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EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN THE MILITARY ACADEMY AS A FACTOR IN FORMING THE VALUE SYSTEM OF FUTURE OFFICERS***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The subject of this paper is the role of the educational process in the Military Academy as one of the factors in the formation of the value system of future officers from the standpoint of military andragogy and military psychology. This paper aims to determine the value system of the cadets – future officers through the times of the development of the Military Academy as a higher education institution (175 years of the Military Academy) by following the educational processes, methods, and demands, but also the demands of the military organization and profession. In the empirical segment of this paper, a psychological instrument was used – a modified scale for measuring value, which

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was applied in repeated research. The results of the presented research show that the value systems of cadets throughout time have never been and are not currently isolated from other factors of influence on their formation, such as the social context and primary families in which the cadets live and originate, as well as the peer groups to which they belong, but that the educational process indeed contributes to its construction in the function of the military profession.

Keywords: Military Academy, upbringing, education, values, value system.

INTRODUCTION

In the last 175 years of its existence, the Military Academy passed through different stages of development, always with the same goal – to train officer staff for the army within which it was formed. Wars interrupted the work of the Military Academy, offering a chance to examine the abilities of trained officers and to incorporate the newly acquired war experiences into new knowledge and programs for the education of the officer staff in times of peace. By transforming society and the army, the Military Academy also transformed to fulfill the given task – the educational process and moral construction of future officers.

With his famous motto that “the character of a nation is reflected in the character of its army, and the character of an army is best perceived through the character of its officer staff”, field marshal Živojin Mišić (Mišić 1985) stressed that the changes in the society and the social value system reflect through the military organization as well. Bearing in mind the significance of the moral construction of the future officers and examining the influence of social factors on the construction of the cadets’ value system, the Military Academy maintained an educational process aimed at teaching military skills and professionally educating individuals for the future military calling. The value system of students of military schools is of special significance since its examination begins from the first psychological selection for acceptance into military education, and its construction through educational processes is monitored as well. In this paper, we will present the development of the educational work at the Military Academy and showcase several empirical research on the topic of the value system

of attendees of the military education, as well as the members of the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Army, conducted through various scientific research projects (of the Military Academy and the Institute for Strategic Research) in characteristic periods of sociopolitical changes, reforms of military organization and our country's commitment to taking a position on military neutrality.

SIGNIFICANCE OF UBRINGING AND EDUCATION

Functional and adequate planning, organization, and conduct of effective educational processes represent one of the fundamental demands set before contemporary society. Permanent changes that have been occurring in every segment of functioning demand constant control in the sense of planning and, above all, directing changes. Said changes ask for continuing strong educational interventions in the function of the reconstruction of the existing and the formation of new competencies and values. Exactly due to these reasons, it is pretty significant to advance the theory and practice of further development of andragogy as a scientific discipline that places the concepts of upbringing and education at the center of its subject of study. The said terms make up the fundamental forces of preservation of civilization. The crucial significance of terms such as upbringing, education, and learning asks for their specific determination.

Speaking of the phenomenon of education, Medić stresses that it has its "social function, it makes up a specific interpersonal relationship, which reflects on the individual process" (Medić 1993 according to: Pejatović 2005, 26). Researchers often define the term education as a "scientifically designed activity directed towards fulfilling various educational needs" (Kulić and Despotović 2010, 13). The phenomenon of education can also be defined as a "process of adopting knowledge, constructing skills and habits; developing abilities, adopting the value system and rules of conduct" (Gvozdenović 2011, 83). Some authors also stress the fact that "learning, as a phenomenon, can be individual and collective, it can occur intentionally and organized" (Miljković 2019, 11). The contemporary andragogic paradigm directs researchers towards seeking unity and continuous interconnection of these phenomena.

Development of military education in Serbia

During 175 years of its existence, from the times of the Principality of Serbia (1850) to the times of the Republic of Serbia (2025), the Military Academy changed and developed in the organizational and programmatic sense depending on social and political factors. Its development began with the founding of the Artillery School on March 18, 1850, in the then Principality of Serbia. The said educational institution was in fact a sort of “general military academy, where officers of all branches and professions were educated” (Đukić 2015, 402). Afterwards, the education of officers continued at the Military Academy of the Kingdom of Serbia; Military Academies in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; at the infantry military school, a school for active infantry officers; Military Academies in the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (DFY) and the Federative People’s Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY); at the Military Academy of the Yugoslav People’s Army (YPA) and the Military Academy of the Land Forces and the intendant service in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), Military Academy of the Yugoslav Army in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Military Academies in the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia. Each of the mentioned military academies had its mission to train the officer corps for the armies of these states.

During its long history, the Military Academy was transformed by the changes in social arrangements, whereas it had a significant role in the construction of the army as one of the significant pillars of all the previously mentioned states. Besides that, it underwent various phases in terms of organization and program. The Military Academy improved its plans and programs through the development of military thought and technological advances in the world and our country as well. It continuously improved its educational program through the actualization of the content of its research subjects. Throughout the history of its actions, it had a chance to examine its educational principles used for training officers in war practice. Experiences and knowledge acquired in times of peace and the conditions of war through managing the units were implemented in the programs of education of the officer staff, and especially the professional and specialist knowledge, which are prone to the biggest and continuous changes.

Educational plans and programs of military academies are determined by the social arrangement, development of the army, and its equipping with modern equipment, as well as training in accordance with contemporary didactic demands in the education of officers and training of soldiers and units in conditions of peace and war. The previous wars in our region, especially during World Wars One and Two, as exquisite evaluators of the quality of training of the officer staff, point to the fact that, historically speaking, the Military Academy conducted its mission and fulfilled its tasks in training the officer staff at the highest professional level. Its organizational and functional changes took place in the form of quite sudden changes in the conception of contemporary warfare, continuous development of weapons, and thus, in the projection of educational plans and programs of the Military Academy, including the ideological assumptions in certain phases of its historical existence.

The tradition of the Artillery School is nowadays nourished by the Military Academy of the University of Defense in Belgrade, which trains the officer staff for the needs of the defense system, by the missions and tasks of the Serbian Army. Its actions are founded on the rich traditions of our Army and our Military Academy, in which numerous generations of officers were educated. As a significant segment of the higher education of the Republic of Serbia, it fulfils its mission and tasks by the Standards for Accreditation of Study Programs and Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Serbia. It continuously develops its study programs in accordance with the contemporary development of military thought and military doctrines, and the contemporary development of military techniques. Schooling lasts four years, whereas during the first two years, the stress is put on general educational and general military subjects, which significantly influence the development of cadet values, in which patriotic values are of primary importance.

Specifics of the educational process in the army

The process of military upbringing and education is founded on the key postulates of upbringing and education in society. Therefore, military upbringing and education are incorporated into society's educational system. Still, given the specifics of the military organization, it should be stressed that upbringing and education in the army have

their characteristic flows of development as well. Still, given the specifics of the military organization, it should be stressed that upbringing and education in the army have specific development flows. The peculiarity of the development of military upbringing and education can be explained by the description of the duties of the officer corps, which primarily refer to defending the country. So, for example, the duties of the military officer can be defined through the following activities: "1) organization, equipping and training of the military force; 2) planning its activities and 3) directing their operations in combat and outside it" (Hantington 2004, 14 according to: Milošević Stolić i Alibabić 2014, 51). Besides that, the axiom of the military organization is characterized by subordination of relations that, to a significant extent, determine the method of functioning of this unique organization. The educational process in the military environment is determined by the following dimensions of the military calling: working in challenging environmental conditions, permanent stay on duty, including working at night; often change of residence and place of work, which often cause separate family living; continuous, permanent and significant changes regarding the needs of the job (Milošević Stolić 2013).

Constant and continuous changes, in light of scientific actions, which inevitably reflect onto the work, and happen on a global level, as well as the specifics of the system of military upbringing and education, strongly open up space for new educational needs of the officers, which demand for taking up adequate and timely andragogic activities to fulfil the needs of the job.

Principles of the educational work with adults

The educational process is a specific and delicate activity conducted by precisely determined general principles, defined by the term didactic principles in the field of didactics. The primary task of the principles in didactics is directed towards fulfilling the set educational goals. The specific research, which examines the possibilities and methods of construction of the value system of future officers of the Military Academy as one of the crucial educational goals, cannot be detached from examining the defined didactic principles. Precise classification of didactic principles has never been defined. During the entire development of the educational process of the Military Academy, organizers of this

complex process always insisted on respecting general and special didactic principles.

The general principles of the educational work are the following: “the principle [...] of educational moderation, the principle of conscious activity (dynamic teaching communication), the principle of concreteness (obviousness), the principle of systematicity, the principle of moderation, the principle of the durability of knowledge, skills and habits, the principle of unity of theory and practice and principle of correlation of the educational work” (Samolovčev 1976, 212). Besides the said general principles, we can speak of special andragogic principles of educational work, such as the principle of integrality, the principle of continuity and modernity, and the principle of diversity and dynamism. The principle of integrality “expresses the demand for comprehensiveness (totality) of the human personality and the demand for the uniqueness of the human knowledge” (230). Besides the said principles, in the specific military environment, there is a need for the allocation of “another two special principles of the educational work: the principle of didactic objectivization of combat conditions and the principle of didactic evocation of the national liberation wars” (229).

Respecting the principles of didactic objectivization of combat conditions is secured through the rapprochement of the educational process to the real combat conditions, and the use of the principle of didactic evocation of the national liberation wars enables the application of adequate experiences from previous armed conflicts. The principles of educational work with adults are fundamental guidelines and demands, basic regulations and correlations of complex but also unique educational processes. For an educational process to guide us to the defined goals of upbringing and education, in the specific case of the construction of values, it is necessary to respect the said didactic principles since they are “the basic principles of guiding the learning process” (Oljača 2013, 149).

Educational goals and programs of education in the military environment

The educational process, directed towards constructing a complete personality, is a complex and compound activity because planning and programming education in military schools is preceded by an examination of educational needs, as the first phase of the so-called educational or andragogic cycle. Regarding this, andragogic literature

includes different definitions of the term educational needs. So, for example, Pejatović defined this term as “a relation (which is most often expressed through the difference) between knowledge, skill and habits a man (or social groups) possess and the knowledge, skills and habits they need to successfully fulfil different roles in various fields of life” (Pejatović 1994, 56). Defining educational needs “must be examined from the perspective of goals and professional strategy of organization” (Milošević Stolić 2013, 76). This process must also take into consideration the changes that are permanently occurring in the outside world, and which undoubtedly lead towards the formation of new, future educational needs within an organization.

In andragogy, there is an entire strain of theories of educational needs. In his study “Conception of the Educational Needs of Adults”, Savićević analyzed the concept of such theories. For defining the subject of this paper, the following two theories are the most relevant: the theory of developmental tasks and suitable moments for learning by Hevighurst and Orr, and the theory of expectancy, the valence of Rubenson. Based on the results of empirical research, Hevighurst and Orr developed a theory of developmental tasks and suitable moments for learning. According to them, each stage of life imposes specific tasks called developmental tasks. Achieving these tasks is, among other things, determined by the value expectations of the society and one’s values. Every developmental task, given the age, calls for a suitable moment for learning, when it will be most efficient (Hevighurst and Or 1956 according to: Savićević 1989, 124–125). Rubenson’s theory of expectancy–valence refers to two terms. On one side, it refers to expectations of one’s success in educational activities, and on the other, achievements and expectations of positive results in the educational activity.

Accordingly, Rubenson believes that “the valence of an educational course is determined by the experiential needs of the individual, their expectations regarding the consequences of participation and values of individuals and reference groups” (Rubenson 1977 according to: Savićević 1989, 130–131). Upon examination of the relations between value orientations and educational needs, Savićević stressed that “there is not a single andragogic subdiscipline which would not deem as precious the knowledge on value orientations and educational needs linked to specific research subject of each of them” (Savićević 1991, 201–205). Speaking of examining the research on relations between educational needs and value orientations, in their study “Value orientations of adults

and education (towards examination of relations: value orientations of adults – choice of education content), Kačavenda and Radić examine the values (value orientations) in the relation with specific issues of upbringing and education of adults, seeking for the answers in “social and relatively stable dispositions of a subject on one side, and the (valued) features of an object on the other” (Kačavenda Radić 1983, 17). One of the most comprehensive studies in andragogy, titled “Value orientations and educational needs of adults”, encompasses theoretical and empirical analysis of relations between these two terms (Pejatović 1994). The results of the research showed that “individuals belonging to specific value types exhibit different educational needs given the different aspects of their manifestation, to which one should pay attention upon planning educational needs” (153).

Projecting the educational process is one of its most crucial tasks to formulate general and specific goals of upbringing and education. After clearly defining the general tasks, the phase of modelling educational plans and programs, as well as the content of the educational work, can begin. Analyzing the educational process at the Military Academy, we stress the significance of military upbringing and education directed towards military professional training for defense and the Serbian army as a factor in forming the value system of future officers (Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije [MORS]. n.d.). Within the Military Academy, the following study programs were formed: Land Forces, Military Electronics Engineering, Military Mechanical Engineering, Technological Engineering of Materials and Protection, Military Transportation Engineering, Military Aviation and Defense Economics (Univerzitet odbrane Vojna akademija n.d.).

The Military Academy studies, by their vision, nourish interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to the educational process. The accelerated advancement of scientific knowledge, as well as “implementation of scientific achievements in practice, leads to transformations in the physiognomy of the security system, which asks for new knowledge and skills necessary for answering to the demands of the calling within it” (Milošević Stolić 2021, 83). So, in this institution, educational contents including constructing competencies from quite diverse scientific fields are organized and carried on. To achieve the set goals of upbringing and education, the Military Academy cadets form knowledge from the fields of military, social and humanist, natural

and mathematical, and technical-technological sciences within study programs (Marček 2003).

The study programs are directed towards training the cadets for “successful command of the units of the branches – services, and exploitation and maintenance of weapons and military equipment within the missions and tasks of the Serbian Army” (Univerzitet odbrane Vojna akademija n.d.). The study programs include the subjects significant for forming knowledge and skills of officers necessary for conducting entry-level officer duties in the branch/service. When speaking of the presence of teaching subjects directed towards the development of the value systems of cadets, we can state that, among others, the following subjects are directed towards the said task: Sociology, Military psychology with andragogy, Political system, Military law and international humanitarian law, Introduction to management, Military History, Introduction to organization, Communication skills and Ethics (Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije [MORS]. n.d.).

MILITARY ACADEMY AND THE VALUE SYSTEM OF THE CADETS OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY

The reforms of military education follow transformations of the military profession. From the aspect of contemporary conditions of warfare and military organization, and bearing in mind the allocation of military and economic power, some of the important questions regarding military education are as follows: what are the capacities of success in a military organization, and what educational procedures, psychological and andragogic knowledge contribute to the formation of the value system of the future officers?

Samuel Huntington describes the understanding of security challenges with the military mind and examines it from three aspects: ability, characteristics, and attitude (Huntington 2004). Bearing in mind the significance of all three aspects of the so-called military mind, the dominant aim of this paper is to determine whether and how educational processes influenced or still influence the formation and changing of the value orientations and value systems of the future officers through an analysis of the upbringing and education process in the Military Academy through time and reforms of the military education. The clarity of the goal and conclusions of this paper will be contributed by the following: defining the concept of value and the most significant value theories,

changing physiognomy of armed conflicts and the need to align with the psychological abilities of future officers, as well as previous research that has followed the reform of military organization and military education.

The notion of value and theories of value

Human values have been the subject of study since ancient times, starting with Plato's efforts to discover the set of values that characterize good people. He stressed the significance of values such as bravery, justice, happiness, and truthfulness. The significance of these values persisted despite different conceptualizations and modifications to the study of values (Holland 2014, 2). The term value holds many different meanings and interpretations. The unique and universally accepted definition of value still does not exist. The diversity of definitions of value stresses the complexity of theories of value still being examined today. Allport defines values as "the final goals of human motivations that can be directly attributed to or emerge from an individual's basic needs and instincts, and which ensure to the individual a dominant life goal, interest-orientation of a purpose that makes life meaningful" (Allport 1960 according to: Alargić 2012, 19). Rokeach defines values as "basic conception of the desirable in every individual and society" that serve as "standards or criteria that direct not only action but also judgement, choice, attitude, evaluation, argument, warning, rationalization and attribution of causality" (Rokeach 1979, 2). Schwartz defines values as the leading principles in the form of wished goals that differ in their significance from one individual to another (Schwartz 1994).

Upon researching personality, Allport significantly contributed to the formation of the value scale. He believed that individuals are unique beings and that this characteristic cannot be disregarded upon measuring value or testing personality (Allport 1955). This belief of his influenced the construction of the value scale, in cooperation with Philip Vernon and Gardner Lindzey (Allport-Vernon-Lindzey – AVL). This scale had a goal to measure the strength of six fundamental value types: theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious (Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey 1960). Despite the significant contribution to researching value, Rokeach believes that Allport's conceptualization does not succeed in recognizing the values as internal and external motivators, since it is too focused on external motivation caused by values (Rokeach 1973, 7).

One of the most prominent scientists in the field of researching value, Milton Rokeach, defines value as a “permanent prescriptive or proscriptive belief that a certain manner of behavior or the final state of existence is more desirable than the opposed method of behavior or final state” (Rokeach 1973, 25). Moreover, the majority of people estimate the same values, even though their preferences are placed differently. Coming from this standpoint, Rokeach suggested a set of values that can be divided into two subcategories: terminal values, which define the goals toward which a person strives during his entire life, and instrumental values, which define specific behavior and attitudes. Based on these assumptions, he has developed his instrument – the Rokeach Value Scale (RVS), consisting of a set of 18 terminal and 18 instrumental values. The respondents have a task to organize a list of values according to the parameter of their significance, i.e., to write the rank they attribute to them next to each of them, bearing in mind the significance they hold for them (from “1” for the most significant one, to “18”, for the least significant one) (28).

Under the influence of Rokeach and Allport, Shalom Schwartz defined the values as “desirable trans-situational goals of different significance which serve as the leading principles in the life of an individual or some other social entity” (Schwartz 1994, 21). He stresses the significance of value, bearing in mind that they “express motivational goals and impact the decision making” (Holland 2014, 16). In accordance with that, Schwartz (1992) identifies ten motivational types of values that motivate values from his theory of value. These ten motivational types are further categorized into three universal human demands: 1) biological needs of individuals, 2) social demands for interaction, and 3) social demands for the survival of the group. According to his attitude, “these three universal demands are cognitively linked to values” (Schwartz 1994, 22). Schwartz’s research on values (SVS), under the influence of RVS, mitigates the shortcomings of the ranking system, using instead a grading system to better express the relative and absolute significance of value. The scale content matches Schwartz’s concept of hierarchical and circular configuration of values. Respondents grade 58 values on a scale of “-1” to “7”, whereas “-1” represents objection to the said value, and “7” a high level of significance of the said value, which is then organized into sets of values, i.e., higher-order dimensions. In this case, the higher-order dimensions represent ten individual value scales, defined as follows: 1) conformism; 2) tradition; 3) benevolence; 4) universalism;

5) self-direction; 6) stimulation; 7) hedonism; 8) achievement; 9) power and 10) security (Schwartz 1992). What distinguishes Schwartz's conceptualization of value from Allport's is that his concept implies a circular relation between values and that they are "usually conflicted or complementary to one another" (Holland 2014, 17). Speaking of Rokeach's theory of validity, despite the fact that in his work values are also always present as conflicting with one another, Schwartz advocates for a circumplex conceptualization, contrary to Rokeach's linear ranking, which does not show how some values are mutually complementary (Schwartz 1994, 24–25).

Among domestic authors, in the broadest sense, values are perceived as "relatively stable, general psychical dispositions emerging from combined effect of the cognitive-emotional development, individual personality features and interactions with the social environment, which direct our behavior towards goals that seem desirable to us and towards which he strive" (Alargić 2012, 20). Rot believes that values "always include dispositions for specific behavior and goals towards which fulfilment this behavior is directed" (Rot 1994, 301). Together with Havelka, Rot understands values as "permanent, extremely positive relation of a person towards specific objects we deem as important and for which fulfilment there is a pronounced personal engagement" (Rot i Havelka 1973, 9). Social psychologist Kuzmanović defines values as "understanding (belief system) on personally or socially desirable general methods of behavior, types of activities and relatively permanent states in the nature, society and individual" (Kuzmanović 1995, 19). Speaking of terms "value" and "value orientation", it is difficult to make a clear distinction between these terms, since that, generally speaking, the term "value orientation" is rarely used in comparison to the term "value", and thus there is also less determination of this term" (Rot i Havelka 1973, 9). Kuzmanović stresses the familiarity between the terms "value" and "value orientation", whereas he identifies the fact that "values refer to a more articulated, defined concept of the desirable, whilst value orientations represent a broader, less articulated value system" (Kuzmanović 1995) as a *differentia specifica*. One of the most comprehensive definitions of value is the one provided by Pantić, in which he defines them as "relatively stable, genera and hierarchically organized characteristics of an individual (dispositions) and groups (elements of social consciousness), formed through mutual action of historical, current social and individual

indicators which, due to their desirability, direct the behavior of their holders towards specific goals” (Pantić 1990).

Changes in the physiognomy of armed conflicts and the needed psychological abilities of future officers

The “new security challenges which formed the world after the Cold War and identified new risks and threats” led to changes in the understanding of the concept of security (Ivaniš i Rokvić 2009, 259). “Mass application of contemporary information technology and the phenomenon of the abundance of information led to an intensification of information competition, because of which the number and types of security challenges in the contemporary, based on conflicts and influence through information, increased” (Miljković i Pešić 2019, 1080). To respond to security and military education demands adequately, “with the existence of suitable legal regulations, economic possibilities of the country, will and readiness of political subjects” (Ivaniš i Rokvić 2009, 267), it is necessary to align professional selection and education program. “Not by chance does Professor Kostić begin his publication with a chapter on models and strategies of development of psychological services in the army, stressing the importance of a strong military psychology service for the selection and work with the military collective” (Pešić 2020, 284). Selection for the needs of military education also implies defining the value system of candidates for military education, especially bearing in mind that the value system of each individual is formed through time and under the influence of different social factors. During time and under the influence of the educational process in military education, it is expected that the value orientation and the value system of cadets align with the demands of the military profession.

When considering the development of warfare, Professor Coker reminded us that the first Pentagon analyses on the topic of development of artificial intelligence (in 2019) showed that the advancements in the field of new technologies would lead not only to a change in the character of war but also to a complete change in the nature of war, i.e., that the goal of development of warfare will be a decrease in the strain of soldiers and that the accent will shift to their cognitive abilities and their domination in relation to physical characteristics (Coker 2021). The future of warfare on the battlefield will be directed communication limited in possibilities, as well as conflicting and deceiving information

(Pettyjohn 2021). The main factors of change in society in the following 20 years, according to the opinion of futurologist Ray Hammond, are identified within the frame of climate changes, the second phase of globalization, directed towards technological innovation and their implementation into everyday life, revolution in medicine, accelerated exponential technological development, which will all most probably lead to loss of social roles of a vast number of people in the planet and thus, to social unrest and dispute of technological development and innovation (Hammond 2021). „It is important to emphasize that the objectives of contemporary warfare are no longer primarily directed toward the physical destruction of the adversary's defense and security capabilities. Instead, they aim to undermine the opponent's will to resist even before the outbreak of hostilities, effectively subordinating the will of the entire society of the opposing state to the aggressor's interests and strategic goals” (Đorđević i Miljković 2025, 168). Such assumptions on the future of the development of society and warfare stress the need for the educational process in the Military Academy to form the value system of the future officers, within which the following values are ranked the highest: psycho-physical abilities, versatility, wide general knowledge, critical thinking, higher level of abstract thinking. Formation of the value system of the future officer shows that the educational processes of the Military Academy should build on traditional values (defined by the Doctrine of the Serbian Army and the Code of Honor of the Members of the Serbian Army) but also construct the value system aligned with the mission of the army and the demanded competencies of officers, in accordance with the characteristics of future wars. The value system conceived on the basis of traditional values and values demanded by the military profession of the future ensures the completion of officer duties and the survival of the military profession.

Consideration on the values of cadets – future officers should be examined hand-in-hand with social changes, resulting from the globalization process, demands of our country to be a member of international organizations, extended social transition that changes understanding and creation of a new social paradigm, but also through different crises and reforms (military, political, economic, educational, value), with a tendency of further changes in the physiognomy of future wars and the accompanying educational changes and the necessary abilities of officers.

“The theoretical approach to waging modern armed conflicts explains their most significant characteristic, called a conceptual transition from “traditional” to a “new generation of conflicts”. The conceptual transition from the traditional armed conflict to the new generation of contemporary armed conflicts implies a transition from waging traditional armed combat, with the goal of directly engaging the enemy, to directly influencing the opponent. In traditional armed conflict, the goal is to directly conflict with the enemy armed force, and in contemporary armed conflicts, the goal is the internal dissolution of the enemy’s system, which will lead to their decline. Traditional armed conflict, with the help and contribution of technological development, becomes a contemporary conflict – a conflict with culture. Information and psychological warfare, along with the conflict of perception, changed the dimension of a traditional armed conflict on the battlefield into a contactless contemporary armed conflict, from a segmental conflict to a total war, from an armed conflict in the physical environment to a conflict in human consciousness, from the dimension of a symmetric conflict into the dimension of an asymmetric conflict – with the simultaneous and harmonized application of political, economic, information, technological and environmental campaigns, as well as from traditional armed conflict in a defined temporal period to the state of permanent conflict as a natural state in the life of every nation (Miljković 2020; Milenković i dr. 2025, 205–206).

Today, when it is believed that the postmodern society is endangered by the lack of a firm and common value foundation, an important research question is monitoring of influence of social changes on the system of individual values and value systems of big groups, given the fact that people are not just passive recipients of social influence. The motivation for research on the value system is reflected in its relative stability as well, which influences its durability and the possibility of predicting the future behavior of people and social movements much more successfully than based on some personal dispositions. In the military organization, the research problem – the value system of members of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces was perceived through the following: structure of the value system and its constancy or volatility, as well as the factors which determine preference of specific values (Pajević i dr. 1988, 2001, 2004; Marček i Alargić 2007), but also the connection of the structure of personality and the value system (Basara i dr. 2008–2009; Alargić

2012). The results of this research are an empirical foundation for new research on the value system of the members of the Army, guidelines to creators of educational processes in military schools, and a landmark to military psychologists and officers in the military professional training of officers for fulfilling their professional tasks.

Tracking changes in the value system is justified with the changes of the military organization, in concretum, “for the beginning of the Cold War, the following is characteristic: mass army, constant readiness and combat readiness, invasion, ensuring security, integrations, supports, warrior role of the military organization, prohibition of conscientious objection and institutional identification of soldiers; the end of the Cold War was marked by the following features: possibility of breakout of nuclear war, intimidation of opponents, big professional armies, culture clash, partial integration, military estimates, a soldier as an expert and manager, partially accepted conscientious objection and professional identification of soldiers; in the post-Cold War period, new circumstances arise, defined by the following: non-military threats, flexible responses, less professional armies and small reserves, economic strengthening, military excluded from the politics, reduction of military formations, new tasks of the military organization, a soldier in the role of an expert and scientist, the increase of the significance of the civilian service and civilian identifications of soldiers” (Filjak i dr. 2005 according to: Alargić 2012, 10–11).

Researching values during the reforms of the military organization and military education

The foundation of this paper is the analysis of educational processes in the Military Academy through periods of development operationalized through determination of the value orientations and the value systems of cadets, following the empirical research conducted through time (Pajević 1988; Damljanović i dr. 2005; Marček i Alargić 2008; Alargić 2012; Milošević Stolić 2024). In the research of values on the sample of the Military Academy cadets from the Land Forces branch at the end of the eighties, it was determined that the following value orientations were most pronounced: collectivism (as a tendency towards cohabitation and norms of behavior), tolerance (as a model of behavior that characterizes every mature personality), leadership (as a tendency of influence, management and coordination over a group), orientation

towards changes (as readiness to accepting social changes and changing life habits), “implicit pedagogy” (implying a special relation towards education and belief in the positive outcome of personality development), self-determination, social engagement, material orientation and desire for achievement (Pajević i dr. 1988).

The following research on the value system of students of the Military Academy, conducted in specific social circumstances after the bombing of the FR Yugoslavia by the North Atlantic Alliance, stresses the dominance of the following values: “freedom, familial security, honor, survival of the nation, happiness, cleverness, pride, patriotism and self-respect, other values are significantly respected as well, such as the following: justice, security of the country, bravery, personal peace and success in life” (Pajević i dr. 2004, 126–127). In subsequent empirical research, results show that students give the most significant importance to the following values: “freedom, honor, family security, cleverness, survival of the nation, justice, security of the country, pride, nation, happiness, patriotism, masculinity, bravery, state and responsibility, while the lowest ranked on the preference value scale is reconcilability” (Marček i Alargić 2007, 94–95).

The acquired results in research on values during the reform of the military system (Basara i dr. 2008–2009; Alargić 2012) show that the members of the Army highly rank the following values: family, happiness, justice, self-pride, honor, and economic advance of the state. The lowest-ranked values are the following: belief in God, obedience, democratic social order, artistic creation, and exciting life. Lower acceptance of faith in God as a value, Alargić explained by the times of atheism and the construction of the so-called moral personality of the member of the Yugoslav People’s Army, with a pronounced abandonment of traditional Christian values. At the same time, the stress was put on promoting the following values: humanism, solidarity, modernization, and internationalization. Alargić stresses one peculiarity in the research – a low grade of values such as freedom of choice, democracy, solidarity, philanthropy, bravery, and patriotism, which are the values previously highly ranked in the past. This result was not by the expectations that the new democratic values would be highly accepted, even though a deviation from the traditional value system or transformation of the meaning of traditional values is noticeable. There is an increasing orientation towards personal success, family security, and a broader understanding of patriotism and military professional values (Alargić 2012).

Through comparative analysis, eventual changes in the value system among members of the military organization in eight years of the most intense reforms of the military organization were examined (Alargić 2012). The results show that six same values appear among the first ten values ranked in both research, which are the following: 1) family, 2) justice, 3) honor, 4) security of the country, 5) self-respect and 6) happiness, which confirms the consistency of social value orientations (Marček i Alargić 2008). Moreover, comparative analysis shows that (Basara i dr. 2008–2009), in comparison to the previous period (Marček i Alargić 2007), there is an increase in the rank of valorization of almost all values: honor, self-respect, security of the country, independence, tradition, bravery, success in life, comfortable life, philanthropy, peace in the world, patriotism, obedience and belief in God. The decrease in the significance assessment occurred in the case of the value of freedom, where there was a drop from second to twentieth rank. The author stresses that, in 2001, patriotism (Pajević i dr. 2004) was among the ten highly ranked values within the questioned sample, while in 2006, it took up the twentieth place. In the research conducted in 2008, it gained more significance and took up the sixteenth place by rank. Alargić concludes based on the results of the empirical research that, during the reform and transformation of the military organization, some values remained stable (humanism and patriotism), while others changed in preference and meaning (hedonism, religiousness, and traditionalism). However, some new values also emerged as significant (success, education, family security). These results drive us to think about the influence of specific socio-historical circumstances in preferring specific values and, by the leading ideology, which leads us to conclude that values change, no matter the fact that they are deemed relatively stable. This data supports the necessity of developing educational programs to educate youth on the issues of national identity and the value system by the law and the dominant religious affiliation in our country.

In the empirical research “Value Orientations and Attitude of the Military Academy Cadets towards Tradition” (Starčević 2024–2026), conducted on a sample of 169 cadets, a scale for measuring values was applied – *SV-2024*. The scale consists of 45 items with responses on a five-level Likert-type scale of Likert type, and the reliability of the measure of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient amounts to 0.912. An exceptional value of the applied psychological instrument is the value scale, which has, through time, in modified variants, been applied to the sample of

cadets and members of the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Army. The use of the same or a modified instrument of high reliability provides researchers with the possibility to track changes in the ranking of values among the cadets and understand them by the educational process and other factors of their formation, track ranging of values among members as an indicator of alignment of the value system with the demands of the military profession. "The results of empirical research of the value system of the Military Academy cadets on the level of descriptive analysis showed that there are three levels of acceptance of a value: the first (highest) level (15 items), whereas the acceptance of values is expressed via mean values of 4.50 and higher; the second (mean) level (19 items), with values ranging from 4.00 to 4.49, and the third (the lowest) level (eight items), with values ranging from 2.90 to 3.99. Moreover, the highest level of acceptance was attributed to the following values: family, honor, survival of the nation, justice, security of the country, intelligence, bravery, independence of the country, responsibility, pride, satisfaction, patriotism, self-respect, nation and the belief in God" (Milošević Stolić 2025).

The military system is not an isolated and independent organization that functions outside the context of general social changes in our country's previous decades. Grandiose in structure and traditional in its character, it changes slowly and adjusts to the demands of society and the contemporary historical moment. However, the military system can be reformed faster and more efficient than some other social organizations due to its hierarchical structure and the method of action, most often by the changes in the physiognomy of contemporary armed combat or under the influence of external social and historical and current social circumstances (Alargić 2012). The reform of the Serbian Army, directed towards refinement of its role, reduction of its size, restructuring, professionalization and equipment with modern equipment, as well as striving towards joining the Euro-Atlantic integration, resulted in its membership in the NATO Program "Partnership for peace", which undoubtedly has a significant influence on the value orientations of employees of the military system. Besides that, a significant influence, and most probably the primary one, is attributed to transition processes in all segments of social life (political, economic, cultural) (Alargić 2012). The change in the structure of the military organization, the mission of the army, and memberships in military alliances are all the demands that are put before the military science and education, requesting the alignment of educational programs to preserve the military organization

and military profession. Monitoring the formation of the value orientation and value systems of the Military Academy cadets, i.e., the future officers of the Serbian Army, thus becomes a permanent task, given the fact that the changes in the development of warfare and military education in the world are far faster than they were in the previous periods, conditioned by accelerated technical-technological advances, which change the character of future wars and needed abilities, knowledge and skills of future officers.

CONCLUSION

Adequate and functional conduct of the educational process at the Military Academy is being achieved not only concerning the previously stated and precisely defined phases of the andragogic cycle. The educational needs are operationalized through education plans and programs of upbringing and education of cadets of the Military Academy through the acquisition of general educational, general military, and general professional military knowledge. Besides acquiring knowledge and skills, the cadets construct a value system with personal and patriotic values, defined as military values.

Upon analysis of the value systems of cadets throughout time, it is evident that the following values are ranked the highest: freedom, independence, patriotism, pride, nation, honor, knowledge, tradition, state, survival of the nation, bravery, but also self-respect, personal peace, comfortable life, equality, family, responsibility, order and discipline. Such a set of values unequivocally distinguishes the factors of formation of the value systems of the youth, as well as the educational processes of the future education of new generations of the youngest officers are of special significance. Upon examination of the change in the character of contemporary warfare, the following general tasks of the society impose: strengthening educational processes as factors of socialization and education of children and youth regarding knowledge important for the preservation of national identity, organization of educational programs and training for employees and inhabitants regarding characteristics of contemporary armed conflicts and defense.

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ВАСПИТНО-ОБРАЗОВНИ ПРОЦЕС У ВОЈНОЈ АКАДЕМИЈИ КАО ФАКТОР ФОРМИРАЊА ВРЕДНОСНОГ СИСТЕМА БУДУЋИХ ОФИЦИРА***

Резиме

Резултати добијени у истраживању вредности код кадета Војне академије и припадника Министарства одбране показују да се систем вредности формира деловањем великог броја фактора, почев од примарне породице, места порекла, завршених школа, вршњачких група и да није изолован од деловања друштвено-политичког контекста у држави, реформе војног система и образовања. Крајем осамдесетих година, најизраженије вредносне оријентације биле су: колективизам, лидерство, оријентација на промене, „имплицитна педагогија”, самоопредељење, друштвени ангажман, материјална оријентација и жеља за достигнућима (Рајевић i dr. 1988). Након НАТО агресије, вредности које доминирају су: слобода, породична сигурност, независност, част, опстанак нације, срећа, интелигенција, понос, патриотизам и самопоштовање (Рајевић i dr. 2004). Током реформе војног система, следећим вредностима је дат најзначајнији значај: слобода, част, породична сигурност, интелигенција, опстанак нације, правда, безбедност земље, понос, народ, срећа, патриотизам, мушкост, храброст, држава и одговорност, док је најнижи ранг на

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*** Рад је део научно-истраживачких пројеката који се спровode на основу Плана научноистраживачке делатности у Министарству одбране и Војсци Србије за 2025. годину: „Вредносне оријентације и однос према традицији кадета Војне академије” (бр. ВА ДХ/1/24–26).

скали преференцијалних вредности заузела помирење (Marček 2007), истовремено су најмање прихваћене вредности попут: породице, правде, части, самопоштовања, среће и економског напретка државе, а најмање прихваћене су вредности које описују конформистичку и авантуристичку вредносну оријентацију. На дну скале рангова су вредности попут вере у Бога, послушности, демократског друштвеног поретка, уметничке креативности и узбудљивог живота (Basara i dr. 2008). Аларгић објашњава рангирање вредности временом одрастања и васпитања и образовања испитаника. Низак ниво вредности слободе избора, демократије и солидарности објашњава се вредносном дезоријентацијом услед ранијег васпитања и образовања, ратова у бившој СФРЈ, глобализације и нејасних и спорих реформи. Објашњење да испитаници, с једне стране, одбацују традиционалне вредности, а не показују потпуно поверење у нове демократске вредности, оставља простор за образовну акцију. Истраживање вредности након става држава о војној неутралности показује да следеће вредности имају највећи степен прихватања: породица, част, опстанак нације, правда, безбедност земље, интелигенција, храброст, независност земље, одговорност, понос, задовољство, патриотизам, самопоштовање, народ и вера у Бога (Milošević Stolić 2025). На основу резултата емпиријског истраживања у различитим карактеристичним периодима за војну организацију, може се закључити да су професионално-војне вредности остале стабилне. Насупрот томе, универзалне вредности су се мењале у преференцијама и значењу, а неке нове вредности су се појавиле као значајне (успех, образовање, породична сигурност). Резултати указују на то да људи, у зависности од друштвено-историјских контекста, преферирају вредности које се поклапају са друштвено или професионално пропагираним вредностима. Ово сугерише да се вредности могу мењати чак и ако су релативно стабилне или су фундаментална уверења, ставови и обавезе. Овакви закључци пружају простор за креирање наставних и образовних модула и модификацију општих и стручних предмета у Војној академији и свим нивоима развоја каријере у правцу развоја карактеристика савремених ратова и будућности војног образовања, односно захтева војне професије.

Кључне речи: Војна академија, васпитање, образовање, вредности, вредносни систем.

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