

**The Changing Nature of  
Civil-Military Relations and Military Leadership**

# *Soldiership without Existence – The Changing Environment for Military Decision-Makers*

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## **Introduction**

When the Iraq War began on 20 March, 2003, the eyes of the media everywhere began to look for experts to explain the reasons and progress of the war. As a rather surprising fact, it was military officers who received most of the media attention in commenting on the war rather than analysts from foreign affairs administrations. The media was no longer interested in politicians alone; officers have also come into the limelight as stakeholders in the expertise of politics and international relations. While this is not totally new, the globalization of war through the media is a rather new phenomenon. Along with it, the roles of professional soldiers have changed.

The 1990s and the end of the Cold War presented the defense systems of most of the Western countries with completely new challenges. Political directives and operational tasks for military organizations and officers were no longer so clear after all. With terrorism and asymmetric warfare at time of uncertainty began. The media took advantage of this time of great changes. The military establishments transformed into postmodern armed forces and rearranged regarding their organizational structure, information technology, and training and education reforms at various levels.

This paper describes five different phenomena of postmodern warfare. The *first* phenomenon is the changing role of military decision-makers and combat commanders in present-day missions. Military leaders have become more and more influential in the overall political situation of a conflict. The *second* one is the genealogy of the change in Western military culture. Being Western influences how we understand the meaning of violence. We can observe the move from the warrior culture to the instrumental or technological culture in warfare. Electronic visualization, in particular, determines our way of seeing the world and issues of violence and war. The *third* phenomenon is the

socio-psychological dimension of how we use power against other human being and potential adversaries and how we can use modern training or conditioning techniques to overcome the inclination to posture. The *fourth* phenomenon is psychological warfare in postmodern war and crises where quite often traditional weapons and strategies cannot be used. In this context, the increasing significance of global media presence and the zero-tolerance of Western publics on war campaigns and casualties play a major role. The *fifth* phenomenon is the leisure-seeking techno-culture of the West and its vulnerability to terrorism. The network-based societies have obviously become the main target of terrorist groups and since the public audiences create their feelings of security mostly through the global media, terrorism has become a constant part in the threat images of the Western world.

### **The Changing Role of the Military Commander**

Fettweis argues that the affect of military decision-makers on diplomacy is underappreciated and under-analyzed. Today, the combat commander is virtually excluded from the interagency process at least in the upper levels of government, despite his increasing dual role as a diplomat and a warrior (Fettweis, 1-2).

In the US, for example, the president is by far the most important figure or symbol in the country's foreign policy and the influence of other actors is more or less directly related to their distance – both institutionally and, in some sense, physically – from him. The president can appoint anyone he wants to be on his personal staff for foreign policy (Fettweis, 5).

According to Fettweis, especially in the U.S. members of Congress or Parliament simply lack the expertise, and the interest, to remain involved in foreign policy issues. The military commanders have generally enjoyed a good relationship with the Congress, especially in the Republican-controlled Congresses of the 1990s, and have been able to secure large budgets for their respective military components. Commanders regularly fly throughout their mission areas to meet with international leaders, often accompanied by entourages that thwart those of ambassadors. Commanders in the field have an increasing

presence with interest groups and media representatives all of whom have a significant affect on executive decisions. While the U.S. public did not know that General Norman Schwarzkopf was the Commander of Central Command, they knew that he was the Commander in Chief of Desert Storm in 1991. The new generation of combatant commanders has fully realized the power the media has and they are able to use it ever more effectively (Fettweis, 8).

Technology made it possible for the commander to be involved in every step of the policy process. Colin Powell, then the Joint Chief of Staff, had great influence on the decisions made by the political leaders during the Gulf War of 1991. A similar situation occurred during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 between the defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld and General Tommy Franks. As a result of technological development and globalization, the commander of the future is likely to be more involved in grand strategy, while in day-to-day command and control micro-decisions lower echelons assume more responsibility and independence. Real-time information can be relayed to the Pentagon just as easily as it can be to Central Command Headquarters in Tampa or to the Pacific Command in Honolulu. Generals today conduct their daily meetings via video conference systems and modern decision-makers get more pertinent information from the twenty-four hour public media coverage than they would probably like to admit (Fettweis, 14).

What kind of morals and values influence the changing roles of Western military decision-makers in the political relations? What made the emergence of the current situation possible?

### **The Difference between Shame and Guilt Culture**

According to Coker, Japan had, unlike the West, a shame culture rather than a guilt culture. The guilt culture of the West manifests itself in rational abstractions such as the moral law, which human beings internalize. We feel permanently guilty about our behaviour, especially when we used violent means toward others. One result is that our attention turns to the victim.

Shame, by contrast, is more narcissistic. It involves a strong sense of being at a disadvantage or inferior. The ensuing sense of powerlessness is exacerbated when it involves external sources in the sense of degradation and humiliation imposed by the outside world (Coker, 2).

Bombers, flamethrowers, and nuclear bombs ended the motto of “Death before dishonour”. For the true warrior, violence is existential. Through violence a warrior comes to know himself and, in a sense, creates himself in the danger of battle anew. Like Nietzsche said, the true warrior is a moral agent to whom, like for the Samurais, death carries the existential meaning of life.

While the Western culture has known the warrior image, as depicted in Homer’s Iliad, it appears as if we have forgotten the existential, tragical, and even poetical dimension of war. If Heidegger was right that the whole history of human thought and existence had been dominated and characterized by man’s understanding of *being*; then the disorientation of modern thought and existence is rooted in the “forgetfulness about being”. The first question that we have to ask if we investigate the meaning of being is: “Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing?” Following Heidegger’s existentialist postulate that the most difficult dimension in the whole Western history have been the concepts of “time” and “nothing”, if we no longer care whether anything is or not, and how much time something takes to be accomplished, this will have profound impact on our existence. In creating our own technological world and artificial intelligence we diminish the factor of time and promote the “nothing”.

Why is the postmodern Western world not interested in the most fundamental and ultimate question? According to Heidegger, it is because the ultimate question is essentially untimely; it is a question that never finds an immediate echo in the present. Postmodern people have no time to waste on seemingly “meaningless” questions to which there is no “right” answer. But, according to Heidegger, what is useless can still be strong, perhaps the only real strong thing (Heidegger 1987, 8). An analogy can be drawn to 11 September, 2001 when the people in the US were hit by something “meaningless” and when they wondered why other people abroad hated them so much.

Already in 1935, at the University of Freiburg, Heidegger argued in his lectures on Being that

“from a metaphysical point of view, Russia and America are the same; the same dreary technological frenzy, the same unrestricted organization of the average man. At a time when the farthest corner of the globe has been conquered by technology and opened to economic exploitation; when any incident whatever, regardless of where or when it occurs, can be communicated to the rest of the world at any desired speed; when the assassination of a king in France and a symphony in Tokyo can be “experienced” simultaneously; when time has ceased to be anything other than velocity, instantaneousness, and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from the lives of all peoples; when a boxer is regarded as a nation’s great man; when mass meetings attended by millions are looked on as a triumph – then, yes then, through all this turmoil a question still haunts us like a spectre: What for?-Whither?-And what then?” (Coker, 38).

When man is brought face to face with himself, man does not like what he sees and turns away from himself. In anxiety we feel that the threat is nowhere and everywhere, like the moment of death. In anxiety man manifest his being towards his own potential for being, and being free for the freedom of choosing himself. (Heidegger 1990, 230-232) Today, our moral commitment to war is no longer grounded in an abstract metaphysical principle, but on a biological commitment to avoid inflicting pain on others and to punish those who inflict pain on us. The problem is that the military is becoming divided between those who still see themselves as warriors, and those who see themselves as humanitarians (Coker, 73).

Warriors are people who realized the nature of their own freedom through courage, and their courage manifests in their willingness to risk their lives, not for the state, or a master, or a community, but for a universal value: freedom. “Freedom dies for fear of dying” is one of Hegel’s most telling maxims (Coker, 55).

As firepower became more intense, death became more impersonal and instrumental. The more independent the individual soldiers are from

sophisticated weapon systems, the more existential and intersubjective the battle and combat situations become. When the United States dropped the first atomic bombs on Japan, the intersubjective relationship with the enemy through the common activity as a “zoon politicon” ended. Nuclear weapons had become a negation of the principle of life.

Today the West is trying to humanize war more than ever before in order to make its practice consistent with our moral code. Critics hint to the fact that warfare has abandoned the existential dimension. Since war no longer defines the Self of man, Westerners cannot kill others and, at the same time, retain their self-respect. Since Vietnam, we tend to say that soldiers are not just killed, but *wasted*. In our postmodern world, death has become life-denying in every sense of the word. We totally separate “nothingness” from “being,” and postmodern soldiers are not able to discover themselves anymore in the battle space.

The Western world’s forgetfulness about the original meaning of Being created the idea that the image of “human” must be seen devoid of violence and death. According to Coker, the Western people became “human” by denying humanity to others, by treating the colonized hardly better than animals, or subhumans. The category *human* was thereby emptied of a universal meaning. After the events of September 11, Islamic fighters are no longer a party to a Western philosophical discourse. A terrorist is barbarian or evil. They have no rights of warriors and represent no *human* existential dimension. We do not understand our enemies anymore. Terrorists, unlike revolutionaries, have no place in the Western intellectual tradition.

Many of us never encounter the question of being or feel its inevitability. The whole question looms in moments of despair, when things tend to lose all their weight and all meaning becomes obscured. September 11 was the date on which the nature of warfare changed: the distinction between war and crime was eliminated (Coker, 10). The global over the local is one way to see war and fight for a purely instrumental and technological end. The question of being and the existential dimension of war are strongly rooted at the local levels where a group like the Al-Qaida asserts their own values.

Nietzsche's firsthand experience of military life when he was drafted into a regiment of field artillery in 1867, obviously convinced him that "only warriors or professional soldiers, men with calling to arms, should be expected to experience the horrors of war firsthand" (Coker, 12).

According to Nietzsche, the true warrior is a man who goes to war not for a utilitarian purpose (e.g., for serving the state), but to serve himself. Nietzsche disliked the fact that nationalism, for the first time, made it possible for every citizen to become a soldier. The rise of nationalism, populism, and democratic values made war instrumental. For Nietzsche, only an aristocratic class could respect its enemies, a democratic soldier-citizenry would not. Only warriors who recognized duties to their peers (including their enemies) could experience war as an intersubjective experience. Soldier-citizens, by contrast, would despise their enemies as thugs, criminals, and enemies to the cause, and would demand their unconditional surrender at the cost of engaging in interminable wars of attrition.

Media-war and psychological warfare – the old name of propaganda – supported by technology and artificial intelligence, were invented along with nationalism, populism, and democratic values. By creating the ideas of evolution and utilitarianism, the Western world forged a past that made it possible to create European modernity. The ancient Gods and the guilt of blood, the sacrifices and slaves were left to the past. War was no longer an expression of people's humanity and the Western people no longer understood the world through conflicts or tragedies. War and violence were no longer the way of courage to "become" a man. War was no longer a dynamic expression of the will to power.

Coker argues that Western culture is based on the Greek interest in human motivation. Telling is the fact that the Greek writers did not write any major manuals or even treatises on war, a fact that distinguishes them from the Chinese of the same era (Coker, 19). What we can find in the great forged tragedies is the refusal to present human beings who are in harmony with their world and are reluctant to live in a world that could instruct us how to be in harmony with it. The essence of danger in tragedy is ironic. The hero is usually unaware that

he has undone himself. The heroes were born into the world to take no rest for themselves and to give none to others. That restlessness led them to rethink war, to re-engineer its first principles and reinvent its rules. In our day it has become impossible to understand the world and international relations through tragedies. The idea and practice of subjective freedom, the Western mentality and humanity no longer understand war as a way of testing people's *vitality* or *morale*. In the past, vitality was neutral and it might be exercised for good or bad purpose. Today, we have to agree that vitality proven in war carries only a bad dimension.

Like the instrumental, the existential experience of war can be found in every culture. Still, it seems that globalization has dramatically changed the position of the existential experience compared to the instrumental one. According to Clausewitz, reason gives as an instrumental idea of war as war serves the reason of the state. But war is often so intense that through the prism of experience it becomes the ultimate existential experience. Its existentiality also derives from another dimension as well: the ambiguous relationship between the warrior and the adversary. This inter-subjective realm is ambiguous because the enemy has to be killed, but not dishonored. Today the battlefield can be everywhere and dishonoring the adversary or innocent people have become an unwritten rule. War has changed its shape like everything else in the Western social culture. Since and since the Vietnam War the battlefield is no longer the place where warriors discover themselves.

What is interesting about the Greeks, according to Coker, is that they asked not only the first-order question: What makes us human? But also the second-order question: What makes us Greek? In distancing themselves, the Greeks also wanted to earn the respect of "others". Homer had shown that to be humanistic, a warrior must respect the enemy. The object of war is to defeat the enemy, not to humiliate him (Coker, 37). In today's postmodern wars, when the human dimension is taken away from the adversary, humiliating captured enemies and even innocent people results as an almost logical consequence.

In the Western world we are talking about the use of military force, but we are no longer talking about war. The attempt to humanize war for

one's own soldiers and the viewers back home is making man increasingly vulnerable to the kind of asymmetric strategies we saw demonstrated in the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2001. Humanism has turned warless. Coker highlights that President Bill Clinton fired a cruise missile every three days during his presidency; American and allied pilots flew 200.000 air sorties between 1991 and 2001. Cruise missiles and air strikes are the preferred means for societies who no longer find it easy to live with war as a concept. Force protection has become the highest priority and conducting a mission is as important as protecting postmodern soldiers. Highly technological weapons systems and its users and operators – postmodern soldiers – became the popular euphemism for killing (Coker, 62-65).

### **Visualization Determines our Way of Seeing the World**

In a world in which the movies and media determine our perception of that world to a very large extent, the sense of the tragic and existential is largely absent. Today the scrutiny of media coverage of wars is unprecedented and exerts strong influence on the way Western democracies fight. The war in Bosnia in the first half of the 1990s, which claimed over 250.000 lives, passed almost without comment in Hollywood. All media that were not part of asymmetric assets showed the humanity of soldiers and the human face of armed conflict. The U.S., for instance, imposed strict controls on the mass media. Few gruesome pictures were shown during the Gulf War. Of the 1.104 Desert Storm photographs that appeared in the nation's three major news magazines, only thirty-eight showed actual combat, whereas 249 were catalogue-style photographs of military hardware (Coker, 66-68).

The global media turns the world into a single cognitive space. Modern soldiers are the products of a purely visual culture. As a result they are creatures of an age that has made violence largely virtual and war an entertainment that raises only few questions, moral or political.

In future warfare soldiers hardly ever see their human targets and will have no inter-subjective contact with their enemies. They have become displaced into their own weapons system and transformed into technicians. In this kind of war there is no place for emotion, fear,

courage, or even endurance. War has become just a housekeeping arrangement, a series of more or less routine tasks. Postmodern soldiers get their warrior standards from the outside.

According to Coker, computer-mediated communication is already changing the world we know, just as biotechnology is changing our bodies. Both are part of a cyber-cultural discourse in which we talk of *programming*. Human operations and actions have become more subordinate to machines than ever before. Soldiers identify themselves with the reality as seen on the computer screen. A cyber-body does not feel pain or actually die. A cyber-self that dies in cyberspace is no big deal because both the *person* and the *world* can be rebooted.

On the other hand, the most sophisticated and longest-standing application of technology is indeed more realistic than the living individual's experience of the world, for example the flying of a real plane. Pilots can learn more on a simulator than they would in the air. At the end, technology safeguards highly expensive military technology, "irrational" from human decision-making and acting. Virtual reality offers us total safety. Since we are not in danger, we feel little, if any, anxiety. As users, we are not at risk. Virtual reality is dangerous for that reason: it challenges our assumptions concerning authentic reality. When a mission is accomplished, one switches off the screen at the click of a button or mouse.

"Digital reality requires absolute conformity. It requires the same screens and keyboards, models, coded language, software and mental operations. As a result, information technology is standardizing war. It offer little scope for different cultural perceptions and very little for individuality of any kind. Everyone has to play by the same game" (Coker, 174).

As David Grossman argues, the Vietnam War was history's first *pharmacological* war. Unfortunately, drugs cause symptoms to remit, but they do not make pathologies disappear. The abuse of drugs in Vietnam merely served to delay the soldier's inevitable confrontation with pain, suffering, guilt and grief. That is why on their return home the incidence of trauma was so extensive, with 20.000 suicides and 40.000 registered drug addicts among the veterans in New York alone.

Anxiety is the result of a concrete event and existential experience, such as someone shooting at us. We should not try to eliminate it or control it with drugs. In short term elimination might help soldiers in combat, but after that, at home with the family the soldiers are walking “suicide bombs”. We know that pain and anxiety warn us when something is wrong or not familiar to us. According to Coker, in the future the capacity to act heroically, take risks, and lead from the front may become more of a function of chemical factors than of a soldier’s cultural, religious, or intellectual heritage. If we reduce fear and anxiety, we also reduce the support that comes from affirmations of solidarity and friendship, which traditionally have made war life-affirming as well as deadly (Coker, 180).

Ethics is grounded in ontology. That means that we must accept that we have a responsibility to others, to those not yet born and to those who will die. We cannot surrender existential and ontological responsibility to technology without surrendering our humanity. Technology is morally blind. No machine or computer can help us to fulfill our authentic responsibility. Unfortunately, post-modern human beings have become more and more objects of their own mechanical and technological creations. Machines are part of our humanity, not an alternative to it. As technology becomes more sophisticated, it would be increasingly difficult to experience war as a social phenomenon. Technology makes it impossible to understand the relationship between man and war in the traditional historical sense. War no longer tells us a story of how, for example, tyranny is defeated and freedom dearly bought. Technology is increasingly becoming an agent in social production.

### **Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War**

Very few researches have looked into the specific nature of the act of killing. According to Dave Grossman, every society has a blind spot and today that blind spot is killing. A century ago it was sex. During the Victorian era sex became hidden, private, mysterious, frightening, and especially dirty (Grossman, xxv).

Throughout history man has been surrounded by close and personal death and killing. When a family member died of disease, lingering injury, or old age they died at home. Until fairly recently, corpses were brought home and prepared for burial by the family. Modern medicine, hospitals, and mortuaries have insulated us now from death. Children have begun to grow up having never truly understood where their food comes from and where older people die. Death is now increasingly hidden, private, mysterious, frightening, and especially dirty.

“Yet at the same time that our society repress killing, a new obsession with the depiction of violent and brutal death and dismemberment of humans has flourished. The public appetite for violence in movies, particularly in splatter movies such as Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, Halloween and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre; the cult status of ‘heroes’ like Jason and Freddy; the popularity of bands with names like Megadeth and Guns N’ Roses; and skyrocketing murder and violence crime rates – all these are symptoms of a bizarre, pathological dichotomy of simultaneous repression and obsession with violence” (Grossman, xxvii-xxviii).

Modern training or conditioning techniques can only partially overcome the inclination to posture. The history of warfare can be seen as a history of finding more effective mechanisms for enabling and conditioning men to overcome their innate resistance to killing their fellow human beings. In many circumstances highly trained modern soldiers have fought poorly trained guerrilla forces, and the tendency of poorly prepared forces to instinctively engage in posturing mechanisms has given a significant advantage to the more highly trained force (Grossman, 13). The more Western people become comfort-loving, the more they must train to accept violence as part of human existence.

In World War II, only a few men actually fired at the enemy, while others gathered and prepared ammunition, loaded weapons, passed weapons, or fell back into obscurity and the anonymity of cover. Most soldiers were not trying to kill the enemy. They appeared to have not even wanted to fire in the enemy’s general direction and seemed to have an inner resistance to firing their weapons in combat. Today, in contrast, there are no situations on the battlefield to look another human

being in the eye, to make independent decisions to kill him, and to watch him die in the single-most basic, important, primal, and potentially traumatic occurrence of war. The media and high technology of our post-modern information society have done much to perpetuate the myth of easy killing and have thereby become part of society's unspoken conspiracy of deception that glorifies killing and war (Grossman, 22-35).

During World War II more than 800.000 men were classified as 4-F (unfit for military service) due to psychiatric reasons. The U.S. armed forces lost 500.000 men from the fighting effort because of psychiatric collapse. In World War II, psychiatric casualties were being discharged faster than new recruits were being drafted. In the brief 1973 Arab-Israeli War, almost a third of all Israeli casualties were due to psychiatric causes. In the 1982 incursion in Lebanon, Israeli psychiatric casualties were twice as high as the number of dead (Grossman, 43).

One of the reasons why fear may have been generally accepted as the major explanation for combat stress is that it has become socially acceptable. The acceptance of fear has become part of the postmodern Western culture. But we still tend to carefully avoid any examination of the different kinds of fear – fear of death, injury, failure, and so on. When the horror of war touches women, children, and the elderly rather than the trained and carefully selected soldiers, the psychological impact was sure to be even greater. Soldiers on patrols behind enemy lines – like civilians suffering from strategic bombing, prisoners of war receiving artillery fire, and sailors in modern naval combat – generally do not suffer psychiatric stress because, for the most part, the element that is most responsible for causing combat stress is not present: they are not obligated to engage in face-to-face aggressive activities against the enemy (Grossman, 53-62).

The psychological distinction between being a killer or a helper on the battlefield is one of the most important issues of soldiership. In the battlefield, there are lots of jobs for medics and rescue people. On the other hand, officers direct the killing but very seldom participate in it. They are buffered from the guilt of killing by the simple fact that they order it while others carry it out. Most officers in combat never fire a

shot at the enemy. It is a generally accepted tenet of modern Western warfare that if a high rank officer is shooting at the enemy, he is not doing his job. The new technology helps professional soldiers not to take warfare personally.

It is said that it is so much easier to kill someone if they look and behave distinctly differently from you. Some of the mechanisms that facilitate this psychological operation include:

- *Cultural* distance, such as racial and ethnical differences, which permit the killer to dehumanize the victim.
- *Moral* distance, which takes into consideration the kind of intense belief in moral superiority and vengeful actions associated with many civil wars.
- *Social* distance, which considers the impact of a lifetime of practice in thinking of a particular class as less than human in a socially stratified environment.
- *Mechanical* distance, which includes the sterile Nintendo-game unreality of killing through a TV screen, a thermal sight, a sniper sight, or some other kind of mechanical buffer that permits the killer to deny the humanity of his victim.

Typically, distance is a tool that overcomes our natural resistance to killing our own species. Through the technological way of killing we can think of the enemy as numbers. In reality, the problem of distinguishing murder from killing in combat is extremely complex. Common soldiers must first deny the guilt within them, and they must assure themselves that the world, the battlefield, and the horrific environment are not mad and irrational, that the victims and targets are less than animals, that they are evil vermin, and that what the nation or coalition and the leader and superiors have told them to do is right and just. For that reason, propaganda and various other crude forms of psychological enabling have always been present in warfare, but in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century psychology has had an impact as great as that of technology on the modern battlefield. In addition, modern military leaders understand that realistic training with immediate feedback to the soldier works, and they know that it is essential for the

success and survival on the modern battlefield (Grossman, 160-165, 209, 251, 255).

Practicing to kill has been made as realistic as possible. In order to overcome the killing resistance it is helpful if we can think of our opponent as a mere target and not as a human being. Modern soldiers use technology and artificial intelligence to react automatically. That is why psychological warfare is such an important element of postmodern warfare.

### **Psychological Warfare and Crises without Traditional Weapons**

By the early 1920s the pragmatic lessons of war, coupled with the prevailing wisdom of social psychology, had moved a growing sector of the American intelligentsia to two conclusions: First, the belief that a modern, large-scale society requires the service of a corps of experts, people who are specialized in the analysis and management of public opinion. Second, the conviction that these unseen engineers, as Harold Lasswell called them, were dealing with a fundamentally illogical public and that they must therefore learn to identify and master those techniques of communication that would have the most compelling effect on public attitudes and thinking (Ewen, 146).

As the world grew larger and more complex, people's ability to make sense of their universe was becoming less and less grounded in the terrain of immediate experience. In other words, public opinion was becoming an essentially irrational force. For the most part we do not first see and then define. We define first and then see. We pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive what we have picked out in the form of the stereotypes of our culture (Ewen, 149).

Psychological warfare is the phrase currently in use in the US for propaganda designed to achieve national policy goals in the world's political arena. However, decisions about propaganda are no more (and no less) "psychological" than decisions about boycotts or bombings: international propaganda is by no means confined to "warfare". The distinctive function of propaganda is to generate, through talk, the

effects on an audience's morale that such activities are designed to produce. What we are talking about, then, when we speak of "psychological warfare" is the use of symbols to promote policies, i.e., politics. Propaganda is politics conducted by the symbolization of events. It differs from other instruments of policy which act directly upon the material environment (e.g., battles, boycotts, blockades). Propaganda manipulates only the language in which such activities are talked about (Lerner, xiii-xiv).

Manipulation of the symbolic environment can itself produce major events in the political life of the world. Policy is the continuous effort to shape the future by decisions in the present. One requirement of sound policy is the clarification of goals; a second is their instrumentation. The two interact incessantly in the course of political life. Goals without an instrument constitute utopianism; an instrument without goals is nihilism. We can say that the latter is the typical situation in today's international relations. The Western world has technological power and skills, but the ideological ideas are not quite clear. Typically, the West has a big problem concerning the political situation in Iraq, Afghanistan, and North Korea (Lerner, *ibid.*).

The new feature of modern war propaganda is its extension to non-combatants. The modern war propaganda is one element of the development of war technique. There is no longer a distance between the theater of war and the home front that could protect against war propaganda. The interdependence of the soldier and the civilian has increased. That is why authorities need the leading writers, novelists, essayists, teachers, movie producers and publicists to sell the war to the audience. The global media not only tells the story of war, but also the whole spirit that is behind the whole adventure.

Modern war propaganda is the upshot of modern society. It is not confined to any particular country, nor can it be attributed to any specific form of government. It is a concomitant, or rather, an integral element of modern society in times of peace. For that reason we should not be surprised to find that in all major countries today there are elaborate plans for repeating the mobilization of "option", possibly on a large scale, in the event of another war (Lerner, 9).

We all know that success in war makes for high morale. Victory and defeat, however, are rather remote facts, saved for the soldiers immediately experiencing them. If we pass from the psychology of morale to its moral foundations, which modern analysts tend to belittle, it is clear that nothing is more important than justice. Morale is strengthened by confidence in the justice of the cause one is fighting for, and lowered by distrust in one's right (Lerner, 16-17).

Wartime propaganda is enacted in a situation with strictly limited goals. Under whatever conditions, the objective of propagandists in wartime is to maximize social participation among members of their own group and to minimize participation among members of the enemy group. Social participation is characterized by concern for the objectives of the group, the sharing of its activities, and the preparedness to accept deprivations on its behalf. High "participation" is therefore identical with high "morale" (Lerner, 40).

Because of network based warfare, participation becomes increasingly important in the future. A person has more and more alternatives to join different groups. Propaganda will become less moralistic. This means that propaganda will direct a person's "id" or "superego" less than their real life needs and habits. The language of propaganda turns more and more similar to advertising and publicity than ideological rhetoric. Democratic propaganda is better equipped to deal with the tendency towards privatization, since it puts greater emphasis on the creation of insight.

To illustrate the weird logic of dreams, Sigmund Freud used to evoke a story about a borrowed kettle: When a friend accuses you of returning a borrowed kettle broken, your reply is, first, that you never borrowed the kettle; second, that you returned it unbroken; and third, that the kettle was already broken when you borrowed it. Such an enumeration of inconsistent arguments, of course, confirms precisely what it endeavors to deny; that you, in fact, did borrow and break the kettle. A similar string of inconsistencies characterized the Bush administration's public justifications for the U.S. attack on Iraq in early 2003. First, the administration claimed that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which posed a "real and present danger" to

his neighbors, to Israel, and to all democratic Western states. Then, the administration argued that even if Saddam did not have any WMD, he was involved with al Qaeda in the September 11 attack and therefore should be punished and prevented from launching future assaults. Finally, there was the third level of justification, that even if there was no proof of a link with al Qaeda, Saddam's ruthless dictatorship was a threat to Iraq's neighbors and a catastrophe to its own people (Zizek, 43-44).

Policy defines the limits within which propaganda must work by specifying the goals to be achieved. Intelligence defines the limits within which propaganda must work by specifying the limits of what the audience will believe and what they will do. Without policy goals firmly in control of utterances, propaganda may move its audience but in no direction or in the wrong direction. (Lerner, 53) The weapons used in political warfare differ in many respects from the arms employed in military fighting. They hit widely different targets at the same time. An important political statement may aim at one particular group, say the enemy government, but will reach at the same time other groups as well, for example the neutrals or domestic critics of the person who made the statement (Lerner, 75).

In a conscript army, the criterion of recruitment is much less specialized and the army is more representative of the total population liable to conscription. Therefore the values involved in political and social systems or ethical schemes do not have much impact on the determination of a soldier to fight to the best of his ability and to hold out as long as possible. In the army, when isolated from civilian primary groups, the individual soldier comes to depend more and more on his military primary group (Lerner, 372).

The typical target for psychological operations (PSYOPS) is the marginal man who does not believe everything that is said, but who is interested in the new message because he does not believe everything his opponent says either. In war, the marginal man distrusts the new message and has reasons to continue fighting, but also has good reason not to fight. He is the potential waver (Lerner, 421).

29 million leaflets, for example, were dropped in the first Gulf War of 1991 during Operation Desert Storm which lasted six weeks. In the two months of Operation Allied Force in the Kosovo conflict of 1999 the figure was an astonishing 103 million. In Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, from October 2001 to March 2002, it was 80 million. During the build up and the three-week Operation Iraqi Freedom it was approaching 60 million (Taylor, 109).

NATO countries, including Britain, Germany and Poland, are also developing their PSYOPS capabilities. From peacekeeping to nation-building, PSYOPS has evolved into increasingly sophisticated forms of communicating with people caught up in what are highly dangerous situations. The postmodern motto is: “electrons, not bullets!” Computer Network Operations (CNO) and Perception Management are the new euphemism for propaganda. For example, in the coalition bombing of the city of Baghdad the idea was to deafen, dumb, and blind the one eye of the enemy’s military command and control capabilities, while leaving the other CNN eye open for him and the wider world to see that his cause is futile. The goal of information warfare is to win without ever firing a shot. Information warfare is used to make the conflict as short as possible (Taylor, 115).

One of the most important elements of the PSYOPS campaign was to instruct Iraqi soldiers on how to surrender. Almost 70.000 surrendered in 1991 and similar figures were expected this time. However, the decision of the overall commander, General Tommy Franks, to start the ground offensive a day earlier than planned, disrupted the surrender plan as some observers argue. The early surrender of an Iraqi division that would hopefully encourage others to do the same was not replicated. Instead, according to Taylor, Iraqi soldiers deserted their uniforms and returned home, leaving Ba’athist fanatics and Republican Guardsmen to do the fighting, including suicide bombings and other extremist activities (Taylor, 120).

The northern and western fronts in Iraq received comparatively little media coverage because those campaigns were fought largely by Special Operations forces whose policy is not to take journalists along with them. In these areas, combat PSYOPS operated together with

Special Forces. Leaflets were produced urging the looting that took place to stop and the now infamous pack of cards was issued identifying the names and faces of America's Most Wanted List of 55 members of the Saddam regime (Taylor, 123).

At the strategic level, PSYOPS means the public opinion and political support ratings. In Iraq, PSYOPS was not just confined to the Iraqi people, but was also directed at the world opinion. In Spain and Italy, where the media was highly critical of their government's support for the war effort, the political support ratings were significantly influenced (Taylor, 126).

### **Leisure-seeking Security and the Zero-Tolerance Armed Forces**

One significant reason for the new focus of international media and anxiety is a notable change in the feeling of general security. In the media the explanation for terrorism and weapons of mass destruction has shifted into the hands of security experts. The industry and media supported and became midwife to the birth of the leisure-seeking, pleasure-demanding, materialistic consumer society of modern Western world. The exponential growth of public relations, like stabilized employment, pensions, social security, and old age insurance for example, is dependent on and connected to the increasing standards of living in the Western world countries (Ewen, 220,357-358).

“Nourishing a trend toward middle-class spectatorship, a new and increasingly disembodied public sphere was being spawned by the dramatic growth of mass-circulation media between the early 1880s and the First World War ... Powerful commercial locomotives, newspapers and news chains-linked further by the expanding information network of the wire services-transported standardized news, information, and editorial perspectives through what was fast becoming a national media culture” (Ewen, 52-53).

Simply put, people in the US were systematically being trained to become an audience capable of discussing and transmitting information supplied by the media. Creating an audience is one of the characteristics of American culture, whereas the creation of the idea of

citizen has been central to European culture. Without an audience there can be no consumers of the viewpoint offered by the media. As audience, a group of people become organized; rationalize information, and move from unpredictable to "media-fed".

"If the crowd was perceived as dangerous, driven by irrational appetites, the public as an audience of readers seemed more receptive to ideas, to rationalization, to the allure of factual proof" (ibid., 73).

Of course, propaganda is still one of the key psychological elements of war. A feeling of mutual suspicion and an atmosphere characterized by chaos and the lack of safety make rational human beings or a community ready to use force. If two groups threaten each other, or believe they threaten each other, the result is an atmosphere of mutual fear and insecurity that gives both groups a reason to strike first. And if both groups realize they have the same purpose, the cycle of fear intensifies (Larson 2001).

In his book "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison" Michel Foucault posed questions concerning the relationship between the change in Western thinking and the change in violence. An essential factor in the violence of the information age is the battle for recipients and how media-hunger is created by means of education. Network based security creates new social relations and influences a new way by which people authorize their social situation. Today, authority no longer means the position an individual acquires, but rather the multiplicity and plurality of social relations. The power to do something depends on the quality and quantity of social relations.

If you do not have the time and place to tell your story in the media, you will have to react to your opponent's story. You'll find yourself in a reactive position without true power. The media war continues indefinitely and topic-wise anything goes (Latimer 2001). Nothing is sacred in the media. Without a story you are not credible, because the media cannot be silenced. The media is the voice of today's people and the marketplace of democracy.

The information age is the era of insecurity and uncertainty. It is also the era of opinion and gregariousness. Everyone is the recipient of some media and a transmitter of messages in his own network.

The media follows public opinion in what people all over the world thinks of, say, the Iraq War. People follow the media and form their opinions of the war. The result is a cycle that becomes increasingly tight and self-dependent as its speed increases. The cycle also has a tendency to detach from its target, meaning that a story in the media becomes more important than the topic itself.

People's sense of security is not directly dependent on the amount of information available. How information is presented, its quality and timing decide how it affects people's experiences of security. Sometimes a tiny scrap of information, coming from the appropriate viewpoint at the right time, creates incredible faith or trust in the state of affairs. On the other hand, a small and harmless rumor can shatter long-built trust. Relationships between different things matter more than bits of knowledge (Kershaw 2002).

In the information age information technology makes it possible for a single individual to rise to strategic importance. Security is a feeling, not a fact. The truth about security is made up of images and imagination allowed by phenomena. Truth is made up of conceptions that it is possible for people to create general security through discussion. Information is knowledge that is spread. Actually, time understood as speed is important in transfer. Rumors, trends, desires, visions, sights and opinions are the consumer goods of information. Just as furniture is not meant to last from one generation to another, information does not have to be true or transfers able to future generations. It is enough that information is transferred. Movement has become more important than that which is moved and speed is the goal of movement. It has replaced truth. Speed is truth. Electricity creates speed. Electricity requires energy, which requires the will and desire for power. Energy is power and power is created from violence.

It is difficult for a soldier to plan an operation so that in addition to calculating mere physical strength, planning would also analyze the psychological factors of war and the act of killing itself. If images of human suffering caused by the operation were included in the planning process, quick decision-making would be impossible (Grossman 1996).

## **Western Self-awareness and Terrorism**

The transfer of knowledge rips human experience from its roots. The new network structures of the information age cause unprecedented insecurity and uncertainty. Two philosophers, Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, analyze the importance of 9/11 and the philosophical dimension of the result of terrorism. The starting point is that philosophy has been separated with fatal consequences from the interpretations of history. Guilt and responsibility for the terrors of the 20th century is not limited only to the victims and perpetrators. Every one is dependent on the terrors of the age in which he lives. One key direction of development of both the French and American Revolution was to separate political power from religious power. In the Arabic world there has never been a political revolution like the French Revolution. This development is now evident in the juxtaposition of the Islamic world and Western globalization (Borradori, 8).

“Throughout the Cold War, Western liberal democracies were arming and training their future enemies in a quasi-suicidal manner. The Cold War’s symmetrical display of power was undermined by the dissemination of the nuclear arsenal as well as of bacteriological and chemical weapons. Now we are faced with the reality of an a-symmetrical conflict, which as such represents a further stage of the autoimmune crisis. In the age of terror, there is no possibility of balance [...] the violence of the attack against the Twin Towers and the Pentagon has revealed an abyss of terror that is going to haunt our existence and thinking for years and perhaps decades to come.” (Borradori, 20-21).

According to Habermas, terrorism is a traumatic consequence of modernization, whereas Derrida sees terrorism as an inbred symptom of the modern experience. According to Derrida, terrorism is directed towards the future in a crooked manner when understood in the form of a promise, hope or persuasion (Borradori, 22).

The strike of 9/11 made possible two different views on the same subject. To New Yorkers the question was about first person experience, through the smoke and dust drifting over Manhattan and the continuous wail of sirens. In Europe, on the other hand, the strike

was a third person experience, watching a special news report at the dinner table. The common factor was that never before had television transmitted direct footage as it did now. It was no longer a Hollywood story, but a real historical event followed by millions of pairs of eyes in a shared global experience. Still the European and to a large extent the American experience remained virtual and unreal, and watching the dust settle in New York City was like watching a soap opera. Europe was left with anxiety whereas to the US the attack gave a much-needed solution to the security situation in the form of a military operation in the Persian Gulf.

“To me, it is horrible to be killed without warning. Because, you can’t prepare yourself in any last way for your next existence. Terrorism’s ultimate tendency is to make life absurd. [...] But when someone dies who’s half loved and half hated by his own family, whose children, for example, are always trying to get closer to that man or to that woman and don’t quite succeed, then the after-effect is obsessive. Those are the ones who are hurt the most [...] the less successful families that terrorism bites most deeply [...] one can’t set things right anymore. One was planning to, one was hoping to, and now it’s lost forever. That makes it profoundly obsessive” (Mailer 2003, 20-21).

The fight against terrorism changes the traditional conception of warfare. Terrorism as a threat does not conform to state borders or focus on traditional targets of military operations. Terrorism is, however, more strongly tied to politics than has been the case with previous military threats. War as an alternative means of politics has not gone anywhere. Terrorism has just turned soldiers into political actors.

Because of terrorism, soldiers and politicians have to work side by side. The necessity for political measures, such as a United Nations Security Council mandate for the use of military force, is overridden when the threat of terrorism is in the air. A different question is whether the events should follow the traditional Clausewitzian order. A part of European security thinking is the assumption that political decisions

have to be seen to the end before resorting to military force. There is still a desire in Europe to see war as an ultimatum between two states.

Derrida calls change a deconstruction. Its goal is to shake the structural privileges of certain characteristics and make foreign interventions familiar. Deconstruction is a very individualistic form of intervention. It begins with the recognition of a given theoretical context or metaphysical assumption. Next it brings forth the things that maintain the hierarchy. Third, it points up those parts of the hierarchy classified as meaningless or neutral and shows how they could assume a key function in the hierarchy. The purpose of hierarchy is thus to point out strategic and political options to a structure classified as static. The fourth phase attempts to create a “third term” to the opposing terms under analysis.

“If the first two moves take on the description of a given conceptual construction, the final two are aimed at deforming it, reforming it, and eventually transforming it. Because deconstruction’s work is so minutely tailored to the specificity of its object, Derrida likes to refer to it as ‘intervention’” (Borradori, 138).

Overlap and the never-ending exchange of views are typical of deconstruction. According to Derrida, the events of 9/11 are signified by the date alone, because the terror and trauma are beyond concepts. They do not fit into people’s everyday mechanisms. They remain anxiety that cannot be given a natural name. They represent a way to repeat a trauma that is beyond our control, a monumentalized event. (ibid., 147-148) Derrida refers to Heidegger’s concept of “event” that refers to the inadequacy of human understanding and evaluation. 9/11 is partly an event in which the media and global audience functioned as a carefully planned propaganda without a chance for representation.

According to Jean Baudrillard, terrorism is immoral. The World Trade Center, the symbol of opportunity, was immoral. Both rise from globalization, which also represents immorality. In Western thinking good and bad have traditionally been kept separate. Western Christian culture, whose later achievements are science, technology, democracy, and human rights, is considered to give a mortal strike to evil that is

often seen to represent the orient and Islam in particular. However, we know that there are two sides to a story (Baudrillard 2002, 12-13).

Predicting terrorism is impossible, because it is impossible to know in which direction and how quickly it will spread. Terrorism is as vital and chaotic as the stock market. Terrorism is the courtroom where rhetoric replaces the facts. Because terrorism is not directed against Western economy, politics or society, the fight against it is ineffective. The vulnerability of information systems, environmental disasters, accidents, famine, epidemics, etc. has taken on a global existence of its own, terrorizing Western societies and creating insecurity.

The question in communication is not so much about will as it is about the necessity that people communicate. There are fundamental social tasks that cannot be carried out except through communication. 9/11 proved this in a horrific way. The question arose why the world does not consider the US to be the source of all things good. Exclusion was no longer possible. The US woke to a situation in which nobody seemed to know what was going on other continents. Even the world's most expensive and extensive intelligence system did not provide decision-makers with a warning, and people returned to the era of fear and uncertainty.

The new war against terrorism is about the universal and global existence of states. The US has a political culture in which an election victory does not mean a change of policy. US monopoly on waging war is crumbling. Pluralism has become the root of war and the media increases the distribution of companies and also the economy of war. The key problem is that traditional sets of moral codes and the laws of war dating back to World War II no longer apply. Normal military operations have been replaced by special operations and protecting one's own operation. It has also become difficult to distinguish between the basic concepts of war, such as offense and defense, or victory and defeat. The notion of "losing the victory" means that if for example the US destroys social and state structures in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is extremely difficult to rebuild them again quickly. Continuous suicide attacks, the absence of general order and security, and the collapse of social well-being have made it seemingly impossible to rule Iraq. The

use of traditional military force has only strengthened the roots of terrorism in which the media functions as a pedagogical means.

What should be done for example with a Muslim woman who is a suicide bomber? The opponent's way of fighting makes it impossible to find a compromise leading to peace, to distinguish between soldiers and civilians, and to follow the moral codes and laws of war. When it is time to make peace, there is no one to negotiate with and nothing to negotiate about. Iraq is no longer a state, but a collection of suicide bombers and civilians who have sunk into insecurity. Only the appearance of statehood remains in Afghanistan, in which non-state actors (tribes, drug dealers and religious movements) fight over power and terrorize the people. In information warfare state borders define internal politics and provide control points of people's identity. Terrorism as failed information warfare makes unusual circumstances a part of our normal life in the information age.

## **Conclusion**

In this article the connection between the changing role of military persons and the surroundings globalization and technological environment was shown. Thanks to the evolution of communication technology, the new tasks and new possibilities to influence to political situation are obvious. Technology and media have made it possible for the commander to be involved in every step of the policy process, not only at the local level.

I have also tried to show the importance of the Western cultural background of violence. The true warrior-culture has disappeared because of the same reason that changes the environment of military decision-makers. At the same time, the question of values, morals and rules has changed. In a world, in which the cinema and media to a very large extent determine our perception of the world, the sense of the tragic and existential is largely absent. Modern soldiers are the products of a purely visual culture. They have become displaced into their own weapons systems and transformed into technicians.

Of course, the technological understanding of the world has needed a new way of education and training for soldiers. The real act of killing has become more and more hidden, private, mysterious, and lacking in reason. We cannot say whether violence has increased or decreased, but we can say that the meaning of violence has changed. Violence has become the public appetite and entertainment for the people in the West. At the same time new technology helps professional soldiers not to take warfare personally.

Due to technology and the media, people's ability to make sense of their universe became less and less grounded in the terrain of immediate experience. Thus, the perception management and socio-psychological influence of public audiences have become more and more important tools of authorities. As the world grows larger and more complex because of communication technology, manipulation of the symbolic environment can itself produce major events in both the political life and in warfare.

Terrorism appears as a logical history of the Western way of understanding violence. The leisure-seeking security and the zero tolerance use of violence have helped to create a phenomenon like terrorism. The terrorism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is one name for how we try to understand and define our relationship with postmodern violence.

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