(A)

Abstract

Military development requires a culture in which honor and duties to the nation are praised and are seen as defining features of manhood. This culture emerges as a consequence of a popular culture enforcing these values and myths of war. Young males with lower social status are the most suitable candidates because of their weak attachment to the society and the ease with which they can be molded into soldiers. Military training of these candidates involves destroying their former identities and building a group culture defined by obedience, self-discipline and commitment. Leadership, strong attachment to the group and the peer pressure exerted further enhance their combat motivation. Ideological commitment, religious convictions and symbols resembling the unit fought for act as supporting factors and should be deliberately used for sustaining motivation. For military success, unquestioned authority needs to be balanced with room for criticism; the military must realize and learn from its mistakes.

Building the culture

Throughout history, war has been "a male enterprise," and the role of women has been predominantly to provide the encouragement and support, merely "buckling men's psychological armor." This is a result of gender stratification through time forced by economic changes, and is a functional adaptation rather than a natural law. Although it is mostly socially constructed, for our purposes of military development, the gender-stratified society provides a perfect workspace.

The definition of maleness in today's society is closely linked to the values the military needs to instill in soldiers – duty, honor and courage. It is this link that pushes men to be soldiers and to fight in a battle. As one of the Civil War volunteers admits in *For Cause and Comrades*: "How often in boyhood's young days when reading the account of soldiers' lives have I longed to be a man, and now the opportunity has been offered." Therefore, the relation among manhood, honor and fighting for that honor is to be established through childhood socialization and education in the society. Boys should be encouraged to play with toy soldiers and tanks; in cartoons images of warriors should emphasize the importance of duty, the glory of fighting for a goal and honor. During juvenile development, the same kind of exposure to images of bravery and honor linked to manhood should be provided through movies, books and even school education by an appropriate selection of historical accounts. The duties associated with such a definition, and the assumed weakness of women, will later push these men to fight for women. The images of manhood will be reinforced in the military through sexual references-again relating weakness to women. As reported in *For Cause and Comrades,* it was not so much duty, honor and glory that pushed the soldiers to fight as the community and peer pressure that made them "a demasculinized pariah" if they failed to.

Along with the expectations for a "man," myths of war such as the joy of fighting for a cause, camaraderie and glory should be created. The romanticized images of war should be instilled through education and visual material - popular culture fed with enough material through books, movies and photographs becomes "inherently militaristic." For instance, the photographs of Gilles Peress should be avoided, "Top Gun" must be broadcast instead of

"Paths of Glory," etc. The quest for adventure, the excitement, the glory and the heroic role model based on these constructed myths will later serve as a strong motivation for volunteers to join the military. Moreover, as reported in *For Cause and Comrades*, along with the thrill of war, the sense of reciprocal obligation to the nation was a reason to enlist for Civil War volunteers: "one had a duty to defend the flag under whose protection one had lived." Therefore, a strong sense of duty to the nation as a moral obligation and patriotism should also be taught.

Creating a collective culture with a patriarchal hierarchy and religious values should be a long-term goal. Religious values will later form the internalized combat motivation and the ability to cope with the uncertainty of war. Patriarchal hierarchy will parallel the relation between the leader and soldiers. A collective culture and recognition of its values will make it easier to mold volunteers into obeying soldiers.

Drafting the "right" portion

Among the candidates provided by such a culture, young, unmarried men from lower social class should be drafted. This is crucial to assure that candidates do not have a very strong attachment to the society and are more easily manipulated to internalize the military culture. It is advantageous to draft people for whom "society has nothing to offer," since the military will be the only way for them to be respected members of society and maybe will be the best economic opportunuity as well. As in the case of the Marines reported in *Making The Corps*, candidates with weak high school education are "nurtured" so that many can assume positions of honor and respect. For higher positions in the army, volunteers from better backgrounds may be recruited. It is important however to note the difficulty of changing previously developed, strong personalities as opposed to those of socially unaccepted volunteers lacking self-confidence who are more ready to be molded into a soldier.

Recruitment of women may require the separation of training facilities. This is due to the strong attachment that forms between men during military education, where men nurture each other, cry without hesitation and are allowed to be intimate. The introduction of women to this setting

may reinforce social norms and prevent the self-expression of men as well as the construction of a military culture.

Training

Basic training should consist of a cultural indoctrination into military values in order to overcome the differences of race and class among soldiers. Creating a homogenous group and a culture of the group made by members who are anonymous is the ultimate goal of the beginning of the training. The individual is not important to the military, the recognition of the group needs above the individual's is essential. The Homeric hero in the *Iliad,* who is fiercely individualistic and who is primarily concerned with his own honor and that of his household as an extension to himself, is no longer the role model for the soldier. As Hector and Achilles are "antipodal manifestations," one of the group and the other of the individual in the *Iliad*, soldiers in today's military are closer to Hector who fights out of a genuine sense of duty for his fellow Trojans as well as the social construct of glory. Soldiers are no longer individual heroes but a "faceless team of men struggling to achieve a larger goal." Therefore, avoidance of the individual and the emphasis of the collective should be the primary message in the military training. In the Marines as reported in *Making The Corps*, for instance, the use of "I" is strictly forbidden; "it raises suspicions that the soldier cares more about himself that about his unit." Volunteers are given exercises that can only be accomplished as a group to create and sustain cohesion. Also, it is a general practice that the group suffers for the faults of an individual – "just as a unit sometimes does in combat" says a Marine officer. As individual identity is erased, the next step is to introduce the candidates to a culture of self-discipline and obedience where "pleasure is suspect, and pain and sacrifice are good."

A major goal of military training should be to teach discipline and obedience as military action requires clear authority patterns, the exact execution of orders, and the avoidance of all criticism on the soldier's part. Discipline should be habitual and unquestioning obedience should be the routine. Fear could be used as an educational device at this stage, as used by the DIs in *Making The Corps* in order "…to create *uncertainty. From the recruiter's perspective, it appears to be chaos. War is chaos. And then they see this DI…who brings order to chaos. They

learn that if they follow orders, their life will be calmer." Aggregate results are not sufficient; military discipline should push each individual to his limit. During military training, there should be a clear expectation of improved accomplishment each time. As Marines say, "Everyday you have to test yourself, otherwise it is a wasted day." Everything must be a reminder that soldiers have entered a culture of discipline where, according to the Marines, "Pain is just the weakness leaving the body." Military discipline is taught by constant surveillance during the training period. However it is eventually internalized and becomes the defining feature of a soldier's life. Ultimately, discipline relies on the self; once it is internalized, training is accomplished. As stated by Foucault (quoted in class), now "prison gates can be opened, because the whole world has become a prison."

Combat Motivation

Training is only a first step to provide combat motivation. What makes these soldiers fight is not only the training, but also the motivation and esteem received from their leader and peers. The leader is a source of motivation and an example of honor for the soldiers. Influential leadership requires personal courage - a powerful factor in motivating men to follow - and a willingness to do anything the men are asked to do. As a Civil War volunteer, reported in *For Cause and Comrades,* puts it: "[A good leader] must not only attend to their drill and obedience to orders but he must look after their personal habits, cleanliness, must listen to their complaints, settle personal disputes, and take as much care of them as the same number of children." Thus, the relationship between the leader and the soldiers resembles a paternal attachment, and like most paternal relationships, this one also has a hard edge of authority.

As the authoritative nature of the leader places him into the status of "father", during battle, the primary group is bonded by the common danger and becomes a band of brothers. Intense loyalty is stimulated by close identification with the members of the group and recognition of commonalties. The men are now fighting for each other and develop guilty feelings if they let each other down. In *For Cause and Comrades*, a soldier expresses this attachment:" Those men on the line were my family, my home. They were closer to me than…my friends had ever been or ever would be. They had never let me down, and I couldn't do it to them…Men, I now

knew, do not fight for flag or country, or glory or any other abstraction. They fight for one another." Therefore, mutual dependence and support create the cohesion necessary to function as a fighting unit. The survival of each member depends on the others doing their jobs. It is this primary group that enforces peer pressure against cowardice. Soldiers are afraid of being coward – the mark of dishonor. To further enforce the pressure, a strategy similar to that in the Civil War could be employed. As depicted in *For Cause and Comrades*, most of the men in a volunteer company came from the same community. Because of this close relationship between community and company, the pressure of the peer group against cowardice was reinforced by the community – "reports of cowardice would sure find their way back to the community."

As a result, military success relies on being able provide sound leadership and enforce strong attachment among men. Military pressure to make soldiers fight can accompany the peer pressure exerted by a "brotherly group." Throughout history, a subtle way to compel unwilling soldiers to fight is to court martial "cowards" and shame them publicly. As depicted in Kubrick's *Paths of Glory*, after ordering an attack doomed to failure, the generals order the arrest of three soldiers and charge them with cowardice and mutiny in order to "set an example" for others. Nevertheless, the most extreme form of military pressure is coercion: threat of deadly force to compel a soldier into the firing line against his will. Coercion was used during the Civil War: "…when we first went into action our men…seemed inclined to back out, but we stationed ourselves behind them and threatened to shoot the first man that turned." However, it should be noted that the real motivation should come from inside. The soldier should be ideologically committed to the cause. By judging the accounts of North Vietnamese soldiers in *Reporting Vietnam*, even ordinary men can be transformed by "a subtle chemistry of patriotism, skillful political control and sheer force of circumstances." Methods used by the leaders of these soldiers can be adapted in battle: "We indoctrinate soldiers to realize they are struggling to liberate the nation and gain human rights for themselves. They are usually very young and flattered to think that they are fighting for something great, something superhuman…there were other techniques that were useful, too. We held competitions in the battalion; emulation campaigns to see which company best followed the model of heroic units. And before a battle, I always called the troops together, listing the crimes of the enemy unit against people to make them angry." As can be concluded from this account, it is a useful

military technique to emphasize the "otherness" of the enemy, and to use the hatred created for combat motivation.

Along with leadership, camaraderie and ideology, religion should be used as a deeper source of soldiers' combat motivation and should provide them with the ability to cope with the uncertainty of war. Soldiers, confronted with the terror of war, seek the aid or comfort of religion. Fatalism helps soldiers to face the dangers of combat without giving way to fear. By accepting external control of events, the soldier is relieved from his worries and feelings of uncertainty. As a result, wars usually intensify religious convictions. A Civil War soldier says: "I never knew the comfort there is in religion so well as during the past month. Nothing sustains me so much in danger as to know than there is one who ever watches over us – I shall be a better Christian if I get home having served in the army." Religious belief helps soldiers to overcome the fear of death as well. Bodily death holds no terror for the true believer because it means the entry of the soul into a better world. In order to overcome the inhibitions of soldiers about killing, the cause is emphasized to be "holy" against an "evil" enemy. During the Civil War, for example, both sides believed that God was on their side and that they were doing their duty to God by trying to kill the "Godless enemy." Religious convictions should be instilled during military education, and encouraged during war. Providing religious reading material, keeping a priest in battle camps and organizing regular religious education are ways to impose these convictions.

Another essential factor in sustaining motivation is a firm base of support in the homes and communities from which the soldiers come, otherwise their morale crumbles, as in the case of Vietnam War. Therefore, an efficient mail service comes to play a large part in maintaining the morale. Letters represent the soldier's major contact with the social unit that reinforces his desire to serve faithfully. Newspapers represent a similar motivating factor, provided that they are supportive of the war. Symbols of the military culture and the social unit the soldiers are fighting for acquire a special mystique; these symbols motivate the soldiers and remind them of what they believe in. As recorded in *For Cause and Comrades*, "During the Civil War, the most meaningful symbols of regimental pride were the colors – the regimental and national flags which bonded the men's loyalty to unit, state and nation… One of the most honorable

feats a regiment could accomplish was to capture enemy colors." Therefore, the links between these symbols and faith should be established starting with military education, and emphasized during time of war. Ceremonies with flags and an emphasis on uniforms are the simplest methods to create the association of flag with the cause.

Warning Signals

What if nothing seems to work – as in the case of Vietnam? It is crucial for the military to encourage self-criticism at higher levels as a survival mechanism. According to *Reporting Vietnam*, "unlike the American Government and military in Vietnam with their light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel philosophy, which insisted that every report showed progress, the Vietnamese communists tended to look for problems, identify the trouble and then solve it, seemed to be the method in many captured communist documents." This is clearly seen in the story of John Paul Vann in *Reporting Vietnam*. In order not to "allow staff to be pessimistic," headquarters refused to listen to Vann's warnings. However, for military success it is crucial to balance authority with allowance for criticism. The military should look for ways to improve and consider criticism crucial for survival instead of avoiding it, as the US Army in Vietnam. Certain institutional arrangements within the army can be used to enforce this (an unbiased court martial and an independent division listening to "complaints" and confirming their viability without disclosing the informer, etc).

(B)

"The Second Coming" by W.B. Yeats was written when the UK had just emerged from World War I. England had experienced great loss in some of the most destructive military battles the world had ever seen. Yeats and his fellow countrymen, in both Ireland and Britain, had just seen the worst humanity had to offer.

Yeats is describing a state of chaos, he rephrases his examples to convey that a total lack of control exists in this setting. The most obvious sentiment of the poem is worrying and the disappointment that comes with witnessing the end of an era, an end to innocence.

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

The poem starts with images of disintegration. The balance, which holds all the elements in equilibrium, is lost and everything becomes unraveled, just as for a soldier experiencing the battlefield for the first time.

Battle is challenge, adventure and excitement for soldiers – who have no battle experience. As is the case with the Civil War, the soldiers depicted in *For Cause and Comrades*, "They are very restless for combat and impatient of delay…they are not at all prepared for the nightmare experiences in store for them."

Battle comes as a surprise and a shock, since there is really no way of preparing for the emotional impact of the actual experience. Reality replaces romance in soldiers' view of combat. A Civil War soldier cries: "I have seen enough of glory of war…I am sick of seeing dead men and men's limbs torn from their bodies." Seeing things they have never seen before creates the ultimate discomfort. They become acquainted with the pain of absolute fear, the pain of exhaustion from fighting, and the pain of being wounded. Moreover, battle usually occurs when soldiers are already exhausted, as depicted in *For Cause and Comrades*: "It was not only prolonged combat that caused soldiers eventually to break down; it was also the marching, loss of sleep, poor food or no food, bad weather, lack of shelter and exposure to extremes of heat and cold, dust and mud and the torments of insects." So, the soldiers "eventually break down." *Reporting Vietnam* reveals the miserable conditions of soldiers: "Our mental condition had begun to match our physical condition. We had no shoes, toothpaste, soap or mosquito nets. All of us had bedsores from the hard bamboo. Rats ran rampant through the hootch at night. They were unbelievably brave…I guess they sensed we are one of them."

The experience of battle changes the soldiers forever. Only after battle, do they realize what they have escaped and that they may not be as lucky the next time. It is not so much death that causes fear as the uncertainty, loneliness and confusion. They fear not knowing – or sometimes

fear knowing- what may happen, but lack sense of control; they are often dislocated – as the soldiers end up in *Full Metal Jacket*. As discussed in lectures, they try to stay together "against all tactical sense," but still feel lonely; they bounce between the extremes of silence before and "hellish" noise during the battle: What is this but an image of loss of order, of loss of form and of "anarchy"?

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

In the middle of this "anarchy," the first impulse of soldiers is the overwhelming desire to escape danger. Many soldiers either do so or freeze in immobility. However, if they overcome the first impulse by willpower, discipline or peer pressure, the flood of adrenalin turns many soldiers into "killing machines oblivious to fear and danger." In *For Cause and Comrades* a Civil War soldier admits: "…the feeling that was uppermost in my mind was a desire to kill as many rebels as I could." Many soldiers explain this state as "combat frenzy, fighting madness or battle rage." The effects are almost like a hallucinogenic drug. Thus, "the blood-dimmed tide is loosed."

And once it is "loosed," it is hardly controllable. Brutality sometimes exceeds "military necessity," and revenge for insult and injury targets civilians. The MyLai massacre mentioned in *Reporting Vietnam,* for instance, happened as a result of hatred for the other side and confusion as well as conditioning. The soldiers ran amuck because they arrived at the scene expecting the North Vietnamese to resist. "I think probably the officers didn't really know if they were ordered to kill the villages or not… A lot of guys felt that they [North Vietnamese civilians] aren't human beings; we just treated them as animals," says a soldier.

Overcoming the inhibition on killing requires the inversion of the moral code- changing the values soldiers hold and justifying killing. However, a soldier going against cultural taboos loses his innocence, and, at that point,

The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity.

This is a reference to how difficult it is to keep one's sanity in the absence of control and innocence. As in Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, Willard, who is sent to kill the "insane" Kurtz, is slowly overtaken by the jungle, the battles and insanity, which surround him. The members of his crew succumb to drugs and are slowly killed off one by one. Eventually he becomes more and more like the man he was sent to kill. Thus, even the assumed "sane" soldiers, are completely changed by their experience. At a different level, it is possible to argue that Yeats is referring to how the wise men in time of war are either being ignored or are not making themselves heard when wisdom is surely needed.

This poem is completely absent of optimism; the image we come across is grim, terrible and full of doom. And so is the experience of war as reflected in soldiers' accounts. However, the poem cannot answer why even veterans keep returning to this scene of hell. The poet, in his disappointment, does not point out the intense friendships, the feeling of survival and mutual dependence that emerges in war. This is the paradox of war: It is doom, but also a time when most intense feelings blossom.

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