any case, Russia has found itself in a war where it cannot achieve military goals, and its strategy doesn't correspond to the logic of military victory.

Second, and this is really quite unusual for the universe of the modern state, The Russian leadership deliberately enabled the demonopolization of the sphere of violence, and during the war, this process only intensified. It culminated (so far?) in Prigozhin's mutiny. Every month, there are reports on the organization of national battalions, volunteer brigades, and private military companies (prohibited, by the way, by Russian legislation). The whole modern state project was built on creating a rigid hierarchy in the military sphere, unifying and controlling it, and suppressing alternative operational centers. But Russia, a state seemingly obsessed with the idea of sovereignty, splits its military forces and tolerates or even fosters the appearance of extra-legal combat units. These units exist, fight,

and are funded in parallel with the regular army, creating possible points of future escalation. In other words, the Russian state is engaged in what, in principle, a strong state should not be engaged in, especially in a situation of a major war. It certainly benefits from the potential advantages provided by units that never leave the gray zone. But it risks being swallowed up by the fog of civil war itself when these units start fighting each other. The engagement of field commanders and their gangs is typical for the culture of new wars. But also, in this, one can see another confirmation of the non-military nature of this conflict. President Putin allows these paramilitary units to appear struggling to strengthen the regime according to the logic of *divide et impera*. Although this does not give Russia a clear advantage on the battlefield, this tactic is good for weakening the political position of the military command.

War as a matter of public conscience

Finally, another essential feature of this war, and it should be mentioned separately, is the highest degree of moralization of the conflict. This, it seems to me, gives empirical evidence of the relevance of the revisionist version of just war theory.

The revisionist just war theory (RJWT) is advocated by numerous authors, with Jeff McMahan and David Rodin being among the most prominent theorists. RJWT reconsiders the relevance and justification of several principles of the traditional just war theory with Michael Walzer as its coryphaeus. Revisionists contend that the traditional JWT, with its focus on the state, is fundamentally at odds with the contemporary era, where most wars are asymmetric and waged by non-state actors. Consequently, RJWT does not consider the state as the primary agent. Actions and decisions of specific individuals, rather than states per se, should be subject to analysis and moral evaluation. Traditional group identities, such as civilians and combatants, are subject to deconstruction. The participation or non-participation of individuals in unjust military aggression is the crucial factor. This thesis leads us to another distinctive state-

ment of RJWT: the norms of ius in bello are not independent of the principles of ius ad bellum. This implies several conclusions, notably the possibility of considering soldiers morally responsible for participating in an unjust war, not just for committing war crimes.

Traditional theory operates under the assumption of moral equality among combatants: if unjust participants in war adhere to the rules of warfare, they are not morally wrong. For revisionists, it is essential to distinguish between those participating in an aggressive war and the victims of aggression. They argue that an aggressor forfeits the moral right to both offense and defense, at the same time losing immunity from attack. The status of war participants, thus, becomes asymmetric. While actions of the victims of unjust attack could be evaluated as morally correct or wrong, unjust combatants, by participating in an unjust war, deprive themselves of the opportunity to commit any morally permissible actions.[4]

From the very beginning, the Russo-Ukrainian war has been morally charged. There is nothing unusual in opponents mutually accusing themselves of committing immoral acts or in giving a special moral status to your people or your army. This is typical for every war. However, the Russo-Ukrainian war has revealed one very unusual discourse. Two traditional rhetorical strategies (moral justification of the right to self-defense and moral criticism of the enemy) are accompanied by an appeal from the Ukrainian side to the conscience of those Russians who do not support the invasion. Russians are urged to realize this war's inhumanity and immorality and stop it.

Such an appeal was made on the first day of the war by President Zelensky: "You are Russians. Now your military has started a war. The war in our state. I would very much like you to speak on Red Square or somewhere else on the streets of your capital, in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other cities in Russia. Not only in Instagram – it is very important."[5] Statements of this kind were repeatedly made at the official level, especially in the first months of the war. Ukrainian public figures and ordinary citizens also joined them. Sviatoslav Vakarchuk, the leader of the popular rock band Okean Elzy, wrote on Facebook: "RUSSIANS!!! DON'T REMAIN SILENT! Putin, gone mad, turns all of you into international criminals! Take to the streets, demand an end to the WAR WITH UKRAINE!"[6] Another example could be found on my own Facebook page, where my Ukrainian friend shared a message on the day of invasion: "Russians, rational people, those who I hope are still in Russia, including my relatives, friends… — stop THIS madness. Protest, block, do anything to stop the irreversible, don't listen to your fake news! Your troops attacked Ukraine today! Ask anyone from Ukraine what is really happening. We have had explosions and attacks on our borders

A person turns into a subject of resistance to an unjust war or its accomplice

since early morning! Brother against brother! Come to your senses! We don't want war, but we are forced to defend ourselves when we are being shot at… A heavy sin will lie on your souls for your silence and inaction."[7]

This form of dialogue with the enemy is unusual in itself. Still, it also shows that a civilian in modern warfare cannot retain their position of a passive observer. Personal trajectories of living through war become worthwhile. The decisions and judgments of private individuals who have nothing to do with the government or the army gain meaning. In other words, a person turns into a subject of resistance to an unjust war or its accomplice.

In his reflection on the moral obligations of Russians, Michael Walzer claimed, "War is a special place, a highly coercive place, and people caught up in it have to be judged with reference to their actual circumstances."[8] I agree with this — if we aim to understand individual decisions, we need to consider personal circumstances. However, this does not convince me that we should resolve this issue in the traditional spirit of separation of civilian and military or that individual circumstances cannot testify to personal responsibility and guilt, direct or indirect complicity in the war as such, or in committing war crimes.

Civilian-based ethics for new wars

In traditional just war theory, civilians are typically hardly mentioned and denied any active role. They are perceived as objects of political management or objects in respect of which, and possibly for the favor of which, decisions are made. Traditional just war theory proceeds from the idea that roles during war are clearly defined. Soldiers can use military force against enemy soldiers, but they are also legitimate targets of war, meaning they can be attacked. Additionally, traditionalists believe that soldiers on both sides of the front are morally equal, i.e., their moral status is symmetrical. Even if the war is unjust, a soldier is not considered a moral criminal until they commit war crimes. Civilian individuals can never or almost never be targeted during war (concepts of collateral damage or the doctrine of double effect provide insights into rare exceptions). Civilians are declared to be morally immune from attack because they are unarmed, untrained, and unorganized. In both JWT and laws of war, this distinction between combatants and civilians is known as the principle of discrimination. And it is the duty of soldiers to refrain from harming civilians. As we can see, civilian individuals are literally excluded from consideration as active actors during war.

However, the Russo-Ukrainian war gives many examples of how significant the participation of civilians is in the war and how dependent the war is on people who do not wear uniforms. Without grassroots initiatives, without civilian volunteers who raised money for weapons, ammunition, and medicines, or without those who deliver food to towns that are cut off from permanent supplies or who help refugees get out of their towns, the course of military operations

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would have been different as well as the life of those who were affected by the war. And we can see that the moral status of civilians as accomplices in war can be very ambiguous. Bloggers who distribute videos about the massacre of prisoners of war or justify attacks on civilian infrastructure, during which civilians are killed, cannot be convicted as war criminals if they did not commit war crimes. But at least they should be recognized as responsible for the propaganda of war and the public justification of war crimes. At the same time, an ordinary combatant (again, if they did not commit war crimes) cannot be put on trial, yet it is important to understand the trajectory that led that combatant to the army. Why did they choose such an alternative? Were there other life alternatives and preferences? Why did they consider military service acceptable even when Russia waged an unjust war in Ukraine? Why does that person continue to consider it acceptable even after 20 months of war? These questions may seem too sociological or anthropological. Still, they also contain a moral component since they are related to assessing right and wrong in such a complex context as war.

I mentioned the relevance of revisionist theory for this debate because it is more adapted to the reasoning about the individual level of participation in the war. However, in fact, we do not have a fundamental theory that would guide civilians acting against the background of the war, and there is no clear policy on this matter.

Revisionists are often criticized for emphasizing individual responsibility and complicity for participation in an unjust war regardless of a person's status as a military or civilian (scientist developing weapons of mass destruction could be an example of civilian engagement in war). It is said this approach tends to undermine distinction between civilians and combatants. Thus, revisionists allegedly want to legitimize attacks on civilians.[9] I find this interpretation to be incorrect. Usually, revisionists are quite moderate in their conclusions. Or at least, that is how I see revisionism. To raise the question of someone's moral responsibility for complicity in an unjust war is not the same as proposing to prosecute that person, let alone subject them to a military attack.

Another common argument against revisionists is that they are disconnected from reality. They are deemed too philosophical, plunged into the deep morality of war yet being impractical.[10] To some extent, this is true; revisionism is a strict philosophical and analytical approach aimed at providing logically precise judgments about war itself. I find it untenable to criticize revisionism indicating that this approach poses too complex questions. It is true that soldiers on the battlefield are acting in extreme conditions and cannot quickly discern who is a legitimate target and who is not, or that an ordinary person may find it difficult to determine whether the war declared by their state is unjust. However, we cannot stop at the idea that if we are faced with too complex questions, we better not change anything and continue to think that soldiers of the *Wehrmacht, Waffen-SS,* or currently Russian military in Ukraine are not doing anything wrong by participating in unjust wars waged by their states.

We must recognize anyone committing morally unacceptable acts as a violator of morality. However, there is a practical philosophical task here that is offering moral wrongdoers a rescue plan. The main question I see as a practical outcome of revisionism is how we can collectively devise strategies and practices that would help soldiers avoid participating in unjust wars, enable civilian activists to protest more successfully, and allow security services to refrain from involvement in the repressive policies of their governments. This, as it seems to me, means that the audience for revisionists is not primarily military or non-military individuals themselves. Their goal is not to teach the military personnel how to most accurately execute orders and how to act on the battlefield. Their audience is the public, political organizations, governments, and international organizations. Revisionism is doomed to remain a philosophical critique if we think of it within traditional state-centric narratives. However, it can be a highly useful theoretical approach guiding decision-makers in elaborating more globalized approaches and programs.

The world seems to be coming into a very turbulent state. Azerbaijan took Artsakh. The Middle East is still balancing on the brink of a big war. It is increasingly asserted that the tensions between China and the United States cannot be resolved peacefully.. We are experiencing a real rehabilitation of war. The forceful resolution of conflicts ceases to be something unacceptable and forbidden. It is quite possible that other political leaders may follow President Putin's example in establishing another zone of military tension. This is the reality of our era of new wars. And in these circumstances, we definitely need to reassess civilians' role as full-fledged participants in conflicts. RJWT may serve as a theoretical tool for that purpose. But the task itself cannot remain only theoretical and requires the development of practical solutions to support those who are ready or could resist the militarization of their societies.

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MILITARY ETHICS EDUCATION
BRIDGING THE GAP OR DEEPENING THE CHASM?

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The Huntingtonian Paradigm and European Militaries

Abstract

Samuel P. Huntington's understanding of civil-military relations, as he developed it in his work "The Soldier and the State", still sets the standard today. It follows the logic of the strict, profound and clear-cut separation of military and politics. Contemporary professional armed forces appear to be the realization of Huntington's ideal.

Such strict military professionalism involves separation from the rest of society. Though advisable in some respects, it tends to widen the gap between civil society and the military. This is not only due to a lack of knowledge or increasing disinterest in all things military in civil society, but is also reflected in isolation and alienation on the part of the armed forces. The example of the US also provides valuable insights for European societies. Particularly worrying are feelings of superiority as a reaction to the frequently occurring loss of importance of professional armed forces in society, which promote mistrust of political decision-makers, disinterest in the political consequences of military decisions or even contempt for civil society and thus further deepen the civil-military gap.

To counteract this, experts recommend the (re)introduction of some model of mandatory military service as well as adapting and improving the education of military personnel, especially the officer corps. As there has been no trend towards the former in Europe to date, the second approach must be prioritized. Military ethics education must convey the exceptional moral status of military service and contribute to the internalization of a demanding professional ethos, without at the same time further nurturing harmful feelings of superiority. The aim is to strengthen the (almost metaphysical) bond between a nation and its armed forces by "peopleizing" alienated professional armies.

For centuries, we as humanity have been aware of the fact that *Scientia potestas est*. The scope of our overall knowledge, the greatest of powers known to man and our most vital resource, is perpetually widening as we accumulate more and more knowledge in all existing fields of human existence, throughout generations. Despite this undeniably constant and ever-lasting process of knowledge accumulation in every particular area of life, in which hundreds if not thousands of people partake throughout millennia, there are certain moments at which individuals shake the very foundations of the system and the "framework" of existing knowledge through "revolutions" which establish new paradigms, i.e., new frameworks, systems and horizons of knowledge. This extreme simplification of Kuhn's vision of how our accumulation and use of knowledge actually works is by no means meant to explain the development and "historical flow" of science and knowledge, but rather to accentuate the importance of individuals who change the way we think about certain aspects of the world we thought we knew. These individuals not only introduce a new paradigm with superior explicatory power, but by doing that also normatively and prescriptively shape how we interpret reality and to some extent even how we organize our institutions and societies. When it comes to the realm of what we today call civil-military relations, it wouldn't be too controversial to claim that the paradigm of the relationship between modern armed forces and their civilian societies, within which we function today, was created by Samuel P. Huntington with his seminal book *The Soldier and the State.* As Brooks notes, Huntington's understanding of these relations is today considered to be the "normal" one, while all other perspectives are measured against it.

The Huntingtonian paradigm is essentially founded on the concept of "objective control", which relies on strict, profound and clear-cut separation between military and politics in order to ensure an apolitical military. Such a

military would then ideally serve politics in an outmost professional manner, i.e., it would be subjected to society's interests, obediently and loyally, with the sole focus on maximizing combat effectiveness. Huntington's vision was a noble one, formulated in order to prevent previous catastrophic historical outcomes of inadequate relationships between realms of military and politics which at times had the tendency of becoming overly interwoven, even indistinguishable. Moreover, it could be argued that he based his concept of objective control on the necessary separation of military from *politics,* not necessarily from the overall society as such, despite the fact that at some points he admittedly did allude to desirableness of even such separation, to a certain point. Some would rightfully say that Huntington truly observed the military caste ideally completely separated from the rest of society, especially democratic society. However, what the Huntingtonian paradigm of civil-military relations contributed to, in almost seven decades that followed his book, is in fact a very troubling separation of the military from the entire civilian society, not just the realm of politics. The evident and seemingly widening civil-military gap that exists today in European societies, some might even say a crisis in civil-military relations, represents not only a significant challenge for armed forces, but also for societies in general. And while much has been written about the role of the changing cultural strategies of (post)modern societies in distancing and even alienating civilians from the military culture, values, and identity, there seems to be much more that ought to be said and discussed in regards to the contribution of the military itself to this process of widening the gap, i.e. the military side of the proverbial gap. Military ethics education holds a very ambiguous, perhaps even a precarious position in these dynamics, and can even be detrimental, if not understood and executed properly.

Separation, isolation and alienation

The concept of relatively strict military professionalism necessarily implies separation and even isolation of the military from the rest of society, in pretty much all aspects, including literal physical separation of military facilities. This concept also produces the need for separate, parallel "institutions" within military facilities which provide "civilian" services to military personnel, to the extent that they pretty much have everything they need on-site, and no particular need to seek services outside of the military. From a certain perspective, such type of separation to the point of deliberate isolation is prudent and purposeful, due to the highly specific mission of the military, unique means of fulfilment of such mission, peculiar challenges, distinctive value system, idiosyn-

The necessary separateness of the military from society does not necessarily imply alienation from it

cratic culture, etc. To use Huntington's notions, the "military mind" is distinctly different from the non-military one, as it is the mind needed for military effectiveness; as such it entails some type of separateness from the "normal" mind which simply couldn't optimally grasp and deal with what is expected in the unique context of the military. But the necessary separateness of the military from society does not necessarily imply alienation from it – it seems virtually impossible to have a military alienated from society if society actively partakes in the military via some form of temporary military service of citizens. However, if societies transition from the various traditional models of time-limited mandatory military service for all citizens (or at least male citizens) and conscription, this permanent separateness and isolation can indeed evolve into estrangement and alienation.

The majority of European countries went through such a transition in the period between the end of the Cold War and the end of the first decade of the XXI century, with Germany being one of the last countries to do so in 2011[1]. There are certainly some exceptions[2], but the majority of European militaries are today professionalized, at least to a point, and thus completely separated and practically

isolated from the rest of society. Modern fully professionalized militaries are perhaps the pinnacle of Huntington's vision of apolitical armed forces separated from politics in all aspects, but they have also unfortunately proved to be completely separated and alienated not just from *politics,* but from the entire realm of the ontologically *political,* which translates into alienation from the rest of the true and basic *Kommunität.* Undoubtably, such a model of small fully professionalized armed forces which function "outside" of society has certain benefits, particularly in the *zeitgeist* of our post-modern individualistic "societies of right-claiming" as the famous Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori dubbed them. But separation of armed forces from society, to the point of alienation, obviously and incontestably brings about many challenges and has numerous unfavorable implications causing the said crisis of civil-military relations and the widening gap between the society and the institution that protects it.

Challenges of military alienation

Challenges and implications of military alienation have been addressed and discussed to some length, especially in the context of the widening civil-military gap in the United States of America. Of course, the fact that the United States transitioned from conscription to a model of an all-volunteer professional military already in 1973, historically fairly early in comparison to European countries bar the UK, contributed to the volume and depth of these discussions which relied on decades of separation and isolation of the US military from the rest of American society. Despite the fact that these implications are observed in the American context and experience, they don't seem to be entirely endemic but rather universal for societies with professionalized armed forces not relying on conscription. Therefore, it is quite uncontroversial and safe to assume that European nations can learn a great deal from the US experience. American authors who dealt with the issues arising from total military separation and alienation which

inevitably followed identified many potential contributing factors to the widening gap but also practical problems generated by it.

Separation of the military to the point of its alienation from society, especially over a prolonged period of time, causes complete disengagement of civilians from the military as a vital social institution – there is insufficient visibility of the military in "normal" everyday social life and lack of personal contact with anyone in uniform resulting in practical ignorance of the nature, role, function or even purpose of the military. Expectedly, this causes utter disinterest in military service, major recruitment problems and erosion of the social status of military personnel. Additionally, holders of key political offices who control, use, and take care of the military often have no military experience and have never been a part of the military, while apolitical armed forces with severed connections to the political life of their societies become disinterested in political consequences of their actions and decisions. Ultimately, all these issues, along with many other, tend to contribute to the military being placed somewhat outside of the limits of the "normal" civilian society, slowly becoming a "state within a state", a problem addressed by many researchers who dealt with the problem of the growing civil-military gap. We are, however, at this point more interested in the *military* side of the chasm, i.e., exploring and discussing factors contributing to this alienation process but on the military side of the gap. More precisely, the unfortunate emergence of mistrust, contempt and even latent hostility towards the civilian society within the military, closely tied to the sentiment of organizational, procedural, cultural and even moral superiority of the military over the rest of society.

Mistrust, contempt and superiority

Several US authors not only identified the phenomenon of "military superiority" but also conducted empirical studies and surveys in order to examine the depth of the issue[3]. When observing the results of these studies

conducted in the US, it can be concluded that they are worrying for the American society to say the least. Moreover, and equally important, having in mind the abovementioned processes of military professionalization via abandonment of conscription in Europe, the results of the US studies should worry European societies too, but also provide an insight into potential issues down the road, as European armed forces become increasingly separated and alienated from their societies. All empirical studies confirmed the hypothesis that complete separation of the military leads not only to isolation and alienation from the society but also to the emergence of mistrust, sense of moral superiority and even contempt for the civilian society.

Although previously indicated, it deserves to be highlighted again that once completely separated and isolated from the rest of society, and without any real meaningful professional contact with the civilian world, the military tends to breed and cultivate a sense of superiority in regards to pretty much all aspects – organizational, cultural, ethical, even moral. Unfortunately, development of such a sentiment only contributes to additional alienation from the rest of society, as the military proceeds to further insulate, almost cocoon itself, as it becomes increasingly inward-looking, incredulous and leery, even contemptuous towards those who are, in many ways perceived as "lesser". The very sense of superiority is therefore not *derived* from mistrust and contempt, rather it *produces* it. It does not seem far-fetched to consider the potentially important role of declining social reputation and genuine respect for military personnel and their growing irrelevance outside of their institution in breeding this sense of exceptionalism and superiority, as an almost spontaneous and subconscious *Abwehrmechanismus* serving the purpose of reaffirming their sense of value, importance, pertinence, and excellence. Namely, the rising practical irrelevance of military personnel, even high military officers, outside of their barracks and institutions among the civilians in the "civilian world" is primarily caused by the suspension of conscription and military

service and complete disengagement of "the rest of society" from its armed forces. In societies in which all young people, or at least young males, spend a not-so-short portion of their lives in military uniforms, under the command of officers who wield power over their troops without any parallel in the non-military context, officers tend to be highly respected, appreciated, or at least *relevant* in all spheres of society. On the other hand, in nations which rely on some type of a professional armed forces model, even the highest officers in reality have zero practical power, influence and relevance outside of the military, especially in

> *Complete separation of the military leads not only to isolation and alienation from the society but also to the emergence of mistrust, sense of moral superiority and even contempt for the civilian society*

societies in which the overwhelming majority of people never served in the military and are quite ignorant in regards to all things military.

Regardless of the reasons behind it, it is emphatically clear that the emergence of the sense of superiority in armed forces, which produces mistrust and contempt towards the rest of society, not only widens the proverbial gap between the military and its society, but also produces an abundance of practical issues and potential grave problems – from perceiving political decision makers, who in fact have the mandate to control and guide the military, as morally inadequate and contemptible, across not wishing to engage in meaningful cooperation with civilian institutions, to finding the entire society the military is supposed to serve and protect unworthy of fighting and sacrificing for, even loathe-worthy.

The peculiar role of military ethics education

Recognizing the aforementioned severe challenges, perilous risks and potential threats both to armed forces and the "civilian world" which stem from alienation of military from the rest of society, emergence of the sense of

superiority within the military, and the overall ominous widening of the civil-military gap, scholars and practical experts in the field have identified several key mechanisms and avenues of countering, or at least impeding, further alienation of the military and deepening the chasm. Notwithstanding various proposed tools and means, a clear convergence of opinion among experts can be noticed in regards to two critical instruments – (re)introduction of some model of mandatory military service and adaptation and improvement of education of military personnel, especially the officers corps. Concerning the first crucial instrument,

Military ethics education must unquestionably aim to develop consciousness and awareness of military personnel, officers in particular, about the inextricable bond between the people and its military, but not as two separate entities

it is evident that there is a plethora of factors and circumstances which affect the decision to (re)conscript the nation or at least intensify a wider meaningful public debate on the issue. Despite certain developments in that direction in multiple European countries in previous years, Europe is still basically relying on small professionalized militaries meaning that the second avenue must be prioritized if we wish to address the gap before it turns into a steep chasm. Therefore, expanding and enhancing the education process in the fields of social sciences and humanities in the military is necessary in order to diminish the gap by creating a much healthier and profoundly emphatic relationship between military personnel towards civilian institutions and civilians in general. Obviously, military ethics education plays a particularly important, even decisive (!), role

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in this process; however, equally obviously, this role is *prima facie* incredibly precarious, ambivalent and ambiguous.

As discussed by many authors, an optimal approach to military ethics education relies on the presupposition of development of a sound and firm military *ethos* which synthesizes both traditional approaches to military ethics education – aspirational and functional[4]. Successful development of a military ethos as a *spiritus movens* of military personnel and a deeply internalized system of specific values, virtues and norms which become inherent elements of one's personal identity and character relies on comprehension and genuine understanding of moral excellence of the military profession, rather than just its moral justification. Any military ethics professor worth his salt must aim to instill an understanding of moral excellence and the supererogatory moral nature of military service, derived from a multitude of factors, in his students. It is precisely this grasp of the truly morally exceptional nature of military service that ought to be the primary motivator of military professionals and that in reality can only provide the desired and optimal behavior of men and women in uniform, both in peace and in war, and is as such the "holy grail" of military ethics education. But looking through our prism of the issues of alienation and military superiority, it becomes conspicuous that military ethics education which develops military ethos also seems to contribute to the creation of very fertile ground for nourishing the sense of superiority within military profession as it aims to instill a deep understanding of moral exceptionality and sublimity of a soldier's duty.

So then, can military ethics education help bridge the gap, rather than deepening the chasm between the military and the rest of society in the absence of mandatory military service in Europe? We firmly believe it can and it must. An optimal approach to teaching military ethics, which would take into consideration the potential generation of highly undesirable exceptionalism and superiority towards the society the military is supposed to serve, will necessarily have to take an almost anti-Huntingtonian approach and accentuate

the essential, almost metaphysical bond between the nation and its military. Armed forces do not exist and operate *outside* of nor *above* the people, even if they are completely and utterly professionalized, physically and organizationally separated and isolated, and if they are in fact alienated due to lack of mandatory military service; military personnel are *of the people,* an integral part of their nation produced by their nation. Armed forces are, simply put, the embodiment of the people's will and readiness to defend their freedom and their collective way of life even if it requires taking on extreme mortal risk and facing lethal danger, which essentially represents a profoundly ethical choice and decision.

Military ethics education must therefore unquestionably aim to develop consciousness and awareness of military personnel, officers in particular, about the inextricable bond between the people and its military, but not as two separate entities; rather as military emanating from the people but without ever ceasing to *be* the people. This bond seems perfectly epitomized in the US Army Reserve motto "Twice the citizens", referring to the duality of status of men and women in uniform, who do not simply stop being citizens and "the people" once they put on their uniform and become members of the military, nor become some sort of *ÜberCitizens.* Similar can be said about the high-minded idea behind the German concept of *Innere Führung.* This intimate cognizance of the ontological unity of the military and its society should not and must not be achieved by militarization of the society, but rather by "peopleization" of alienated and estranged professionalized armed forces using various means, including the vital instrument of well-devised military ethics education. Such an education would ideally include topics of the ontological status of war, the underlying political nature of the military, peace ethics, etc., and would place more focus on non-military traditions and values that the military is supposed to protect. Finally, military ethics education could also tremendously benefit from practical assistance and inclusion of the "civilian realm", meaning civilian institutions and civilian personnel.

1 Interestingly, the UK ended conscription already in 1963.
2 Certain countries in Europe, both EU member and non-member states, have some form of mandatory military service. Some of them never suspended the military obligation, while some returned to mandatory military service after short periods of suspension in the first decade of the century.
3 The most important studies relating to the phenomenon of military superiority in the US are the TISS (Triangle Institute for Security Studies, survey published by Feaver and Kohn) survey of 1998-99 and the YouGov survey of 2014 (published by Schake and Mattis). The most recent study, conducted among West Point cadets in 2020, further corroborated the previous findings, i.e., that military personnel perceive their organization, culture and values superior to the civilian ones.
4 Cf. Stanar, Dragan (2023): Moral education in the military: Optimal approach to teaching military ethics. In: Theoria 66 (1), pp. 37–51.

THE RETRANSFORMATION OF SOLDIERS' IDENTITIES

Author: *Patrick Hofstetter*

Ever since Russia openly escalated its war of aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the term *"Zeitenwende"* has been on everyone's lips.[1] The new normality has shaken Western societies' supposed certainties of the past thirty years. Policymakers and armed forces, along with civilian institutions, are seeking new answers. For example, in a podcast series on the *"Zeitenwende* in peace ethics"*, the Center Faith & Society at the University of Fribourg[2] asks the legitimate question: "Was pacifism a naïve idea?"[3] It therefore seems appropriate to examine the turning point in military ethics too.

According to Dieter Baumann, military ethics can be broken down into four levels pertaining to the relevant actors of responsibility: state, armed forces, military leaders and soldiers.[4] In the following, I will first outline the possible effects of the turning point on each of these actors separately. This will reveal shear forces between the individual levels. To consider the imminent transformation simultaneously on all levels requires an integrative approach and therefore necessarily a certain simplification. This is where Charles C. Moskos' I/O model[5] comes in, which shaped the discourse in the 1970s on the transformation of the American armed forces from a conscription to a professional army.[6] By addressing its known conceptual and empirical weaknesses[7] from the outset and incorporating relevant lines of research in other fields, prospects open up for improvements in military ethics education and training, based on empirical findings in today's armed forces.

Transformation on four levels

On the *state* level, strategic transformations taking place around the turning point are obvious. NATO has escaped brain death[8] – once again shaking off predictions of its demise. Debates on both sides of the Atlantic about supplying arms to Ukraine attest to a revived interest in military ethics in the public sphere. Military spending is increasing again, compensating at least in part for past neglect. The

Abstract

Russia's open invasion of Ukraine is perceived in Western states as a turning point. It poses new challenges for military ethics both in research and in practical applications, for example in personality development training. Breaking this down to four levels – state, armed forces, military leaders and soldiers – we can see that changes in the security policy context have actually triggered reverse transformations on all levels. These differ in their respective speeds. While European states have been swift to revert to national and NATO defense, it will take years to strengthen or restore the conventional capabilities of European armed forces. It remains to be seen how quickly the identity of the soldier will adapt to the new conditions. Acting as a link between the levels, it is up to military leaders to absorb these shear forces. A holistic transformation model can help to lead the debate and create the necessary awareness. Reversing the historical I/O model proposed by Charles C. Moskos, the father of military sociology, an O/I model is described. This posits a retransformation from functional organization to normative institution, which should be accompanied by a corresponding change in the soldier's identity. Correcting the conceptual and empirical weaknesses of the original model from the outset opens up the prospect of improvements in military ethics education and training, based on empirical findings in today's armed forces.

expected domestic political battles over distribution are already unfolding.

Driven by the primacy of politics and the changed financial framework, it is the *armed forces* themselves that are seeking an actual retransformation: Germany is boosting its capabilities for national and NATO defense with special funding,[9] Austria is discussing doubling its defense spending by 2027,[10] and in the Switzerland, the Armed Forces are seeking to "consistently orient [their] capabilities, organization, training and infrastructure toward defense" with a vision for growth.[11] With this reversion, questions of military ethics are also shifting; the discourse on the "combat force"[12] focused on overseas deployments[13] is receding into the background, while classic issues such as the ethics of urban warfare are once again coming to the fore.[14]

Justified doubts prevail as to how consistently Western policymakers will back up their words with action.[15] However, for *military leaders at all levels* there is no question that the transformation on the Ukrainian battlefield is a reality today – and would be inevitable in any war with Western military participation. Massive air strikes[16] and fierce infantry fighting[17] bear little resemblance to what Western observers had become accustomed to militarily since the last turning point, the fall of the Berlin Wall. Regaining the lost combined arms knowledge of Western NCOs and officers, however, will take years.

In reality, the abandonment of conventional warfare[18] and its replacement by cyber war[19] have not materialized. At the same time, current developments represent more than a mere return to Cold War patterns. What Ukraine is suffering in 2023 is more reminiscent of World War I. This was certainly foreshadowed as early as 2015, in a French video report where a young Ukrainian soldier commented: "I don't think life in these trenches is much different than during the First World War."[20] Those who are directly affected – or more specifically, shelled – quickly learn this. But the transformation of the *soldier's perspective* in Western armed forces is still ongoing. As a professional ethics, military ethics must address this transformation in order to

place personality development training on an appropriate foundation.

This overview can, of necessity, only be superficial given the space available. But it is sufficient to show two things. First, on each level, there is a counter-movement compared to the preceding three decades. Second, these movements are happening at different speeds.

Table 1 (see next page) provides examples of some military ethics debates which, while following from these developments, must be

For military leaders at all levels there is no question that the transformation on the Ukrainian battlefield is a reality today

conducted elsewhere.[21] Our focus here will be on the shear forces posited earlier. The Institution/Occupation Model (I/O model), introduced by Charles C. Moskos to describe the American transformation from conscription to an all-volunteer-force in the 1970s, will serve as a suitable starting point. It is briefly explained below.[22]

The Institution/Occupation Model and its reversal

Charles C. Moskos, who can be regarded as the father of military sociology, proposed the I/O model to describe the transformation of the U.S. Armed Forces in 1973 from a conscript army to an "all-volunteer force". In his view, the armed forces were changing from a *sui generis* institution into an organization that functioned according to market principles. Moskos chose the term *occupation* for this pole of development. There is a fuzziness about this terminology which later drew criticism: While *institution* relates to the macro level, *occupation* focuses on the micro level – specifically individual soldiers' relations to their work. Moskos elaborated this in his essay "The all-volunteer military: Calling, profession or occupation?"[23] Nevertheless, the I/O model has had a lasting impact on debates in military sociology, mainly in the United States.

Level	Changing context	Examples of military ethics debates
State	Return of power politics	• Type and amount of arms deliveries • Reconsideration of NATO membership options, questioning of neutral positions (Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, …) • Increasing military spending ("guns vs. butter")
Armed forces	Reversion to national and NATO defense	• Collateral damage in own country (population, protection of cultural assets) • Return to original raison d'être
Military leaders	Refocusing on conventional battle (with hybrid components)	• Urban warfare on own territory • Widespread use of armed drones
Soldier	Return to original task of defending own country	• Training for national defense instead of deployment as an armed development aid worker • Conscription and reservist system • (Extrinsic and intrinsic) motivation ("*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*")

Table 1: Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Western armed forces have faced changes that have given rise to military ethics debates.

A comparison with the actors of Baumann's approach reveals that the I/O model simultaneously addresses the second level "armed forces" and the fourth level "soldier". But it is precisely the interconnectedness of these two levels that seems to be Moskos' core message: As a staunch advocate of conscription, he believed that its abolition was the main factor driving the diminishing role of the armed forces in the state and society,[24] which also touches on Baumann's first level "state" (see

Figure 1: Charles C. Moskos' I/O model describes the transition from an institution (left) to an occupation (right). Ultimately, however, this involves a change at both the armed forces level (bottom) and at the level of the soldier (top), which Moskos did not explicitly distinguish.

Figure 1 below). Finally, the "military leader" as the actor on the third level can be regarded as a link between the main actors, who is particularly called upon when shear forces arise between the organization and the individual.

Although Moskos later refined his ideas into the model of the post-modern armed forces,[25] the appeal of his simplification endures. In 2012, for example, Nina Leonhard and Heiko Biehl referred to the I/O model during the debate on the suspension of conscription in Germany.[26] However, this should not lead us to apply the model only to the transition into a professional army. Developments in Switzerland, where conscription has never been abolished, can also be regarded as a movement from a normative institution to a purely functional organization. In 1988, in its message on the initiative to abolish the armed forces, the Swiss Federal Council wrote: "Switzerland does not have an army, it is an army."[27] Twenty years later, in its 2010 security policy report, it listed the armed forces as only the second of a total of eight security policy instruments. The following example of the shear forces already mentioned is taken from this context: When the Swiss Armed Forces began to focus on "subsidiary domestic tasks" in 2004, it prompted resignations by military professionals who could not reconcile this development with their self-image in the service of national defense.[28]
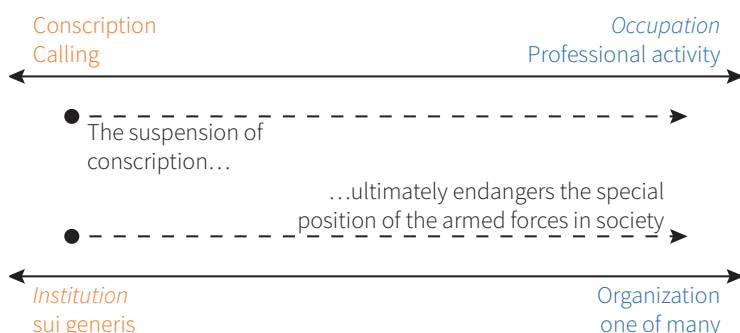
Of course, such anecdotal evidence cannot make up for the greatest weakness of Moskos' concept: Like its successor concept of the

post-modern armed forces, the I/O model lacks a theoretical foundation, conceptual acuity and ultimately empirical verification. Nevertheless, both models "met with a broad response in the discussion of military sociology"[29] and have accordingly been used to describe the transformations of European armed forces after the fall of communism in 1989 up until the turning point of 2022.

With due regard to this justified criticism, the question now arises as to whether we are witnessing a reverse transformation since Russia's open invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Let us first attempt to discuss this in terms of an O/I model, i.e. in Moskos' terms from *occupation* back to *institution,* in order then to suggest the appropriate theoretical foundation and a possible empirical approach to avoid the mistakes of the previous discussion.

To correct for the apparent lack of precision in Moskos' conceptual levels, two hypotheses are proposed:

1. The reversion of Western armed forces to national (and NATO) defense is accompanied by a retransformation from intervention armies to defense armies.

2. This implies a parallel retransformation of the soldier's identity from the current, functional self-image of being a soldier as an occupation to the normative role as a guarantor of state sovereignty.

The first hypothesis should not be understood as a tautology; rather, it is intended to describe a reversal of the transformation of armed forces observed over the past thirty years at the macro and meso levels.[30] In the same way, the second hypothesis addresses the reversal at the micro level.

Anecdotally again, it can be noted that the number of conscientious objectors in Germany quintupled in 2022 compared to the previous year from 209 to 951,[31] even though the *Bundeswehr* today constitutes an "all-volunteer force" with volunteer military service personnel as well as longer and shorter-service professional soldiers and reservists. This can certainly be interpreted as a shear force between the *armed forces* and *soldier* levels, indicating by way of example that the approach can be helpful in highlighting upcoming challenges in

military ethics. *Volunteer* soldiers who *refuse* to serve are probably only an extreme example on the lowest level of Baumann's model. At the uppermost level, the fundamental question arises of the relationship between democracy and the military system[32] after the turning point; this question is independent of military operational considerations.
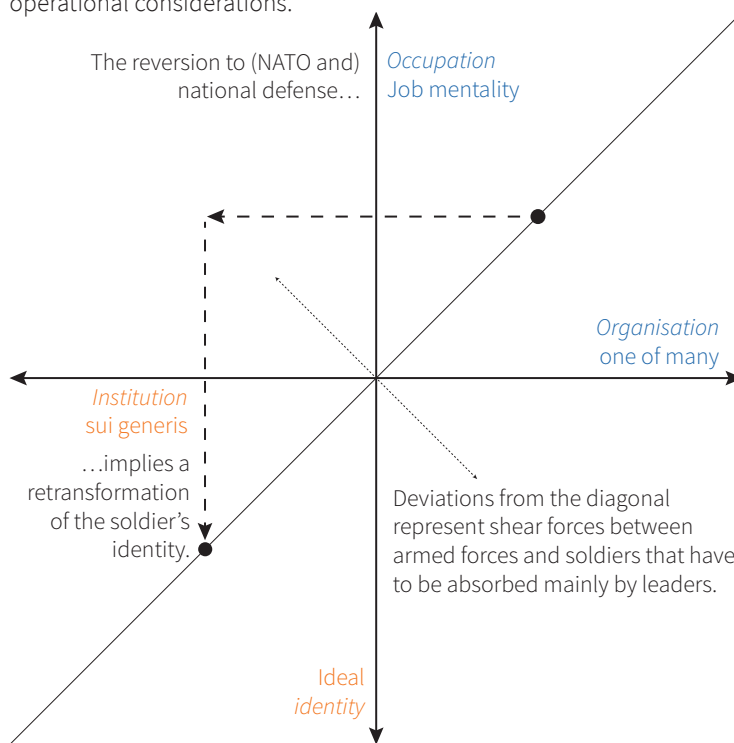

Figure 2: The O/I model postulates a transition from organization (right) to institution (left), accompanied by a corresponding change in the soldier's identity. In contrast to Moskos' I/O model, the levels "soldier" (vertical) and "armed forces" (horizontal) are distinguished from the outset, and the definition of the ideal identity is still open, as it is the subject of empirical research.

A possible conceptualization

Empirical support for observations about soldierly identities is a necessity, because the topic is susceptible to narratives, social desirability and other distortions.[33] Critical examination of the conceptual forerunner also reveals that it was a long time before an evidence-based review of the I/O model was conducted, which then found glaring differences between individual countries that required specific explanations.[34]

Thus an empirical examination of the identities in question requires a clean conceptualization. In this regard, research in different fields has produced different but overlapping
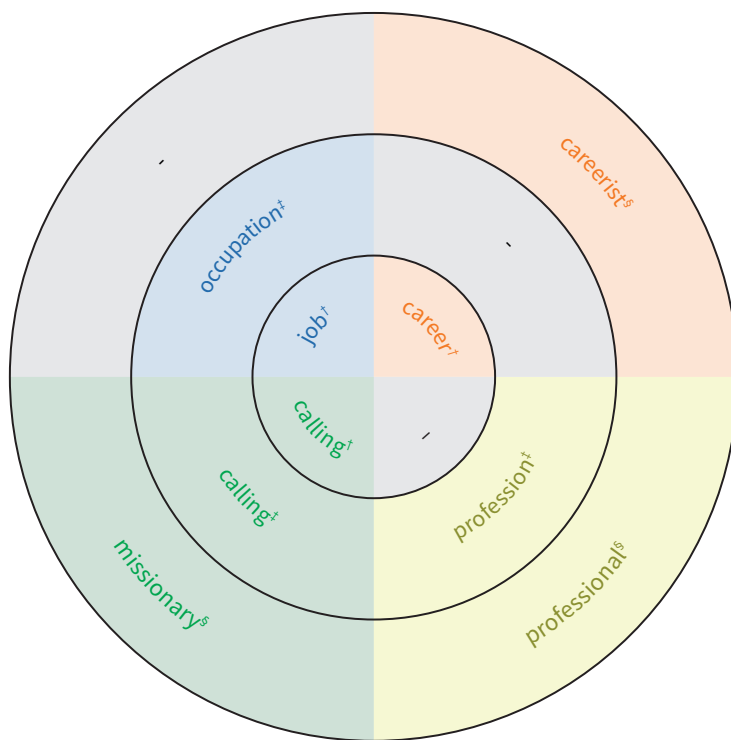
Figure 3: Different typologies of people's work orientations (relations to their work) at a glance. † The inner circle shows the relations to work according to Wrzesniewski et al. ‡ The middle ring shows the model according to Moskos. § The outer ring shows Wilensky's role orientations. A dash indicates that there is no corresponding item in the respective typology. The background colors represent matching content.

typologies. While Moskos distinguished *calling, profession* and *occupation,*[35] occupational and organizational psychology has established the triad of *calling, career* and *job.*[36] By contrast, occupational sociology had earlier distinguished the *missionary, professional* and *careerist.*[37] The overlaps are depicted in Figure 3 (above); corresponding items have been checked and are available in English, French, German and Italian.[38]

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A survey of over 2600 leaders in the Swiss Armed Forces refutes various narratives common within their ranks, such as that the work of the career officer is still a calling for the older generations, but is now "just a job" for the younger ones. In keeping with the narrative, the idea that the career officer's occupation must once again become a *calling* is omnipresent.[39] Yet across all age groups, the percentage of those who view their work as a *calling* varies only insignificantly, between 5.6% and 7.3%. The same is true for those who see their work as a *job,* with variation between 1.8% and 3.3%.[40] At the same time, with 54.7% of military professionals, 33.7% of senior active reservists and 46.0% of civilian employees, the *profession* orientation predominates in all groups. Other assumptions were also refuted, such as common prejudices about different branches. According to Moskos, the more technical, more "civilian" branches of the armed forces, such as the air force or logistics, should tend toward the *job,* and combat troops toward the *calling;* at least in the Swiss Armed Forces, this is not the case. Meanwhile, the percentage of those with a *career* orientation among senior active reservists – i.e. leadership personnel doing military service – is significantly higher (16.2%) than among military professionals (5.2%). This again goes hand in hand with Janowitz's observations,[41] even though it is the diametric opposite of the common narrative in the Swiss Armed Forces.

The above examples show unequivocally that the discussion about the retransformation of the armed forces, which has only just begun, must be empirically supported from the outset. There is (not least) a military ethics aspect to this, since it is conceivable that *job* and *career*-oriented people could adopt different basic attitudes to NATO and national defense than those with a *calling* or *profession* orientation. The need for empirical data can already be seen from the fact that even this seemingly obvious correlation has not yet been validated or falsified.

Of course there are also justified objections to the typologization approach in general. But in the armed forces culture, the clichés

certainly play a significant role – no matter how accurate they are. This further underlines the need for empirical research so that education and personality development training measures are based on the right assumptions. The four-way typology, based on the military sociology tradition, therefore provides the starting point for more in-depth study. The return to (NATO and) national defense is leading a retransformation not only on the level of state and armed forces. At the end of the day – in the Donbas as on all battlefields before throughout history – the leading actors are still the military leaders and, ultimately, the individual soldiers.

So it is important that we understand our military personnel, because it seems perfectly conceivable that they will react differently to ethical arguments, in the context of teaching values, depending on their soldierly identity. To demand ethical behavior – for example, by appealing to a basic *professional* attitude – is not likely to be very effective if the soldiers concerned do not see themselves as *professionals* but rather as "defenders of the motherland" – and are perhaps less receptive to a more factual, sober perspective. Moreover, the identity that is desired from a military operational and ethical point of view can only be fostered and demanded if the relevant facts are known in the first place. Ultimately, then, the aim must be twofold: to establish an empirical basis for teaching meaning, values and discipline in educational contexts;[42] and to correct ethically and strategically unhelpful narratives in the armed forces, as well as military-specific narratives in society. This is likely to involve a struggle for attention, given that both debates in Western countries today are dominated by identitarian ideologies rather than soldierly identities. If the amount of attention currently given to diverse minorities in the armed forces was given to the individual motives of the majority, the ethical question would be much better served.

By devoting their attention to the pressing questions of classical military ethics, the military social sciences can guide the imminent retransformation of Western armed forces. In the best case, military science can thus facilitate and even accelerate these changes. In the worst case, should the retransformation of the armed forces fail to take place for financial or sociopolitical reasons, the armed forces can at least be guided by evidence-based military ethics in leadership, education and training.

> *To demand ethical behavior – for example, by appealing to a basic professional attitude – is not likely to be very effective if the soldiers concerned do not see themselves as professionals but rather as "defenders of the motherland"*

If it comes to a conventional war with the involvement of Western military personnel, the armed forces would then have done at least the minimum necessary to fulfill their military ethical duty to society and also to the individual soldier.

1 GfdS wählt "Zeitenwende" zum Wort des Jahres 2022. Press release by Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache e.V., December 9, 2022. https://gfds.de/wort-des-jahres-2022/ (all internet sources accessed November 20, 2023).

2 https://www.unifr.ch/glaubeundgesellschaft/de/.

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THE ARMY IS NO PLACE FOR A WARRIOR

Author: **Christopher Ankersen**

A professional army is no place for a warrior. And yet many within Western militaries are using the term and the imagery of the warrior as both descriptors and ideals. Despite the rise of usage by militaries of the term warrior, it is not without its problems. The warrior has a long history that is marked by disobedience, misconduct, and misogyny. For these reasons, it should be avoided when we're talking about contemporary, professional militaries.

In this essay, I will look at four key questions: Where does the idea of the warrior come from? What does it mean? Why does it matter? And then finally, what is to be done?

Where does the idea of the warrior come from?

The term and the image of the warrior can be seen—in official and unofficial milieus—across the West, from the US Army and Marine Corps, to the Canadian Armed Forces, to the Australian Special Air Service Regiment. The term is used as the highest praise, bestowed upon figures such as wounded veterans and retired generals. Often the warrior imagery takes the form of the Spartan, epitomized by the iconic silhouette of the horsehair plumed helmet.

It is important to recognize that warriors are not really historical beings in the sense that we don't look to the accurate notion of what they actually did. We are much more persuaded by their mythical nature. As Christopher Coker writes, myths are more real than science: they are destiny defining. In that sense, we look to these kinds of images passed on through myths as containing the secrets or the essence or the foundational principles that we need to follow if we want to be the best we can be. Mythical warriors are used as representations of the ideal martial figure. These representations (both verbal and visual) form a discourse that produces a precondition for action. It is not information that is being passed on, but rather affect: emotional content.

These archetypes of the warrior are very much with us. But where are we getting these representations of the warrior? We don't all live

Abstract

In many Western armed forces, the concept of warrior has a positive connotation and is seen as a badge of honour, in certain social milieus it is considered attractive, and the media is also full of portrayals of warriors. However, idealized, archetypal ideas are conveyed rather than referring to real historical figures.

If one examines these ambiguous, emotionally charged images from a historical-anthropological perspective, the problematic nature of the figure becomes apparent. By frequently rebelling against authority, engaging in dishonorable behavior towards their peers, plundering or even raping, warriors commit serious violations against essential functions of society. To this day, there is ample evidence of problematic characteristics, in particular selfishness, subordination problems, unrestraint and outbursts of violence, as well as a paradoxical relationship with the feminine. The idea of a special position associated with the warrior harbors the danger of seeing oneself more or less outside or above society and even establishing one's own rules and laws. This elitist understanding matters, among other things, because it can weaken the cohesion of the troops, lead to a focus on the military's technical skills (the functional imperative according to Huntington) and, in extreme cases, undermine the idea of civil control. Instead of the ambivalent warrior figure, a more sober image of the soldier who serves the state is required.

with our noses buried in books about ancient myths. So where does this imagery come from? Contemporary, distorted interpretations of ancient and modern warriors are often found in popular media, such as a movies or television. And so, we can see the fetishization of the warrior in movies like *300,* or in television shows, like *The Mandalorian.* So prevalent are these representations of the warrior that recent US Army recruiting ads used the slogan "warriors wanted", suggesting that a person might well be a warrior before they even join the military. And not only that, you can be a warrior long after your professional military service is over; once you become a warrior, it's something that you can retain or hold on to. We can see this in consumer products, where warriors are portrayed as defenders of an idealized way of life. A crop of veteran-owned businesses, such as Nine Line Apparel or Black Rifle Coffee, use the term and image of the warrior to market their offerings, largely aimed at warriors outside the military.

The fact that representations of the warrior come from a variety of sources matters because it illustrates that militaries are not in a position to control or unilaterally define how warriors are represented. As much as they may try to harness or edit a version of the warrior suited to their needs (in order to build morale or esprit de corps, for instance), the reality is that the warrior is represented in a plethora of ways, from myriad sources. Far from an unambiguous figure, the warrior strikes a complicated pose.

What does the warrior mean?

What are we talking about when we talk about the warrior? It is easy to believe that the warrior is about perfection, about excellence on the battlefield. Indeed, for many proponents of using the warrior in professional militaries, this is the utility that the warrior brings. Fortitude, courage, and skill at arms, say, are all encapsulated in representations of the warrior. That may be true, but what else do these images of warriors actually mean? If we look at the historical record and the mythological transcript across all of the Indo-European community,

ranging from what we would now call India, all the way through Persia, up through Turkey, in through Greece, what used to be the Roman Empire and into European cultures, including Germanic, and Nordic or Viking cultures, this 5000 year record has shown some very durable, one might say indelible, patterns of how warriors have been represented. As the French anthropologist Georges Dumézil claims, while the warrior becomes essential for the survival of the community, nevertheless it is a thoroughly ambivalent figure, prone to commit random acts of violence or treachery.[1] Dumézil believes that all societies that form part of this Indo-Europe-

Far from an unambiguous figure, the warrior strikes a complicated pose

an inheritance have a complicated relationship with warriors. He mentions that all societies have three functions. The first is the function of order, which is represented by the sovereign or highest governing actor. The second function is that of security, which is represented by the warrior. Finally, the third function, production, is represented by the rest of society, particularly women, farmers, and artisans. It is within that threefold notion of society that warriors are prone to three fundamental kinds of transgressions, or sins, against society, which line up against these three social functions. Warriors often rebel against the sovereign. They often commit injustice or kind of dirty tricks against other warriors, which we might call perfidy. They also commit sins against productive society, like looting, like sacking, but also very prominently, illicit sexual relations. Let us look at these enduring and problematic aspects of the warrior.

The warrior is prone to a rebellion or rebelling against the sovereign. We see this in *The Iliad* when Achilles falls out with Agamemnon over Briseis. Achilles views himself as the ultimate warrior, versus Agamemnon, who maybe once was a warrior, but now he's older and the sovereign ruling over all of the Greeks besieging Troy. We see a similar relationship between

Thor and Odin. We see this antagonism between Lancelot and King Arthur. Shakespeare captures the warrior's contempt for authority in his *Coriolanus,* who begins as a warrior on the battlefield, a triumphant general, but one who comes back home and rails against authority, including when that authority rests with the people, the people of the Republic of Rome. This is present, too, in much more contemporary – and somewhat less mythical – figures. We can see this contempt, for example, from General MacArthur, represented as the combative American Caesar, towards President Truman, portrayed as a milquetoast shopkeeper from Missouri.

The second dimension where warriors conduct themselves in dishonorable ways is against other warriors. We see on a Greek vase, for example, Achilles with the body of Hector, dragging him behind his chariot around Troy, desecrating the body, which was seen in *The Iliad* as a severe transgression. Indeed, it causes the gods to intervene. More recently, we see a member of the Canadian Airborne Regiment torturing and ultimately killing the Somali teenager Shidane Arone in 1992, and members of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment allegedly killing almost 40 Afghans illegally in between 2005 and 2016. In Ukraine, stories of

Warriors very much see things from their own point of view

soldiers from both the Russian and Ukraine armies torturing prisoners of war are circulating.

Finally, we see warriors sinning against productive society. This can take several forms, including activities like looting or taking war trophies. The most egregious, though, is the practice of carrying out illicit sexual relations. In *The Iliad,* we see Achilles and his 'war bride' Briseis, a young woman whom he has abducted. He captures her and believes that it is a warrior's right to kind of take her as his possession. When Agamemnon demands her as his own trophy, Achilles retreats from the battlefield taking his warriors, the Myrmidons, with him.

Sir Lancelot has an affair with Lady Guinevere, the wife of King Arthur, thus using illicit sexual relation as a form of rebellion. In contemporary settings, we have the warrior General David Petraeus having an extramarital affair with Paula Broadwell, his biographer, to whom he also passed confidential documents. Rape as an instrument of war represents perhaps the most perverse dimension of this transgression: it occurs on almost every battlefield, including in Ukraine.

All three of these sins we see echoed throughout the mythical and historical record. And they permit us to record, across the Indo-European cultural space, warriors with a common set of problematic traits. First, they tend to be endogenously motivated, which means they very much see things from their own point of view. It is their own desires that motivate them: the desire to excel, the desire to get rich, the desire to be immortal; whatever it is, warriors appear to be motivated by their own personal ideas. Second, as we have mentioned, they have a troubled relationship with authority. Third, they have a paradoxical relationship with the feminine. On one hand, they frequently see themselves as the protectors of women in their own societies. At the same time, though, they are willing to inflict pain and suffering through acts like rape and sexual slavery, as part of their "just rewards" for good performance on the battlefield. Fourth, they tend to be given to rage, violence, destruction and atrocity, whether we're talking about Achilles, or berserkers in the Viking tradition. Moreover, this idea that they have an uncontrollable anger often has detrimental impacts not only for themselves, but for the wider military effort or even the wider society.

Therefore, it is important that we recognize that while warriors are portrayed as excellent combatants, they have also been portrayed, and can be seen within the historical record, as selfish: they see war as a personal experience, a test of their own ability, an opportunity for them to realize Maslow's ideal of self-actualization. As Caroline Alexander notes, "Achilles hijacks the Iliad."[2] For him the war for Troy is a personal test, which has detrimental effects for the rest of the Greeks and the Trojans in a very

tragic way. We can see this kind of personal focus echoed in events like the US Army's infamous "kill team", a squad that was operating in Afghanistan. According to the magazine *The Rolling Stone,* troops in this outfit were "bored and shell shocked and angry", and tired of waiting around for more of [their] comrades to be killed and [so] disturbed by the passive role of the squad that the sergeant in charge actually decided to take things into their own hands.[3] Here we see this selfishness: like Achilles, the kill team figured that it could decide when to fight and how to fight. They appear to feel that it is up to them as warriors, the ones on the ground as it were, to set the conditions of acceptable behaviour.

Partly because of similar feelings of exceptionalism, we are confronted by the fact that in many societies, warriors have needed a kind of 'special handling' when they come back from war. They need to be formally reintroduced back into the societies whence they come. In Nordic culture, for instance, there is the notion of the berserker, warriors were represented as having turned into a bear on the battlefield and who needed to transform back into human form in order to come back into the fold of non-martial society. Similarly, we see across cultures the idea that warriors are welcomed back after war, but requiring some form of transformation, whether it's through ritual cleansing, or having to rededicate themselves to following the rules of their host society. And where these transformations do not happen then warriors either get exiled or are shamed and ostracized, or in many cases, tragically, commit suicide.

Warriors, then, have traditionally considered themselves and been considered by their wider societies, as special and apart from the wider community. Frederick Nietzsche goes further and points out that warriors are disenchanted with society itself: "[the warrior] is angry with civilization because he (sic) supposes that its aim is to make all good things – honors, treasures, beautiful women – accessible even to cowards."[4] Good things, it seems, should be the exclusive preserve of those who have fought. This may be an extreme form of exceptionalism, but it is not without its contemporary ech-

oes. In 2017, retired United States Marine Corps General John H. Kelly, while acting as White House Chief of Staff, expressed this feeling of exceptionalism: "We don't look down upon those of you who haven't served…In fact, in a way, we're a little bit sorry because you'll never have experienced the wonderful joy you get in your heart when you do the kind of things our servicemen and women do. Not for any other

> *Warriors have traditionally considered themselves and been considered by their wider societies, as special and apart from the wider community*

reason than they love this country."[5] Clearly, the warrior stands apart—and maybe a little above—the rest of society.

Why does this matter?

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu might have viewed the use of the warrior title or image as a form of symbolic capital.[6] Like all capital, if it is spread around too much, it loses its particular value. So, you want to be selfish in a way; you want to have your identity as relatively isolated and difficult to acquire, because scarcity increases the value of your symbolic capital. Symbolic capital has two aspects to it. It is based on a prestige or celebrity or honour founded not only on one's own knowledge, or one's *connaissance,* but also on recognition from others, *reconnaissance,* others who understand, appreciate, and respect what has been done or achieved. We see this quite keenly within military organizations where elite groups, or groups that figure themselves to be elite, try to reserve that symbolic capital for themselves. So, whether that is airborne forces vs non-airborne forces, or special forces vs conventional forces, or combat arms versus support forces, there is often this attempt to increase one's symbolic capital by saying that the elites represent the real warriors, everybody else is just average or run of the mill. The cruder demarcation between civilian and military is not sufficient. Indeed, as British General Sir

John Hackett put it, "The movement of the military away from the civilian has now in general been reversed. They have come closer together. Military skills are less exclusively specialist. The military community lives less apart. Uniforms are less worn in civilian society."[7] Perhaps as this distinction between civilian and military has faded, the need for increased distinction within the military has been sharpened. The
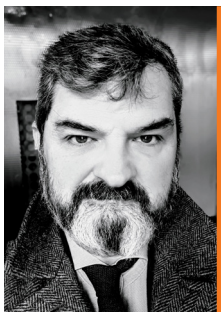
The figure of the warrior tends to be corrosive to the notion of a professional military under civilian control

result is a self-selecting sub-community of warriors within the military itself. This can lead to a healthy spirit of competition amongst individuals and units, leading to better performance. However, it can also cause a number of detrimental effects within the military as well, such as feelings of resentment between elite and non-elite units, which can, in turn, lead to a reduction in morale and cohesion. Logistical units, for example, that are looked down upon by commando units might be less inspired to go the extra mile to provide support.

A second dimension of why this warrior discourse matters is that the figure of the warrior tends to be corrosive to the notion of a professional military under civilian control. Samuel Huntington speaks in *The Soldier and the State* about two imperatives that face the military. The first is the functional imperative: the military should go and fight and win wars. Meeting this imperative takes skill, discipline, and

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the ability to plan, for example. Huntington's concept of objective control strikes a bargain: the civilian government grants the military professional autonomy, the ability to concentrate on developing the skills and aptitudes required to meet the functional imperative. In exchange, the military agrees to remain out of politics. However, Huntington acknowledges that this imperative alone is insufficient. There is also a societal imperative: the military also has to make sure that they fit in with and follow the norms and rules and traditions of the society for which they fight. A warrior culture, as we have seen, tends to downplay such a focus on societal norms in favor of their own specific norms. Therefore, we often see a tendency for those identifying as warriors to focus on the functional imperative at the expense of the societal imperative. This predilection is not just corrosive to the notion of the profession; it may actually lead to challenges to civil control. The *techne* of the warrior is valued more than an ability to conform to social morays. Indeed, the warrior is often portrayed as an aloof figure, superior to the bureaucrat or politician. For instance, the Commander of the Canadian Army, Lieutenant General Rick Hillier said the following at memorial service for Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan in 2003: "It is the soldier, not the journalist, who guarantees freedom of speech. It is the soldier, not the politician who guarantees our democracy. It is the soldier, not the diplomat that becomes a tangible expression of a nation's willingness to extend its values and its ideals worldwide."[8] Such a 'warrior supremacy' orientation exacerbates the 'expert problem' which exists in most principal-agent arrangements. Risa Brooks believes that this attitude can contribute to what she calls "McMasterism", where warriors regard themselves as in a position to give advice to political decision makers, but if the decision maker chooses to ignore that advice, then the warrior, like Achilles, may choose to walk away.[9] Harold Lasswell warned of "a garrison state […] a world in which the specialists of violence are the most powerful group in society."[10] Surprisingly, in a 2017 survey, 17% of Americans said that they would be happy with the military taking charge.[11]

What is to be done?

Within the context of contemporary, professional militaries, the use of the term and other representations of the warrior should be avoided. Instead, the fact that the professional military member is not fighting for personal glory or enrichment, is not animated by individual rage, but rather acts as an instrument of the state should be foregrounded. Carl von Clausewitz properly places, within the structure of his dual trinities that lie at the heart of war, a clear division of responsibility. According to him, the idea of hatred or enmity or passion lies not with the military, but with the people. That passion is channeled through the government who issues direction, and then the military does its best with its training and skill to be able to execute that direction in the realm of chance, all while the enemy military is trying their best to do the same. Therefore, we do not look to have berserkers or rageful warriors as the animating feature of the armed forces. Instead, we should be focusing on this notion of the soldier (or sailor or aviator), defined as "one who enters into an obligation to some government to devote for a special period, his (sic) whole energies, even if necessary, his life to the furtherance of a policy of that government." US Army Colonel Ralph Peters wrote in 1994, that the soldier is, in effect, the anti-warrior; he wanted to make it very clear what the differences were between the warrior and the soldier by valorizing the notion of the soldier as disciplined and rules-governed.[12]

Professional militaries, then, should abandon the warrior in favour of the soldier. A less flashy role model, perhaps, but one that does not valorize selfishness, insubordination, perfidy, and sexual violence.

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"TRY TO GET MORE EMOTION INTO THE CLASSROOM"

As a descriptive rather than a prescriptive field of research, behavioral ethics asks when and why people do not act in accordance with well-known standards or even with their own moral convictions. How can militaries use research findings about unethical behaviour and incorporate them into ethics education? In this interview with "Ethics and Armed Forces", researcher Dr. Deanna Messervey from the Canadian Department of National Defence answers questions about fast thinking and slow thinking, ethical risk factors and ways to avoid the slippery slope of moral transgressions on and off operations.

Dr. Messervey, you are a social psychologist working in the field of military ethics. How did you start your research?

I am a defence scientist in the Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis (DGMPRA), within the Commander Military Personnel Command (CMPC). DGMPRA conducts research that supports the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and the Department of National Defence (DND), including leadership, sexual misconduct, retention, well-being, inclusion, and culture. Early in my career, I was tasked with assessing ethical culture and other ethics-related outcomes using the Defence Ethics Survey. I was also tasked with addressing the question of why there were rank group differences in ethical attitudes and intentions in the Human Dimension of Operations survey. This work led to the development of the Defence Ethics Personnel Research Program.

And what did you find out about ethics in the Human Dimension of Operations survey?

Initially, the survey was administered to CAF personnel on deployment to assess combat readiness and unit climate. When Canadian troops went to Afghanistan, it was supple-

Profile

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mented with some ethics items that overlapped with previous MHAT surveys[1] like reporting an in-group member for mistreating non-combatants or unnecessarily damaging private property. Unlike the MHAT surveys, the HDO survey asked about the willingness to intervene. A key question was to understand why CAF members are more willing to intervene than to report unethical behaviour and why this difference is largest among junior non-commissioned members. This research question required a multidisciplinary approach which includes understanding the military culture in units where there has been ethical failure in missions abroad and understanding decision-making at large, especially moral decision-making and drivers of (un)ethical behaviour.

Let us take an extremely shocking example. The so-called "Brereton Report" states that between 2009 and 2012, at least 39 noncombatants or POW were brutally killed by members of the Australian Special Air Services Regiment. In this and other cases, laws and behavioral standards were absolutely clear but violated nonetheless. How can this happen?

What drives behavior clearly is not just knowing what the rules are. One of the key things that come to mind is ethical culture. In research, ethical culture is often discussed in terms of whether an organization creates the conditions that foster ethical or unethical behaviour. Many of the conditions that foster an unethical culture were an issue in this and other high-profile cases. For example: Is leadership promoting ethical conduct or not? The report clearly showed that leadership was an issue. Another one is secrecy, lack of oversight and accountability, which also creates a problematic environment. If, for example, a violation of International Humanitarian Law occurs without any consequences, it will reinforce that behaviour. What is also often present in those cases, more generally speaking, is an individual whose values are not necessarily in line with those of the organization, but who can have a huge influence on others.

According to a definition by David Todd and Paolo Tripodi, behavioral ethics is "the exploration and comprehension of the circumstances under which we might engage in behavior contrary to our own ethical values"[2]. Could you explain this more in detail?

It is worth noting that often our behaviour is consistent with our values. That said, sometimes it is not and it is important to understand why. Values are enduring goals that serve as guiding principles in people's lives. They are really abstract and often devoid of context. Behaviour is much more concrete. Hypothetical moral dilemmas, which often ask what you ought to do, do not take into account how you are feeling, and how uncomfortable it can be when you are in a real situation. There is also no imminent consequence to your behavior when you think hypothetically; and the more something is in the future, the more aligned in terms of your values you will think about it. From a neuroscience lens, hypothetical moral dilemmas use the neural network associated with imagination, whereas real moral dilemmas are associated with social evaluations and emotionally relevant information. So, there are real differences between how we process real events versus hypothetical events. Taken together, the situation will have a profound impact on our actions, and this can vary by individuals. And in a military environment, organizational factors can have a huge influence.

Could you name a few of those "risk factors" and how they influence our ethical reasoning and behaviour?

First of all, it's important to know that the same situation or factor can actually increase or decrease ethical behaviour. Time pressure, for example. If you have to engage in deliberation about what you should do, then time pressure will probably not be your friend. But if doing the right thing automatically has already been practiced and you don't have to engage in self-control, then time pressure does not necessarily mean you're going to act unethically. So practice is important, automaticity is important.

To start with, there are several important individual factors; one of them is moral identity. Moral identity means that doing the right thing is an important part of your sense of self relative to other characteristics. Another one is self-control. Like other traits, it can vary across individuals but it can also be influenced by situations, for example people can have more self-control in the morning but just through the hustles of the day, they can have less by the afternoon, and this is in ideal circumstances where people do not have to deal with major stressors like combat or some of the situations

It is worth noting that often our behaviour is consistent with our values. That said, sometimes it is not and it is important to understand why

that are found on operations. If this already happens at a very low level outside of a military scenario, you can imagine what happens under extreme conditions.

That means that it does not only depend on a person's individual traits or capacities, but also on the situation he or she has to cope with?

That's right. In a military environment, a key situational risk factor for unethical behavior that has been implicated in many high-profile situations is seeing someone being killed in action. Knowing this is going to be important for leaders and organizations to teach people what to do in those situations.

But also, and this is something that is less talked about, going into a new culture where the rules about what is considered morally acceptable are different can be a risk factor for unethical behavior. For example, when people on a navy ship go to some place where no one knows who they are, so there is anonymity and different moral standards, the research suggests that these types of conditions can increase the likelihood of justifying bad behaviour: "It's okay over here, so why can't I do it?"

And what about the influence of the organization as a whole?

From an organizational perspective, ethical culture is important. And in military organizations,

authority really matters; those who are in positions of authority have an enormous impact on behaviour. In a study, we invited people to complete a survey and looked at response rates after giving them different reminders to complete the survey. We observed the biggest impact on response rates when people in a position of authority encouraged participation.

When you are in a position of leadership, you may look at your followers in a more abstract

When you are not thinking about your values, it is really easy to engage in behaviour that does not live up to your values and still feel good about yourself

way. But your followers are looking at you very closely! Very subtle things in your behaviour will be noticed in a way that wouldn't be noticed if you were not in that position. Therefore, modelling ethical behavior is critical in terms of creating organizations where people act ethically. It is probably one of the most important factors, along with the influence of other people in your unit.

Are all those factors which you have just explained interrelated?

Yes, oftentimes they can be. Imagine a soldier on deployment who has witnessed someone being killed in action and that person has low self-control. And what if the leaders have not demonstrated strong leadership in that situation? That would further increase the risk of unethical behavior.

After all, it seems clear that unethical behaviour is not just a question of "bad character"?

Certain individuals may be an issue, but oftentimes when we see major ethical failures within the military, other factors have been at play. For example, having a culture that values protecting the group is a risk factor. Of course, it has many positive aspects, such as people being willing to risk their lives to protect others, supporting a mission, and working well with others. But protecting your in-group can lead to competing loyalties. Donna Winslow[3]

identified how competing loyalties – a loyalty to the society or the organization as a whole, but also a sometimes more pronounced loyalty to your immediate team – played a crucial role in the now disbanded Canadian Airborne Regiment when members tortured and killed a noncombatant. If the descriptive norms within a team are not aligned with the expectations of the organization, that can be very problematic. Sometimes it means that people will not report transgressions. And if somebody speaks up, they often become targeted because they broke the group's moral code. But protecting individuals who are clearly engaging in unethical behaviour, especially violating the law of armed conflict, is problematic in many ways. In addition to those directly hurt, it can also hurt and have a detrimental effect on those who witness it as well as the people who acted unethically.

Considering all these factors that influence our behaviour, would it be right to say that people are constantly lying to themselves about their moral goodness?

With behavioral ethics and social psychology, what we can say is how *groups* of people will act and that they may not live up to their expectations. But it is also worth noting that there are lots of examples of goodness that you could not predict, like when somebody falls onto the track of a subway line and a stranger risks their life to save that person. I think more research has to be done to understand how we can encourage a society which fosters that kind of goodness in people.

It also seems possible to "activate" someone's moral identity. What does this mean?

People feel very good about themselves when they act in accordance with their moral standards, and they feel bad when they do not. But even someone with a strong moral identity could fail to live up to their internalized standards. We are very good at disengaging from our moral standards. When you are not thinking about your values, it is really easy to engage in behaviour that does not live up to your values and still feel good about yourself. But when you are reminded to think about the person you

want to be – as we say, "the kind of person your kids (or your dog) think you are" – you are more likely to act in accordance with your long-term values. Likewise, religious reminders can foster ethical behaviour, possibly because they activate your moral identity.

But how can this be done in the military?

There is a whole body of research about all those psychological maneuvers that people use. Herbert Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton's book *Crimes of Obedience*[4] – which is worth reading – is one of the best examples explaining how the military organization can have a huge influence on its members' behaviour. In the first chapter of their book, they use the example of My Lai and the psychological processes at play. For example, they found that when military personnel received unethical orders from their leaders, they were more willing to act unethically. They use the term "authorization" to describe how people do not feel accountable for their actions when obeying orders (including unethical ones) because they don't feel like they are even making a decision. There are others, like routinization, when things become so automatic that we do not even think about moral considerations. Dehumanization, describing and thinking about the enemy as less than human, especially comparing them to animals is also extremely problematic. There is also a lot of research showing how conditions of anonymity impact your behaviour in a negative way. Having face-paint on, for example, can increase the risk of people acting more brutally.

Therefore, making people feel identified is a powerful tool. Not only leaders, but also peers can do that; if they think that somebody in their unit is about to do something unethical, for example, they can call them by their name, at least by a nickname if it is right in front of the enemy, so they are reminded of who they are.

How can all this knowledge be integrated into a more "realistic", comprehensive ethics education?

First of all, it is absolutely vital to have clear rules that are well understood. But as we've seen, that is not enough on its own. Although teaching the rules in advance is important, it often is not enough to shape behaviour. It may not inevitably come to mind in a high-stress environment where the temptation to act unethically is high, so having training conditions very close to realistic conditions is the key part of it.

When it comes to ethics, leader-led training is one way where leaders can really step up, help create those conditions and encourage the people within their unit to remind others to act in accordance with the expectations and standards of their organization.

Talking about specific battlefield scenarios has also proved to be an effective way. After the MHAT IV survey, there was a follow-up intervention study which aimed to improve ethical attitudes and behaviour.[5] In addition to leader-led training, they used video vignettes or movie scenes with professional actors. This was a very powerful way to present soldiers with specific situations like war crimes, for example, and then let them discuss it. Having not only your leaders talk about it but also your buddies who you are going on operations with conveys some very valuable information about what they believe is the right thing to do.

The gold standard in terms of ethics training, especially for groups or units who work in high risk situations, would be to have injects into actual training where people can be confronted with these kinds of difficult situations. Just unexpectedly throw in a scenario where there's a real sense of confusion, for that shock and surprise can have a paralyzing effect. Afterwards, groups can then discuss what they would have done better if they were confronted with a similar situation in the future during the debriefing. Teaching that at the working level, and having a bottom-up-approach to the strategies that can be used is very valuable.

But if you can't have those realistic injects or interventions?

There are many things you can do even in a classroom. In a group environment, you can ask people what they *would actually* do. That change in language makes a real difference. When you ask people "What should you do?", they will probably give you the textbook answer. But if you ask what they would actually do, they

have to think about their words and they may feel greater discomfort, which helps them be better prepared for realistic situations.

Imagine a senior leader or someone of a more senior rank than you doing something morally questionable. Supporting and obeying leaders is not seen as just a job requirement, but it can also be seen as a moral obligation for some people. So, thinking about how to address ethical issues in advance of a real situation is important because it is very challenging to think of an appropriate response if you are

Teaching ethics through deliberation and reflection alone may not be sufficient for ethical decision making that takes place under stressful conditions

feeling stress, especially for someone challenging a person in a position of authority. I think more effort is needed with that.

Taken together, especially in a military environment: Make things as specific as possible. Try to get more emotion into the classroom, by having people speaking up or role playing.

You have alluded to the famous idea of "fast thinking" and "slow thinking". Could you explain how those two types of thinking work, and how they are related to moral decision-making?

This refers to different ways of thinking. Keith Stanovich and Ryan West[6] first used the term System 1 to refer to intuitive thinking that is fast and effortless, happens without your awareness and does not require controlled attention, and they used the term System 2 to refer to thinking that is generally slow and effortful and requires a lot of concentration and controlled attention because it is linked to our central working memory. Daniel Kahneman[7] popularized the terms System 1 and System 2 in his book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. It is worth noting that Stanovich[8] later co-authored a follow-up journal article where he recommended that people stop using the terms System 1 and 2 and to use the terms Type 1 and Type 2 processing instead.

Regardless of which term you use to describe deliberative thinking, our ability to engage in deliberation is highly impaired under conditions of stress. This means that teaching ethics through deliberation and reflection alone may not be sufficient for ethical decision making that takes place under stressful conditions. I recommend supplementing ethics training with strategies rooted in Type 1 thinking[9].

And what could those strategies be?

If-then-rules, for example. "If situation x occurs, do action y", so if you see someone being killed in action, do deep breathing, because when you exhale longer than you inhale, it will activate your parasympathetic nervous system; or maybe something more active like progressive relaxation: "If you see someone killed in action, squeeze your right hand and hold it for 15 or 20 seconds, and then relax, then take your left hand and do the same…" That can bring down the level of stress and help you think more clearly.

But isn't Type 2 thinking more valuable or desirable than Type 1? Or is that a misunderstanding?

Both, Type 1 and Type 2 thinking, can lead to ethical or unethical behaviour. But when there is high stress, especially when we experience visceral states, like disgust or fatigue, when we are hungry, angry, or "hangry", we can get caught up in the heat of the moment, which can lead to not acting in accordance with our long-term values. But most of the time, people act ethically even without engaging in deliberative Type 2 thinking. When you drive on a highway and someone cuts you off, you may think about responding in an angry way… But you will usually overcome your impulses and get on with your day.

But sometimes it might also be important to understand things more in depth and use Type 2?

Absolutely, it has an important role to play. Thinking about what is the right thing to do is really an important question. And also thinking about how to create the conditions

under which you are more likely to act in accordance with your values may require Type 2 processing.

Can all these findings also be useful for situations off the battlefield or military operations?

Of course. An important point is that you do not develop a completely new type of decision-making in a theatre of war, it is more the severity or the intensity of the situation that varies. A lot of research which has been informing military or behavioral ethics with regards to military situations is from a non-military research context, based on decision-making research and influencing factors at large. What we can learn from academic research is that even small stressors, like being under time pressure, for example, can lead us to act in ways that you would not expect. Think of the famous 1973 study of the Good Samaritan[10], which showed that people who were in a rush were less likely to help; it doesn't mean that they did not value doing the right thing, but it tells us common stressors, like time pressure, can increase the likelihood of people acting in ways that are not aligned with their values. Another common experience that can impair your decision-making is lack of sleep. People are less likely to help when they are tired, they will think less cooperatively under certain conditions. Even our ability to engage in deliberative decision-making can be impacted by whether it is right before lunch or a coffee break.

With all that knowledge and research in your mind, when you look at the wars in Ukraine or the Middle East, how do think about it? What strikes you the most and what do you recommend?

People may be feeling anger and disgust right now because some of their most sacred values have been violated. Unfortunately, anger and disgust can increase the likelihood of people acting in ways that are inconsistent with their long-term values. For example, people may be more willing to morally disengage, so they may not feel that moral standards apply to their enemy in this situation. Strong leader-ship that discourages comparing the enemy to animals, promotes a group identity that is aligned with International Humanitarian Law, encourages people to think from a long-term perspective and to consider the perspectives of others may help minimize ethical risk but there is no easy solution.

Dr. Messervey, thank you very much for the interview.

Questions by Rüdiger Frank

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MILITARY ETHICS – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

For the Special section in this issue, the editors of "Ethics and Armed Forces" have presented experts from various countries with a six-item list of questions on the subject of military ethics and ethics education in their respective armed forces. These pages do not claim to be representative, but are intended to provide further illustrative material for the question of a common European approach in this area.

UNITED KINGDOM

What is your and your country's understanding of military ethics? What does it essentially deal with, and what is its main task?

It is fortunate for Britain that the universal language gaining traction year on year is English, opening up the world in normal knowledge, discourse and professional understanding. But this has its problems, as the USA particularly and other nations using it internationally are developing new English languages, with dynamics of their own from other cultures. This does not always assist in true universal understanding. For instance, the meaning of terms 'moral' (from French and Latin) and 'ethical' (from Greek) are confused.

The national learning culture of Britain, led by England the dominant nation, has been Aristotelian and empirical. Until recently the nation has always had problems with abstractions and complicated nouns, in relation to verbs. The British military has always been disdainful of intellectualization, again until recently (since 1989 to give it a date), and what has been learnt as 'ideal' war that adjective in mainstream English has a different meaning from Clausewitz's. Practicality had taken precedence over theory, but in Britain theory has been tackled with characteristic enthusiasm in recent years. That is not to say that there were some or many very intelligent officers in previous generations, bringing about peace after war.

During the Cold War, the British military certainly grasped the character of 'nuclear deterrence theory', but 'military ethics' was not spoken about, researched or taught, other than

in the background in the publication 'Law of Armed Conflict' (LOAC), military law and service discipline, articulated or understood by osmosis. The British Amed Forces were highly successful and professional. Interestingly AF professionalism was developed alongside the recognition and practice of strong 'leadership' by commissioned officers and non-commissioned officers, for the Army under the Sandhurst mission of 'Serve to Lead' from as long ago as 1947. Teaching and developing the leadership function carried the British Army through the period of de-colonization, Cold War, Northern Ireland operations, the Falklands' and first Gulf war of 1992.It was after then that moral understanding was becoming more questionable in British society and ethical principles were first considered as becoming of main stream military concern.

Since 2000, what one can call 'institutional' and 'operational ethics', have been embraced and research-led by various people within the military infrastructure and by outside independent academics. Codes of conduct as 'Values and Standards' have been embraced willingly and meaningfully. This intellectualization process has been accepted, as well as practical wisdom, even though the term *'phronesis'* (Aristotle) is not on everyone's lips, while 'common sense' (G.E. Moore) is.

Finally, the military profession is highly regarded and trusted, above many other institutions of state. This is due to the persistent voluntariness of the Armed Forces over history, conscription rejected. The 'Military Covenant' was introduced formally in 2000, and is now the 'Armed Forces Covenant'. This expresses the acceptance of the contradiction of using 'force of good' and the 'ethics of fighting power', at best a reserved power for which armed forces exist.

Is there a public debate in your country on related issues? If yes, on which ones?

There is normally little public debate in Britain on the 'just war theory' and 'ethics of war'. The public tends to sway instinctively towards the 'underdog' in international relations. The advanced nature of accountability and specific 'public enquiries' – such as the Chilcot Report

on the Iraq Inquiry of 2016, exposing mistakes over the invasion of Iraq in 2003 – are well received and indicating that lessons learnt will be a matter of trust between people, government and the military (Clausewitzean 'trinity').

Do you see any commonalities between the EU member states and other European countries in the understanding and/or concrete questions of military ethics? If so, what are they?

The people of the British Isles have seen 'defence' rather differently in history without the number of external borders faced by most European nation-states. This has made 'defence' a more simple concept and practice. Only three times has Britian faced existential threat since 1066, twice briefly and once of longer duration.

The nature, study and education of 'military ethics' – in the view of this writer, who took part in the St Cyr published research exercise (2013-16) – has been greatly influenced by the military-cultural narrative of the flux and history of the nation-states of Europe from Spain to the Urals.

That having been said this author sees huge convergence in recent years on the subject of the 'ethics of defence', but still with language and cultural difficulties as noted above.

Has the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine led to a significant change in that sense?

Some in Britain saw the invasion of Ukraine coming. To others there was a massive 'willing suspension of disbelief' beforehand (S.T. Coleridge). The British people, expanding in cosmopolitan ways, are optimistic and this writer – visiting Ukraine in 2000-02 in 'defence sector reform' interventions – with others considered that a spirit of 'détente' was developing. Other forces prevailed.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is not well understood in Britain although Human Rights law is. The reaction from February 2022 has been hugely supportive of the people of Ukraine. But the thinking public has great difficulty in understanding Russian aggression, putting world history back one or two hundred years in development. Political, military, social

and humanitarian assistance has flowed generously to support the Ukrainian people.

It is obvious that the just war theory requires revisiting. Some thinkers in Europe believe that *jus post bellum* (references supplied if required) and *jus ad bellum* are only loosely connected. Common sense and intuition indicate the opposite – of cause and effect – and it is suggested that if asked many people in Britain would agree.

To what extent and for whom are ethics and military ethics part of military training and education? Who gives the classes?

'Values and Standards' are now part of the curriculum of training in every part of the British Armed Forces, and thereafter developmental training, with military ethics education for promoted ranks, particularly officers.

Since about 2010 'military ethics' education and training has been led by the UK Defence Academy, with in-house academics in partnership with military staff. Despite attempts, including as often recommended by this writer, there is still no formal MOD 'doctrine' as such, on account of coyness in articulating empirical findings, which can change with each new operation and campaign. Although since 1989, the 'moral component' of military 'capability and power' was identified as being different from the 'physical' and 'conceptual' (intellectual), lack of military doctrine in support of IHL and LOAC is problematical.

In your opinion, what are the most important questions or the most pressing problems of today that military ethics should address?

a. What are the dynamics of changing connexions between '*jus post bellum*' and '*jus ad bellum*'?

b. What are the inter-connexions between 'military ethics' and 'existential threats' to humankind and the planet?

Profile

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AUSTRIA

What is your and your country's understanding of military ethics? What does it essentially deal with, and what is its main task?

Military ethics is about reflecting on decision-making situations that arise for professional soldiers (and, similarly, for those doing military service and civilian personnel), bearing in mind that the scope for decision-making depends on the hierarchical level. The main task of military ethics, as I see it, is to present the different ethical systems (ethics of duty, virtue and utility), the basic conception of humanity and what it means to serve in the armed forces in Austria, based on the relevant legal texts (Federal Constitution, the general service regulations for the armed forces, human rights declarations), along with

Just because one state violates the international order does not give all other states carte blanche for their own (planned or impulsive) breaches of the law

concrete examples of decisions and their consequences (recent incidents in the Austrian armed forces mentioned in the report of the Parliamentary Armed Forces Commission and the Disciplinary Commission, incidents during overseas missions). In keeping with the tradition of the Military Order of Maria Theresia, the focus is on successful examples, courageous correct decisions that might as well have been refrained from without punishment.

Is there a public debate in your country on related issues? If yes, on which ones?

Because the military tends to be perceived more as a domestic disaster relief force and assistance organization – for guarding embassies and policing border areas, for example – specific issues in military ethics are rarely the subject of public debate. When it comes to "comprehensive national defense" under the Austrian constitution, however, there is a recurring discussion about Austria's continuing neutral status that is at least linked to military ethics. Political questions, such as which international missions Austria should participate in, and in what form, are also relevant to military ethics in the broadest sense.

Do you see any commonalities between the EU member states and other European countries in the understanding and/or concrete questions of military ethics? If so, what are they?

The main similarities are found in the basic documents. For European countries, the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with the associated European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg reflect the European conception of humanity, which stems from the roots of Greco-Roman antiquity and the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition. These rights and freedoms are also enshrined in the Austrian constitution, and they clearly define the limits of any military action (even in the face of arguments based on utility ethics and motivated by day-to-day politics).

Furthermore, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ties almost all EU states together and the actions of state institutions are bound by this common catalog of rights.

Since all European states are also members of the United Nations and many other international organizations (such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)), or have signed relevant conventions with military significance (Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War on Land, Hague Convention for the Protection of Cul-

tural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, etc.), these principles can also be regarded as shared principles of a European military ethics.

Has the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine led to a significant change in that sense?

On the contrary. Despite all the media propaganda, it is precisely in the case of this attack that adhering to the principles of international humanitarian law in the larger context and military ethics on a personal level is of central importance. Just because one state violates the international order does not give all other states carte blanche for their own (planned or impulsive) breaches of the law. It is sad to note that this war has produced many new examples of how controversial weapons systems with long-term consequences for the civilian population (e.g. cluster munitions) are judged differently by the media depending on whether the aggressors or defenders are using them. With a view to Ukraine's future (and based on experiences of deadly remnants of war that are still found today in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Kosovo), a strong military ethics might provide an even better explanation as to why certain weapons systems are outlawed internationally. It could possibly even draw political decision-makers' and the public's attention to the existing conventions and their purpose. After all, the law of armed conflict is there to be observed precisely during such conflicts, not in peacetime before and after the war at academic conferences or political conventions. Military ethics could explain why, contrary to all day-to-day political utilitarianism, upholding international norms is vitally important (and essential for survival).

To what extent and for whom are ethics and military ethics part of military training and education? Who gives the classes?

Military ethics is taught as a subject during the training of professional military personnel, but not to military service conscripts or civilian employees (this might be an option in the future). As part of NCO training at Austria's Army Non-Commissioned Officers' Academy (HUAk), the military chaplaincy handles ethics training (16 teaching units for *Unteroffiziere* (NCOs), 10 for *Stabsunteroffiziere* (senior NCO ranks)). For prospective officers, military ethics is part of the "Leadership, Law, Morality" module, which is taught by various senior teaching officers and guest lecturers at the Theresian Military Academy. The National Defense Academy has its own chair of ethics, which is responsible for the most advanced courses (for example the Master's degree course – general staff course, or the basic training course for specialists such as doctors, psychologists or other academics).

In your opinion, what are the most important questions or the most pressing problems of today that military ethics should address?

In my view, there are currently three particularly pressing challenges for military ethics, which I would summarize as singularization, digitalization and tribunalization.

The various anti-pandemic measures of the recent past intensified a process that has been underway in many European countries for a long time: a singularization of the individual. Spatial isolation merely made visible a social isolation that began much earlier. Yet a spirit of camaraderie and showing consideration for one another are essential in military life – knowing the strengths and weaknesses of individual group members and providing targeted support based on ability. In any kind of training, it is dangerous if the group disintegrates into individuals who have lost all sense of solidarity, who want to achieve and enjoy their goals alone – even at the expense of their fellow soldiers. A focus on what unites us, and on the fact that military goals can (almost) always only be achieved

Profile
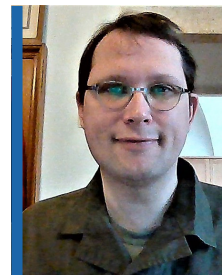
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together by integrating different talents and skills, would be one aspect of military ethics training.

The digitalization of life and the delegation of certain decisions to convenient "smart" solutions is an everyday reality, and it massively simplifies routine processes like personnel and materials management. However, many people are starting to complain about the lack of control, or perceive the loss of control as a personal affront (the "machine" can do something better than me) – and not just since AI entered the scene. To avoid sinking into a modern-day Luddism, a smart military ethics can give prominence to the soldier's role as user of any legal technology, and establish the primacy of humans and their mili-

Even if it goes against the spirit of the times, military ethics can invite caution, restraint, careful examination of data, facts and opinions, and level-headed statements

tary leadership decisions over the suggestions of automated "battle computers". At the same time, to remain credible, such a military ethics must also be able to impose the same criteria on the development, acquisition, implementation and use of such systems.

Media and social networks encourage the trend of immediately taking a definitive stance on every issue, while at the same time condemning all those who do not share this opinion. This is increasingly leading to verbal as well as physical excesses and activism, including terror. Even if it goes against the spirit of the times, military ethics can invite caution, restraint, careful examination of data, facts and opinions, and level-headed statements. It can also defend the judicial competence of national and international bodies (such as the International Criminal Court) against the court of supposedly public opinion and political grandstanding, thereby providing certainty for the individual soldier. Finally, military ethics can point to the success story of the development of human rights – even when confronted

with all manner of totalitarian systems – which terrorists of all kinds dismiss as unimportant, citing the shortage of time in "final", apocalyptic decision-making scenarios.

In the best case, military ethics strengthens individuals who responsibly practice their profession as soldiers for their home country, the entire human family, and nature too – not because they are forced into it, but because they want to do with joy what they recognize to be right.

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