



ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ

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ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ

THE POLICY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Jubilee of the Military Academy
– 175 years of military education in Serbia

ISSN 2334-959X

UDC 351.862/.863(497.11)

No. 2/2025.



ПОЛИТИКА НАЦИОНАЛНЕ БЕЗБЕДНОСТИ

The Policy of National Security

Publisher

Institute for Political Studies
Address: Dobrinjska 11, Belgrade
www.ips.ac.rs

Tel.: 011/3349 204;

E-mail: pnb@ips.ac.rs

ISSN 2334-959X UDC 351.862/.863(497.11)

No. 2/2025 Year XVI vol. 29.

JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED THREE TIMES A YEAR.

For publisher

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Printing

Donat Graf, Belgrade

Circulation:

50

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FOREWORD

Dear readers,

Exactly 175 years have passed since the education of officers came to life in Serbia. The event through which our country showed the institutional capability to master the skill to school the officer staff for its army independently was the founding of the Artillery School in Belgrade. Although it bore the name of only one branch of the military, the one that had the most excellent firepower at that time, the Artillery School was conceived and organized as a general officer school intended for the schooling of officers for all branches of the then Serbian army. The people immediately called it the Military Academy. It officially took on that name in 1880, after the reform initiated by the Minister of War, Lieutenant Colonel (and later general, academician and president of the Serbian Royal Academy) Jovan Mišković, whose name today is borne by the barracks in which the Military Academy is located and whose bust is today greeted by everyone who enters the “Administration Building” of the Military Academy.

The foundation of the Military Academy was not a simple act; the foundations of this institution were laid on the following: the centuries-old dream of Serbs for the liberation from foreign rule, the hope that the hour of statehood renovation would inevitably come and the knowledge that the freedom and national state can be acquired only through the fight, as well as that this fight can be victorious only with the help of modern and strong army, shaped on the example of the best European army of the time. The path from the contemporary army led through the professionalization of the officer staff, thus through accurate and historical professional knowledge acquired through extended schooling, multi-layered loyalty and responsibility, mutual solidarity, and a sense of belonging to the profession.

From then until now, the history of the Military Academy and the history of Serbia have been linked by fate. The state framework defined the form, organizations, and domains of the Military Academy. The

domains of the Military Academy significantly determined the quality of officers, and the officers defined the level of capability of the army, from the General Staff to the last platoon, which then reflected on the strategic reach of the state and its ability to project its power and achieve or protect its vital interests. This is where the same causal circle begins again, unless the Military Academy, as a creative, inventive (and thus unpredictable, truly free and influential) core of the officer profession, does not surpass the framework that defines it, raising the quality of the officers and the capacity of the military profession. Precisely because it is military-oriented but still an academic and intellectual environment, the Military Academy is an institution of strategic significance and a stronghold of the space of military power. It is home to all the officers, and its signature is under the *esprit de corps*. Hence, its holiday – the holiday of all officers, the entire army, and the state.

The journal “The Policy of National Security” joined the Military Academy and the University of Defence in Belgrade in the celebration of this jubilee – one hundred and seventy-five years of the existence of the Military Academy – by dedicating this number to the topics relating to military education in Serbia. We thank the editor-in-chief, Professor Dr Marija Đorić, and her associates for this.

This issue presents to the readers scientific papers that mainly stem from two scientific research projects of the University of Defence in Belgrade, financed by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia. These are the “Value orientations and attitudes of cadets of the Military Academy towards tradition”, which is predominantly worked on by professors of the Military Academy, and “Military Profession in Serbia in the modern security environment”, which is mainly worked on by researchers from the Institute for Strategic Research. Works of other members of the academic community that deal with the issues of significance for the defense system, especially military education, are also present. As can already be seen from the mentioned scientific research programs, they are directed towards both significant and current topics of officer professionalism and the military education of our times. Have the consumer society’s values shaken modern states’ armies and caused a crisis in the officer profession? Why do young people enroll in the Military Academy? Who are they, where do they come from, and what values do they share? How is the information and technological revolution affecting military education and the officer profession?

The effort to keep the glorious history and equally glorious problems from the history exclusively within this editorial, and that have the papers that follow refer to timeless and contemporary issues and solutions to military education, was fruitful in all eight scientific papers brought to you by this issue of “The Policy of National Security”. In the first of these papers, the author sheds light on the military profession in contemporary society, which is the reason for the existence of military academies worldwide and the consequence of their activity. Then, two departments of the Military Academy were presented: the Department of Social and Human Sciences is represented by a paper on the topic of tactics, a military science for which, in the Republic of Serbia, the Military Academy is the foundation, while the Department of Technical-Technological, Natural Sciences and Mathematics is represented by a paper on the topic of unmanned autonomous vehicles and the needs for the new competencies of the military staff by the technics they carry along. These are followed by papers offering answers to questions on the axiological purpose of the educational process in the Military Academy, factors that influence the opting of young people to enroll in study programs of the Military Academy, socio-economic features of cadets, consumer ethnocentrism, and lifestyles of members of the defense sector. The series concludes with the paper of the Institute for Strategic Research director, Professor Dr Dragan Stanar, on the modern significance of military education and the civilizational price that the political unity that does not have much right in military education and does not invest in it must pay.

This issue is given an exceptional value by the critical and synthetic review written by the head of the Military Academy, Colonel Professor Dr Srđan Blagojević, which also indicates the directions for developing this higher education institution, the only one in Serbia.

Guest Editor,
Colonel assoc. Prof. Dr Srđan Starčević

JUBILEE OF THE
MILITARY ACADEMY
– 175 YEARS OF MILITARY
EDUCATION IN SERBIA

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ARMY AND MILITARY PROFESSION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY: A CONTRIBUTION TO DEFINING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The social transformations defining contemporary, postmodern, or post-Cold War society have inevitably shaped the military – its organization, functions, role, and societal position. Global shifts from a bipolar to a unipolar and now multipolar geopolitical order demand the continuous evolution of national armed forces. This paper provides an overview of the broader context in which the modern military and military profession operate. It seeks to establish an analytical framework for examining their role and position in contemporary society as a research subject. The objective of this paper is to contribute not only in a hermeneutic (cognitive) sense but also in a methodological sense by developing an analytical framework based on six key factors: (1) the political system and legislative framework, (2) national culture and social values, (3) historical experience, (4) the economy and the level of technical and technological development (5) the quality of military education and training, and

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** The paper was written within the framework of the Institute for Strategic Research project "Military profession in Serbia in the modern security environment" (ИСИ/ДХ/3/24-26), financed by the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia.

(6) international military cooperation. Each factor is briefly explained, emphasizing its significance and specific characteristics. Through the appropriate selection and application of scientific methods, the proposed analytical framework aims to enable future research on the role and position of the military and the military profession in contemporary society to achieve the most comprehensive scientific understanding of the research subject.

Keywords: military, military profession, post-modern society, post-modern army, analytical framework.

INTRODUCTION

To systematically examine the role and place of the army and the military profession in society, it is necessary to define the analytical framework first, which should serve as a starting point for further research on this topic. Bearing in mind that we are speaking of a complex issue impacted by a series of different factors, the analytical framework offers a structural approach to gathering and interpreting data, guiding researchers towards the correct choice of indicators and scientific methods, which should ensure that the research has a transparent and predictable course. On the other hand, this enables an easier operational definition of the research subject, which in this concrete research is the social determinants of the military profession and, in a broader sense, the internal characteristics of the military organization.

The term “analytical framework” should be understood as a basic model or concept guiding researchers towards the correct approach to the organization and conduct of research. In other words, the analytical framework serves to “identify, categorize and organize those factors that are seen as most relevant for understanding a phenomenon” (McGinnis 2011, 167). Therefore, it can be said that the key reason why we should think of the analytical framework at all is that it helps with defining the problem, identifying key factors related to the research subject, and contributes to the creation of a more complete insight into the subject itself and the research process. Moreover, the analytical framework defines and eases data management related to the research subject. Managing data in this sense would imply the entire process, based on relevant scientific methods, starting from data collection, classification,

processing, and finally, presentation. This process aims to ultimately obtain the most complete picture of the research subject – in this case, the military profession, its place, and role in contemporary society.

Speaking of research in social sciences, to which this research also belongs, if we define a firmer structure with specific relations between some variables or indicators, we could speak of an analytical model instead of an analytical framework. For researching political phenomena, methodologists Milosavljević and Radosavljević suggest one “typical mental model of research subject”, which consists of six key factors that could also, in some variety, be a valuable model for reaching scientific cognition regarding this issue (Milosavljević and Radosavljević 2006, 74–88). By applying knowledge from the field of operational research, it is also possible to quantify certain social phenomena, thus making concluding somewhat easier. For now, this is only a qualitative analysis, where specific segments appear that can be expressed with quantitative indicators, but whose purpose is only to additionally strengthen the components of the qualitative description of categories defined with this analytical framework.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE MODERN INTO POSTMODERN ARMY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE CHANGE FROM MODERN TO POSTMODERN SOCIETY

Even though the postmodernism era in the philosophical and artistic sense starts way earlier, the second half of the 20th century, especially the period after the end of the Cold War, in a sociological sense, can be seen as the postmodern period, bearing in mind that social characteristics of this period are globalization, digitalization, individualization (fragmentation of identity) and skepticism towards “grand stories” (ideology, nationalism, etc.), which represent the negation or a difference from the modern period. The changes occurring in the post-Cold War period were reflected in all spheres of society in almost all countries. Due to numerous transformations that took place in the military sphere during that period, the term “postmodern”, hand-in-hand with the following nouns: military, army, war, etc., becomes quite appropriate and generally accepted, especially in Western terminology (Moskos et al. 2000; Bondy 2004; Kiszely 2009).

The globalization process became the main feature of this time, and liberal economy and technological advances, especially in information-communication systems, have led to different changes, not only in the internal structure of society but also in the global scene. Another significant characteristic of the postmodern society regarding this topic is the fact that it is the era during which the weakening of centralized forms of social organizations occurred. This carried along some consequences, reflecting the national security domain. Armed non-state actors often replaced regular armed forces of states or entered into conflict with them as one of the warring parties (Kaldor 2005; Kreveld 2010). Strong national states and markets retracted before the global and free market, dominated by multinational corporations, often with larger budgets than the states. Due to the ideal of an unhindered flow of goods, people, and capital, national borders do not hold the significance they once did, and their control, instead of the army, is usually taken up by specialized police units.

Quite helpful and interesting frameworks for viewing the overall social changes that occurred with the general reorganization of the industrial into a postindustrial or information society were provided by the Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori, who contributed to researching democracy, as well as the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells, through this theory of the network society. Sartori believed that the transformation of modern society into a postmodern one is reflected in the creation of “a society which holds rights”, that is, a society which seeks its rights and, at the same time, does not care that much for the duty and obligations. Such societies, in which the link between the law and duty does not exist anymore, create a special type of people, resembling “spoiled brats”, and thus, we cannot expect such people to be ready to give a sacrifice (Sartori 2001). As Srđan Starčević noticed, this negatively reflects on accepting military conscription and eventual participation in the state’s war efforts (Starčević 2024). This is in direct collision with the characteristics of modern society, based on a collectivist spirit and ideological and national values.

Similarly, Castells stresses that social structure based on networks, a characteristic of modern times, represents a highly dynamic and open system adjusted to social organization to “overcome space and waste time” (Kastels 2018, 644). Such changes resulted in a changed society that is not ready to make the sacrifice and drastically disturb its comfort. For such societies, only an “instant war” is acceptable, not including

regular citizens, but only professional soldiers, which is brief (and even instant) and which is “clean” in the sense that it is being carried on with highly-precise weapons, without grand destruction and civilian casualties (Kastels 2018, 627).

From a geopolitical perspective, in the beginning, the collapse of the bipolar international order led to a unipolar one, in which the only remaining superpower held global domination in the political, economic, and security spheres, the United States of America. The domination of the political West, led by the US, created a new reality in the international security arena, whose main feature was American interventionism (Ganzer 2018, 2021). Russia’s powerlessness and China’s restraint, as well as the developing countries following the political West, have led to the will and interest of Washington’s political and economic establishment, by force or will, being implemented in almost all meridians of the world.

Besides that, in the post-Cold War period, a change occurred in the perception of threats, which reflects the relations between the national armed forces and society. “After the Cold War, the security discourse became much wider, comprehensive, and elastic than before” (Ejduš 2024, 130). With the symbolic fall of the Berlin Wall, the fear that a major interstate conflict or a conflict of global proportions, such as World Wars One and Two, disappeared. This feeling especially reigned among the most developed countries of Europe and the EU Member States.¹ The fear of invasion by an enemy state, military bloc, or nuclear war replaced the fear of terrorist attacks, interstate tensions, and eventually conflicts, but relatively far from the countries of Europe (Tučić 2020, 48–49). This has led to a change in the vocabulary and terms previously used in military doctrines and the introduction of new terms which diminish the significance of an armed fight in war operations, such as “operations different from war”, “peace operations”, “maintaining stability and support operations”, etc. (Vuković 2024, 397). Because of that, in American military circles emerged a debate regarding which level of “operations that are not war” diminishes the “soldierly” abilities of national armed forces (Moskos 1998, 4–8).

The transition from modern to postmodern society did not necessarily condition the change from a modern to a postmodern army.

¹ Therefore, for example, in the European Security Strategy – “Secure Europe in a Better World” from 2003, the first sentence states as follows: “Europe was never so advanced, so secure, or so free. Violence from the first half of the 20th century gave way to a period of peace and stability, unprecedented in European history” (Janković 2006, 3).

Military and wars in the contemporary era were inextricably linked to the idea of the nation-state. The modern period is based on the state-centric approach to security, in which the only reference object of security is the state, which will transform in the period of postmodernism (Štrbac et al. 2013). This is the period from Napoleon's wars and then on, implying the existence of big national armies and the dominant role of rulers and holders of state power who make decisions on war and peace (see Klauzevic 1939; Žomini 1938). The format of the army from the times of modern was a combination of conscript and professional staff, in which the soldiers and a part of the lower ranks were conscripted into the general military service, referring to the male population of military age, while a segment of the non-commissioned officer and predominantly officer staff were from the professional staff. This army is "oriented towards war by its mission, of male composition and ethos, differentiated by structure and culture of the civil society" (Moskos et al. 1999, 1). It was precisely this separation of the military from civil society, of which even Carl von Clausewitz spoke, that represented one of the most significant features of the members of the military profession, thus making them a special segment of society.

Contrary to that, the postmodern army is going through a process of weakening the firm links with the nation-state, and thus, its fundamental form shifts towards "volunteer forces". Abandoning the concept of general conscription happened as a consequence of the rejection of war as an option and citizens resistance to the call of the state to a final sacrifice, which became clear after the inglorious outcomes the great powers bore in the wars waged in Algeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan (Kastels 2018, 625–627). The peak of the professionalization process and abandoning the principle of involuntary military service happened at the end of the nineties of the last century and at the beginning of the 2000s. Contrary to some earlier periods, when state security directly depended on the ability to fast and massively mobilize military servicemen and deploy large military formations, the postmodern army relies on smaller, well-trained and highly mobile units, equipped with contemporary and expensive war techniques, made up of professional staff. "The quantity is compensated by quality, not only in the personal army staff content but also the equipment of war techniques given to it" (Mirković 2007, 234). As the perception of security threats changed, the response to the state to them changed, leading to a change in structure and the size of the national armies.

What is characteristic of this new, postmodern army is the latest mission, which is multipurpose, implying that, besides the traditional role referring to the defense of the state from external threats, some new roles appear as well, in which the military force is used in almost “civilian purposes”. Therefore, it is not that unusual anymore to use the soldiers to help the civilian government in crises (which emerged as a consequence of natural disasters, technological accidents, terrorism, etc.), or to engage military personnel in different and numerous missions worldwide, whether under the UN umbrella or in some other format. The military ethos is not as belligerent as it was in modern warfare; men are not the only members of the military machine anymore, since women have joined them as well. Some see this as a breakdown of this warrior ethos, bringing the military in line with other professions accessible equally to men and women even earlier. Besides that, the military as an organization has become more open to civil society, and thus the military profession as well. The barracks fences are not the “impermeable walls” anymore, hiding the biggest “state secrets”, but various military objects have become accessible to civilians as well, and it became possible to organize the most diverse manifestations, often attracting media attention, in them (Moskos et al. 1999).

THE MOVE FROM UNIPOLARITY TO MULTIPOLARITY AND THE NEW NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE NATIONAL ARMY

The new shift of the international order, from unipolarity to multipolarity, conditions the latest changes in the national army’s role, organization, and size, and the tasks put before it. The first more serious indication of the end of unipolarity happened in 2008 with the military intervention of Russia in Georgia. The war in Ukraine, the conflict in the Middle East afterwards as well, and especially military interventions of Israel in the Gaza Strip, Yemen, and Lebanon, brought the topic of war conflicts back into the focus of interest of the world public. “It has become clear once again that, even though not the only one, the use of military force remains a significant tool in international politics” (Milenković i dr. 2025, 102). This also means that many countries, despite decades of neglect, will have to commit once again to the reaffirmation of the status of the army and military profession in society.

Moreover, other indicators, which are not directly linked with war events and those from the political and economic spheres, show that yesterday's sole superpower, the United States of America, has serious challengers. In the first line is China, which is succeeding in transforming its accelerated economic growth and increasing economic significance into political influence. At the same time, China is, in parallel, working on strengthening military capacities, thus becoming the most serious challenger to America in the Pacific region and globally (Pejić 2024). To China and Russia, which are still basing their rivalry with the states of the political West on military power and energy sources, we should add the rest of the BRICS member states and the Middle Eastern countries (Petrović 2010). Despite being an ally to the US on many issues, the European Union persistently attempts to position itself as an independent global economic and political actor. However, its deep dependence on the US military personnel does not permit it to fulfill the complete political autonomy towards which it strives (Štrbac i dr. 2015, 17–24).

With the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, whose durations and scopes surpassed all initial expectations, the topic of war returned once again to the political agenda, and on a very high level. The fear of war on a larger scale, and not only conventional but nuclear, became a reality. Harsh and hyperrealistic images from the battlefield, as well as numerous analyses by various experts, impose on all countries of the world, and not only the ones that are direct or indirect actors in those conflicts, the need to question the force of their armies and the defense capacities of the state. The technological advance that occurred and which was never faster or bigger provides some new dynamics to the contemporary conflicts. The mass use of high-precision and unmanned weapons, in the first line, including drones of most different uses, brings dramatic changes to the method of waging wars, which necessarily reflects on the mere organization of the armed forces as well. The application of artificial intelligence in data collection and processing, as well as the target selection and decision-making processes, represents a novelty that will become the main feature of future wars.

Besides that, the current wars bring back once more to the scene the mass use of artillery and armor combat systems. This opens numerous questions for the states that have in the previous period, conducted transformations of national armed forces, which, as a rule, implied a reduction of the unit strength, both in terms of people and military equipment. First, are the numbers of contemporary arms, military

equipment, and munition reserves available to the armies sufficient for larger-scale wars? Second, given that most states shifted from conscription or combined personnel to a thoroughly professional army composition, whether the states have adequate trained citizens who, as a reserve force, can fill the war units if needed?

The responses to these two questions point that the new transformation of the national armed forces, in the organizational sense, will represent a “step back”, that is, the return to the old ways, which probably implies much more numerous armies than today which, besides professional members, contain conscribed persons, who can be counted in as a trained reserve. It is estimated that reinstating conscription will not be easy at all. Starčević also warns of the difficulties that will accompany the reintroduction of military conscription due to realistic expectations that the multipolar world will be a “world of military competition”, saying: “States that can convince their citizens that the threat to the country’s freedom is real will introduce this obligation, although it will be a lighter form of obligation than the one that was in force in the last century. The countries that have suspended involuntary military service and want to reinstate it without convincing their citizens of the reality of the threat will face clear resentment from their citizens” (Starčević 2024, 12). In parallel with this process, it can be expected that the military industry will have much more work in the following period.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS AS ELEMENTS OF THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING THE ARMY AND MILITARY PROFESSION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The previous lines presented the image of contemporary society in the security context and how its transformation from the modern into the postmodern era reflected on the army and its need for adjustment. However, understanding the global social context is still insufficient to properly understand the place and role of the army and the military profession in contemporary society. Therefore, among the main determinants of the army and the military profession recognized by the author of this paper, which we can deem to be the elements of the analytical framework, are as follows: (1) political system and legal framework, (2) national culture and social values, (3) historical experience, (4) economy and the level of technical-technological development, (5) quality of military education

and training and (6) international military cooperation. This is, by all means, a conditional division which is not final and depends on the temporal era and the region examined.

The political system and legal framework represent one of the fundamental factors in determining a society's army and military profession. The Constitution, as the highest legal act and the law, chooses the place and role of the military in the state system by clearly defining its purpose and tasks. The Constitution and laws prescribe who commands the army in times of war and peace, with what power, and conditions for performing military service is performed, and the rights and obligations of military personnel. Lower legal acts, various rules and instructions, starting with the Service Rules onwards, regulate in more detail the functioning of the army organization, the rules of using force, methods of engaging units, training, discipline, career advancement, and the like. However, considering different regulations by their hierarchy and fields is necessary, but not sufficient, to understand the proper place and role of the army and military profession in society.

A step further would be to consider the manner and extent of application of these regulations in practice, for which it is necessary to understand the political and social context reflected in the political system and political culture of the given society. The differences between states regarding political systems are recognized by "how the government, institutions, and relationships that govern and are created in political actions and processes are organized and regulated" (Pešić 2018, 24). The political system indicates the positions, significance, and relations among key political actors and institutions, as well as the power relations of the holders of political power in a state. Whether we are speaking of a country with a democratic or autocratic governing method, a republic or a monarchy, a presidential or parliamentary political system, whether the right wing or left wing oriented political parties are in power, etc., will indeed affect the position and significance of the army and members of the military profession.

Security and defense are significant functions of politics and the political system. Therefore, the state must possess adequate resources of power, knowledge, and ability to use these resources to fulfil national interests and goals (Blagojević 2018, 45–52). The function of defense must be institutionalized to be effective and efficient (Malinovski 1970, 137). In other words, the function of defense implies an organization in which the roles of the members of the community are clearly defined,

material means (equipment) are defined and secured, and in which tradition plays a significant role. The chief holders of the function of defense are the national armed forces.

Analyzing the political system shows the relationship between the army, political elites, and civil society, representing the backbone of civil-military relations (Todorć 2004, 7–15). Contemporary democratic standards imply professional actions of the army by its constitutional role and outside the influence of politicians and political parties (Hantington 2004). In this relationship, it is essential to consider whether and to which extent the army is “politicized”, bearing in mind that “a politicized army either appoints its leaders to the governing positions in the states or is being manipulated by the leaders of a certain political option” (Starćević 2011, 254). On the other hand, the interference of politics in military affairs disrupts the cohesion of the society and the army itself, one of whose main characteristics is monism.² Determining the nature of civil-military relations is especially visible through the influence of politics on expert military issues, such as army organization, doctrine, equipping, career advancement, etc.

National culture and social values are of essential importance for understanding different occurrences and processes, and for a proper understanding of the work of institutions and the behavior of prominent individuals and societies. When presenting his book *Theory of Culture*, Đuro Šušnjić said that culture is “a view of the world, not only as it was and is today, but as it could be and as it should be”, and that from culture “emerge calls for consents and uprisings” (Šušnjić 2015). According to his perception, understanding a society’s specific culture makes it impossible to comprehend its fate. Given that we cannot speak of a culture outside the community and the society, national culture is the core and the imprint of a demos/nation. According to Benedict Anderson, nationalism is a product of culture and emerges through identification with other nation members (Neš 2006, 86). Invoking the need to protect the (endangered)

² As a feature of the army, monism means that the army is one and unique. This implies that there is only one army, and not more, in the state, and it is unique because it is subordinate to a single authority and acts synchronously and in accordance with a unique idea to achieve a specific task/goal. “The society can be stable whether the supreme command is entrusted to a separate or collective body, but this stability will be called into question if there are several armed organizations subordinate to different, mutually independent commanders, or if, in addition to the constitutionally designated supreme command authority, someone else claims the supreme command. In such cases, there is a high possibility of civil wars and coups d’état breaking out” (Starćević 2022, 227).

people, their national identity, territory, etc., additionally strengthens the position and significance of the army and military profession in society.

Looking at the national culture and social values this community nurtures, the attitude of citizens towards freedom and the duty to defend it with arms, if needed, is also visible. This further influences the acceptance of community members to participate in training for military duties through different models of military service. In social communities within which there is a general military obligation for men of a certain age, being conscripted implies some form of initiation through which young men transit from “boyhood” to “manhood”, which is sometimes even accompanied by a sort of popular celebration (Kovačević 1986). This popular tradition and customs form confirms the place and significance of the army and the military profession.

In the analysis of national culture, it is useful to consider in more detail its two sub-types, political culture and strategic culture, which can be even more closely related to the topic. Political culture is closely linked with the notion of a political system and implies society's relation to political institutions and values. According to Dragan Simeunović, “political cultures are significantly shaped by social and historical circumstances, the geopolitical position of the society, the size of the state and nation, etc” (Simeunović 2022, 262). Political symbols through which, among other things, political culture manifests and which can be perceived and experienced emotionally, are closely linked with the dominant ideology in the society. Suppose political symbols emphasizing the libertarian tradition of the people are additionally supported by national myths and state ceremonies. In that case, the army and its members are more valued as guarantors of freedom and independence.

On the other hand, strategic culture, as part of national culture, is closely linked with political culture. “Created as an amalgam of history, geopolitics, possibilities, and the value system, strategic culture can be presented in the most general sense as a set of dominant attitudes and behavior patterns” (Blagojević 2019, 176). It explains the attitudes of the most significant social actors, primarily political and military elites, towards force and the use of force (Milenković 2019, 52). Through these relations, the status of the army factor in society can also be seen. Societies in which military interests, ideas, and customs prevail over all others are called militarized societies, and this practice is called militarism. Militarism can be understood as a value system in which the military

mentality, warrior virtues, and tradition are particularly emphasized and glorified, but also as “a military ideology which is the foundation of the subjective political activity of the military oligarchy” (Krstić 1993, 663). In such societies, the military as an institution and the military elites have a privileged, often even formally dominant position, compared to the civilian structures. Examples of such practice are Germany and Japan in the first half of the 20th century. On the value scale, this positions militarism as the opposite of democracy, due to which it is perceived as a negative social phenomenon (Dreze 2000).

Historical experience is an element without which it is difficult to perceive the proper role of the army and military profession in society, because we cannot understand the present without an appropriate understanding of the past. Thus, we cannot reliably predict the future. It should be acknowledged that most modern nations were created in conditions of war, conflict, and competition with other peoples and nations. This process dominantly took place in the 19th century, when the ideas of nationalism took root in the world. The historical experience in this context should be perceived through the role of the national armed forces in creating the state and through the fight for its preservation. If, throughout history, the army was the institution on which depended the destined survival of the state itself, and often even the biological and identity preservation of the people, then the position of the army in the given society would be more dominant in comparison to other actors.

Moreover, it has been observed that decisions in contemporary times are often made on the foundation of agreement with the actions from the past (Marsh and Stoker 2005, 76). This, by all means, also refers to the decision on the ab(use) of the army for fulfilling various political goals, whether it be the fight or maintaining the wished and acceptable peace, preservation or change of the internal social, economic, and political order. Based on the example of coup d'état, research shows that the possibility of its occurrence is significantly higher if it has previously occurred in the history of the given state (Simeunović 1991, 57). Such and similar “political engagements” can provide the military and its members, in one historical moment, with a special (privileged) social status, which can become a burden in the future.

Economy and the level of technical-technological development. What is completely evident is that the level of the economic power of a state influences the size and quality of the army. To examine the significance of the army and the military factor in a society, it is necessary

to monitor the level of financial allocations from the state budget for defense purposes.³ Besides the indicator reflected in absolute values, another significant indicator is the level of allocations concerning the total GDP expressed in percentages. By following this indicator for a more extended period, it is possible to notice the change of priorities of a government, which also implies the change in the position of the army and military profession in society. To make this analysis more complete, the budgetary allocations should be analyzed through the expenditure structure, based on which it would be clear what the operating, investment, and personnel costs are (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation [NATO] 2024; Stojković i dr. 2024).

Although personnel costs are not the only thing that counts, they reliably reflect the status of members of the military profession on the social ladder.⁴ In this sense, it is essential to consider the level and growth of personal income and the relationship between income and living standard during a specific period (market basket, inflation, etc.). Through the application of specific statistical methods, the relationship between the state's allocations for the personal income of the military personnel and the quality of life can be examined through the purchasing power parameter, which is a more realistic indicator than the amount of income itself. In addition, a comparative analysis of the current military budgets of relevant countries, neighboring countries, and countries with similar geopolitical positions and problems is also functional. Determining trends in these elements can also be a relatively reliable method of predicting significant occurrences and processes in the security field, which will determine the status of the army and the military profession shortly.

It is estimated that the new technical-technological advancement, primarily the information revolution, which is already reflected mainly on different means of military equipment, will impact the army organization

³ State allocations for military needs have a dual effect on economy and state development. Some empirical research stresses the conclusion that of the total military expenditure of the state, "one-third contributes to development, while two-thirds are unproductive investments, which only burden the economy and slow down its development" (Mirković 2007, 225).

⁴ To illustrate, the example of an army commander from the distant past shows the connection between the amount of received pay and the social status: "According to a salary list from the times of the rule of the Sargonid dynasty (2296–2105 BC), the highest income from the state treasury was received by the army commander, followed by the prime minister, the supreme judge, the deputy minister, the minister of the court and the palace usher" (Korać 2013, 28).

and method of unit engagement as well. The use of autonomous weapons is not a question of the future anymore. The new armament race is reflected precisely in the possession of armed autonomous systems and systems based on artificial intelligence (Šar 2020). What also represents a novelty when compared to the Cold War period are the units for conducting various types of operations in cyberspace, and for the most potent countries of the world, the cosmic warfare units. Such technical-technological advancement will reflect differently on the social position of the army and the military profession. It is natural to expect modern armies equipped with contemporary weapons and equipment to enjoy greater prestige.

Quality of military education and training should ensure that the army receives officers and soldiers capable and willing to defend and uphold the state, its citizens, and the values of the community. Only such members of the military professions can enjoy the respect of the community and colleagues from other armies, whether it be the allies or the adversaries. Investing in the education and training of military personnel is of first-class national significance. Knowledge and training for quick and proper reactions in crises create trust and a sense of security among the citizens. Constant changes in the security environment require continuous and lifelong learning and development. The fundamental characteristic is that today, more than before, the military profession asks for training and preparation for the “unpredictable”. By recognizing such trends, a group of American experts, even in the 1980s, developed proposals for improving modern military education, which they called the shift “from modern to postmodern (military) education” (Moskos 1998, 4–5).

Modern trends in globalization and the development of new technologies impose different demands on the process of military education and training. The main goal is to establish a training system that enables fast, simple, and efficient knowledge acquisition while reducing costs compared to traditional methods. To achieve this, modern armies use four chief training methods: distance learning, analysis of previous experience through the lessons-learned concepts, establishment of standard operational procedures, and learning through simulations (Vulić 2016). Quality education of an officer must integrate general academic knowledge, military skills, and strategic thinking, which will, during real combat operations, ensure success in achieving the set goals (Hornstra et al. 2024). The higher the quality of military education and training and the more in line with the standards of the most modern

armies in the world, the more respected the position of the army and the military profession in society will be.

International military cooperation is a segment that most definitely contributes to the reputation of the national army, not only among the partner armies and states but also on the internal level. The level of international military cooperation measures the trust and respect an army enjoys. Various alliances and partnerships can contribute to this. Due to the need for interoperability, membership in international military organizations, as well as bilateral defense agreements, influences the army's standards and procedures, thus making it better, more capable, and more ready to bear the contemporary challenges, risks, and threats to security. International cooperation is fulfilled through participation in peace operations and joint exercises with other armies. The army and its members, by participating in peace operations under the mandate of the United Nations or the European Union, acquire precious experience, build mutual trust with partners, and contribute to the reputation of the military and the state they represent (Vukadinović and Milenković 2024). A similar effect is achieved through participation in multinational exercises as well. Quality education, exquisite training, and high morale are prerequisites for a professional attitude towards military obligations and tasks, creating a positive image of the members of the army and the country they come from. Armies that exhibit the aforementioned virtues tend to be desirable partners and can expect a better position within their society.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Every significant social change, whether on geopolitical, economic, technical-technological, or internal political plan, reflects on the army and the military profession. No matter the different eras and changes that occurred during them, the fundamental purpose of the military always remains the same – to create or preserve “acceptable peace” (Stanar 2021). As it usually happens, in times of peace, its purpose is not always clear enough to the citizens, who allocate significant financial resources through the state budget. In times of crisis, especially in war, when the army and its members become the primary protectors of the citizens' lives, identity, property, and the fundamental values of a society, this understanding is quite different. The responsibility for a right and equally clear understanding of the purpose, but also the role and significance

of the army, not only in times of peace but in times of distress as well, lies on all social elites, both civilian and military ones, and especially holders of political power.

The post-Cold War period, perceived in this paper as the postmodern period, was marked by social changes that call for faster adjustment due to its dynamic nature. Even though the war between sovereign states was never completely ruled out as a possibility, it was believed that after the fall of the “Iron Curtain”, such a scenario was not so sure, especially not on European soil. Reality has refuted such expectations. Metaphorically speaking, Yoshihiro Francis Fukuyama’s bestseller *The End of History and the Last Man* from 1992 was replaced in 2008 by Robert Kagan’s *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (Fukuyama 1992; Kagan 2008). Hardly predictable and constant changes in all spheres have become the reality and, in fact, the only predictable thing.

The analytical framework offered in this paper should enable a better understanding of the place and role of the army and military profession in contemporary society. As such, it can be a good starting point for future research. What is entirely sure is that the need will mark the future of the army and military profession for fast adjustment to dynamic technological, geopolitical, and other social changes. The development of artificial intelligence and autonomous combat systems has already begun to transform the way military operations are conducted. However, the need for military personnel to possess digital skills and constantly improve their technical knowledge in applying new technologies must not be allowed to diminish the importance of knowledge in social sciences. Without social sciences, it is impossible to understand the context and purpose and develop critical thinking, especially considering that contemporary and future security challenges surpass the traditional frameworks of warfare. The Military Academy of the University of Defense in Belgrade, which celebrates its 175th anniversary this year, has the mission of integrating knowledge from various scientific fields of importance for defense while following modern trends, which creates an assumption that the future officers will be able to fulfil even the most complex tasks set before them successfully.

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ВОЈСКА И ВОЈНА ПРОФЕСИЈА У САВРЕМЕНОМ ДРУШТВУ: ПРИЛОГ ДЕФИНИСАЊУ АНАЛИТИЧКОГ ОКВИРА**

Резиме

Друштвене промене карактеристичне за савремено, постмодерно илилити постхладноратовско друштво нужно су се рефлектовале на војску, њену организацију, задатке, улогу и положај у друштву. Глобална кретања од биполарног, преко униполарног, ка мултиполарном геополитичком поретку намећу потребу за сталном трансформацијом националних оружаних снага. Поред давања прегледа једног општег контекста у коме се савремена војска и војна професија налазе, рад представља покушај дефинисања аналитичког оквира на основу кога се може сагледати место и улога војске и војне професије у савременом друштву, као предмету истраживања. Циљ рада је да се поред доприноса у херменеутичком (сазнајном) смислу, пружи допринос и у методолошком смислу, кроз развој аналитичког оквира за разматрање предмета истраживања кроз шест чинилаца: (1) политички систем и законодавни оквир, (2) национална култура и друштвене вредности, (3) историјско искуство, (4) економија и техничко-технолошки ниво развијености друштва, (5) квалитет војног образовања и обуке и (6) међународна војна сарадња. Сваки чинилац је укратко образложен уз указивање на његов значај и специфичности. Правилним одабиром и применом научних метода, овај понуђени аналитички оквир треба да обезбеди да се у неким будућим истраживањима места и улоге војске и војне професије у

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** Рад је написан у оквиру пројекта Института за стратегијска истраживања „Војна професија у Србији у савременом безбедносном окружењу” (ИСИ/ДХ/3/24-26), који финансира Министарство одбране Р. Србије.

савременом друштву дође до што обухватнијег научног сазнања о предмету истраживања.

Кључне речи: војска, војна професија, постмодерно друштво, постмодерна армија, аналитички оквир.

· This paper was received on April 1st, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

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THEORETICAL DEFINITION OF TACTICS AS A MILITARY SCIENCE***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The development of civilization has led to the emergence and evolution of states and armies, whose fundamental purpose was to defend a country. This resulted in the development of knowledge regarding the methods of conducting an armed fight. Such knowledge has been systematized over time, and thus emerges knowledge related to this field, known as the art of war. Since the 19th century, there has been an increasing talk of military sciences (tactics, operations, and strategy), replacing the term the art of war. However, both directions, the Eastern and the Western, recognize tactics as the fundamental military science. Even today, the theoretical definition of tactics has not been fully completed. The first chapter of this paper provides a conceptual definition of tactics as a military science. The second chapter of the paper describes the fundamental constituents of tactics. The third chapter refers to the classification of tactics according to several criteria. The understanding of key terms and

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*** This paper was written as part of the scientific research project financed by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia: IIIHO/ДХ/1/24-26.

the description of the research results were carried out using the following methods: content analysis, definition and classification method, historical-comparative method, analytical-synthetic method, and deduction method. The definition, description of constituents, and classification of tactics as a military science are the result of this research.

Keywords: tactics, military science, constituents, armed conflict levels, operations.

INTRODUCTION

All that surrounds us represents an objective reality. Since the beginning of consciousness of human beings, researching objective reality or concrete forms of objective reality has always been based on reflection, which contains an abstract logical character. Namely, understanding reality is always based on understanding the method, i.e., the path of arriving at new knowledge. Abstract thinking gained its exponential significance with the emergence of the first science—philosophy, and the path of arrival at new knowledge in this science, formed as the “love of knowledge”, was based on the first paths of cognition, reflected in philosophical methods. Moreover, indeed, when we look at the first philosophical directions and the abstraction of their essence, we can conclude that without the development of philosophy and the philosophical methodological concept, there would be no development of either other sciences or other groups of scientific methods used for researching the fields of objective reality. The essence of philosophical thought can be abstracted into dialectics and metaphysics. While the former, dialectics, promotes motion as the essence of the existence of objective reality, the latter, metaphysics, offers us stillness and balance as the essence of objective reality. If we examine civilization’s development and social currents’ evolution, we can conclude that civilization is constantly evolving. Its basic principle is the dialectic unity and the struggle of opposites, where the development of one civilizational pole directly influences the development of its opposite. Moreover, stillness represents only balance between motion of two civilizational antagonisms (this can be explained on the example of development of military aviation technology, which always results in development of an anti-aircraft component as a tendency that the development of one equipment conditions the development of another,

that will have the ability to counter the contemporary air forces). On the other hand, the development of natural sciences is founded on metaphysics, i.e., on stillness as the essential abstraction. As proof of the previously mentioned, we can list Newton's laws, the law of energy conservation, and the like, which essentially represent mathematical formulations of the basic principles of metaphysics. The methodological concept developed for their research is based on both philosophical principles, considering that armed conflicts and their specific forms of occurrence represent socially technological phenomena in which both social and natural law are interwoven. Simeunović states, "one should not forget that, parallel with the process of differentiation of science and scientific disciplines, occurred the process of their integration and creation of new scientific fields as well. There is more than the urgent need to bridge the ever-deepening gap between the natural and social sciences, which has been particularly accelerated by the invasiveness of information technologies" (Simeunović 2023, 36).

With the development of civilization, qualitatively and quantitatively armed formations of opposed sides evolved, as well as the concrete forms of armed struggle and armed conflict. Moreover, theoretical experience related to conducting armed combat is also being developed, including the tactical level. With the development of scripture, these experiences are slowly systematized and included in the unique fund of knowledge, slowly shaped by examination of improvement. Namely, with previous experience, new technological solutions used in combat are also developed. The new technological solutions condition the development of technological armed solutions of the other, opposed side, and the consequence of all this is the invention of new tactical procedures that ensure the implementation of combat missions while minimizing one's losses and maximizing the losses of the other side in the conflict. Military formations and their combat use develop in such conditions, along with the development of state communities. All this could not be possible without the development of the military science (even today, there are disagreements regarding the syntagm that should be used for the set of sciences about the military activity), including tactics, as an autochthone military science (see Blagojević, Starčević, and Zogović 2019, 181–183). Numerous disagreements regarding the subject of research of autochthone military science existing among the Western and the Eastern military thinkers (in the period following the World War Two, our military thought accepted the Eastern division

of autochthone military sciences into tactics, operations and strategy, compared to the dual classification of Western thinkers, implying strategy and tactics) have left a significant influence on conceptual definition of military sciences in this region (Marček and Kovač 2011, 15–22; Compare Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 65–75). In such circumstances, tactics is theoretically constructed, representing the fundament of development of armed forces and their units, and the actions and other combat and non-combat activities conducted by tactical units, as the lowest units in terms of their personnel and material composition, represent clear material indicators of planning and implementation of tasks even at the highest level of armed forces. In such conditions, tactics develop as a fundamental military science, which is nowadays exposed to even the most significant changes in its development, thanks to the changes in the use of units at the lowest organizational levels, as a consequence of the application of exponentially advanced technological solutions.

THE NOTION OF TACTICS AS A MILITARY SCIENCE

As previously mentioned, the development of civilization also conditioned the development of armed conflicts. In such conditions, military sciences develop as well. In practice, the phrase “art of war” is often used, while tactics, operations, and strategy are represented as branches of the art of war. However, strategy, operations, and tactics cannot be defined only as skills. The term skill refers only to the practical dimension of an activity, i.e., the ability to conduct one activity based on practical competence and a particular gift. Moreover, we should mention that, according to Sakan, “the phrase ‘the art of war’ cannot denote military science for three reasons. The first reason is that this phrase is associated with skill, and not science. The second reason is logical, because the art of war is associated with war having some skill, which is impossible. After all, the war is not a subject. The third reason is that war is associated with war as a broader social phenomenon, not armed combat as the subject of interest of military sciences. If that term implies military science, this would mean that we are speaking of the science of war, not the armed combat” (Sakan 2011, 31–44). As such, tactics and other autochthone sciences were studied as skills until the 19th century. However, the expansion of the technological component, i.e., the material factor and creation of complex organizational military

systems, conditioned tactics to be studied more and more as a science since the end of the 19th century.

Upon conceptual definition of the term, we should also reflect on the origin of the word tactics. The word tactics is of Greek origin. This term, translated from Greek, means to set, to line up, the art of lining up in battle formation, the science of conducting battle, and refers to the development of tactics in the era of cold weapons during the existence of the phalanx from the ancient period (Klaić 1979, 1321). Thus, we can conclude that the starting point for defining tactics is logically correctly defined and relates to military organization use. Upon conceptual definition and defining the term tactics, special attention is given to respecting the rules of defining (defining is non-negative, content-proportional with a logically correct determination of deficient, that is, the content used for defining the form-determination of the *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*). Today, various terms and phrases representing the *genus proximum* are used in conceptualizing tactics. The terms used are the following: skill (which we have already reviewed in brief), the process of waging a battle, method of conducting combat operations, etc. (See Sakan 2003, 276–278). However, it should be stressed that tactics is not a process, because process implies a set of activities happening from the emergence to the disappearance of occurrences as concrete forms of objective reality. That is why tactics is not a process; it does not tie to a specific occurrence but represents a broader social consciousness of people who research and deal with tactics. Moreover, tactics is not a method; it does not represent an epistemological description of the procedures of researching an occurrence, because tactics is not a scientific method. Its meaning is relatively broader, and in its scope, it also contains scientific methods as its constituents. That is why it is best to speak of tactics as a science (in this case, a military science, since the activity of using a unit essentially refers to military units).

Bearing that the “higher concept” is specified when defining tactics and that we are speaking of a science, more will be said here about what science is. According to the Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian literary language (*Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika* 1969, 651), “science is defined as a system of knowledge and laws of the development of nature, society and thinking.” According to another understanding, science represents a knowledge system from a specific subject field. According to Šušnjić (Šušnjić 1999, 127), “science is a specific method a man uses to describe and understand the world around him and himself in the

world.” According to Sakan (Sakan 2003, 34), “science is systematized and argued knowledge on the objective world acquired through conscious application of specific research methods.” The definition according to which science represents a set of systematized methodologically verified knowledge on a specific field of objective reality is also acceptable. Bearing in mind all the previously mentioned, one of the methods of defining tactics can be derived by a deductive-analytical approach from the definition of military sciences. Namely, according to Sakan, military sciences can be defined as (45) “systematized and argued knowledge on the armed combat acquired through conscious application of specific research methods.” The phrase “military sciences” does not bear the same significance as the art of war had as a science. This significance is transmitted onto exceptional levels of generality, i.e., to the fundamental military sciences: military strategy, operations, and tactics (93). With the use of a deductive-analytical approach, tactics can be defined as an “autochthone military science that encompasses systematized and argued knowledge on the lowest levels of armed combat (engagements and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions)” (Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 74). Suppose we accept the definition stating that military sciences represent a set of systematized, methodologically verified knowledge on armed combat as the main content of an armed conflict. In that case, we can also define tactics using a deductive-analytical approach. Tactics represents an autochthone military science that includes a systematized methodologically verified knowledge on the lowest levels of armed combat (“engagements and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions”).

Although the previously presented conceptual definition of tactics is correct, to precisely define tactics, we should completely define all contents of the deficient, that is, the *differentia specifica*, as a second content of the deficient. Through this approach, upon defining tactics as a science, a difference in content is made, defining what tactics study that other sciences do not, including the military sciences.

In literature, different deficient refer to the content of the tactics study. The syntagm “theory and practice” is often used as part of a deficient. Considering that military units are based on a juncture between systematized theory and experiential practice, this syntagm makes sense, even though its use was criticized in the previous period (See Sakan 2003, 277). Moreover, with the syntagm “theory and practice”, the syntagm “preparation and execution” is also used. Bearing in mind that on concrete

levels of armed combat (“on tactical, operational and strategic levels”), operations of the opposed sides are being prepared and executed, this syntagm has its professional justification. Besides these syntagms, to finally define tactics, it is necessary to determine its research subject, as an integral constituent of every science. At the same time, this poses the most significant problem when defining tactics and other autochthone military sciences. Namely, when defining the area of objective reality researched by tactics and other military sciences, a part of military theoreticians refer to the size of the military unit participating in combat and non-combat activities. Moreover, some military theoreticians believed that the goal to be achieved with the concrete form is to define the research subject of military sciences. Keeping in mind the fact that nowadays, “drone swarm” – “loitering ammunition” or a “couple” of planes could destroy the center of gravity of the enemy, it is pretty challenging to make a clear correlation between the level of the used force and the achieved goal. Namely, a group, team, or company could, today, take such action to achieve a strategic influence through direct or indirect effects. Moreover, operational groups are also incapable of destroying targets of tactical character while conducting their combat actions, which is visible in the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine. This is why the research subject should be perceived through the prism of the armed combat level, in which the opposing sides conduct their operations. According to this understanding, we can define tactics as an autochthone military science, including a set of systematized and methodologically verified knowledge on the actions of military formations in engagement and combat as the basic level of armed conflict. By including a broader context of defining all content of deficient, we can define tactics also as an autochthone military science that deals with researching theory and practice of preparation and execution of operations in engagement and combat of the opposed sides (in individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions), as the fundamental levels of an armed conflict. In this case, the syntagm “individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions” is used as a substitute for combat because it is logically correct. Namely, armed combat is a narrower concept than the term combat, which is why combat cannot be used as a concrete form the armed combat level. In the next chapter of this paper, more will be said on the conceptual meaning of the terms themselves that refer to the armed combat levels: “engagement and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions”, bearing in mind that they

are the research subjects of tactics as an autochthone military science (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225).

CONSTITUENTS OF TACTICS AS MILITARY SCIENCE

Every science is defined by its constituents as verified knowledge on a specific field of objective reality. Constituents of autochthone military sciences, including tactics as well, are as follows: subject, theory, method, and language. Numerous authors dealt with constituents of military sciences (Blagojević, Starčević and Zogović 2019, 183–186; Compare Sakan 2011, 31–44; compare Krsmanović and Liptai 2011, 152–159; Compare Devetak 2023, 136–138). Conditionally, in this chapter, as an individual constituent, we can also examine the research object of tactics, which, in this case, refers to the domain of the military organization on a tactical level.

Tactics research subject

Suppose we accept the definition of research subject of autochthone military sciences as armed combat and its concrete forms – forms of manifestation in an armed conflict. In that case, it is entirely acceptable that the research subject of tactics is engagement and combat, as lower levels of armed combat, while two-way processes take place on a tactical level. Due to lack of logic referring to the term combat, when it is seen as a content at a lower level of generality than armed conflict in some literature, it is acceptable that this lowest form of armed conflict, i.e., its concrete forms, are defined as “individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). In any case, we are speaking of two-way processes in which the opposed sides participate through the conduct of their operations. “In engagements, usually higher tactical units and specialized teams of the same level as the ones of the opposed side are engaged” (Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije [MORS] 2012; Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225).

“An engagement is a lower level of armed conflict than battle in terms of significance” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). “It represents a concrete form of an armed conflict and it can be conducted between two opposed sides independently or as part of a higher form, that is, within one battle” (225; Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 70).

“An engagement unifies more individual operations, counter-operations, actions, and reactions, and has a decisive influence on the outcome of an armed conflict in tactical proportions. Individual operations, counter-operations, actions, and reactions are the fundamental level of armed combat, in which smaller forces are directly and in mass coming into conflict during the assigned missions and tasks. At the same time, this form represents the lowest form of manifestation of an armed conflict that can be conducted between two conflicted sides in a specific space and time, individually or as part of higher forms of manifestation of the armed conflict” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). Based on the previously stated, we can conclude that “engagement and individual operations, counter-operations, actions and reactions” are the research subject of tactics as military science, where in a two-way process, tactical actions, combat organization and the use of the opposed sides though preparation and execution of operations in a specific space and at specific time, at the lowest level of organization.

Theory of researching tactics

A theory of a science, in essence, represents systematized knowledge on the research subject of science. “The theory of a science is consisted of specifically linked general experiential attitudes through which it classifies experiential data and explains experiential occurrences in the field of reality which is the subject of its research” (Milić 1978, 302). According to Vujević (Vujević 1983, 26), “theory is the higher law used for explaining lower laws.”

From the previously stated, we conclude that we can speak of the theory of science in a broader and narrower sense. “Theory in a general sense can be understood as everything that is known in a certain area of reality through the intellectual and cognitive activity of people and written down or expressed and recorded in some other way, which serves as a basis for improving human practice” (Sakan 2003, 81). “In a narrow sense, theory only implies that type of theory that has an objective, scientific character (scientific theory), i.e., that explains phenomena, objects, and processes, and as such, enables a deeper approach to the knowledge of reality” (33).

The theory of tactics has developed since the beginning of civilization, i.e., since using the first cold weapon in combat. It developed through four epochs:

Cold weapons epoch; Use of classical conventional weapons epoch; Epoch of the use and threat of use of nuclear-chemical and biological weapons; Epoch of contemporary dissymmetric and asymmetric armed conflict and security threats, risks, and challenges from the airspace (See Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017).

Each epoch is determined by technological solutions used in armed forces, within the civilizational development and dialectical unity, and the struggle of the opposites and the shift from quantity to quality. Today, we are witnessing the emergence of concrete forms of armed conflict and thus the development of tactics. This epoch is distinguished by a mass use of weapons and military equipment of the fourth industrial revolution, and artificial intelligence and mass use of roboticized unmanned platforms of aerial, land, and water types are slowly taking up the primacy in the preparation and execution of combat operations.

The basic language used in theoretical systematization of knowledge is a combination of the applied technical-technological solutions in the systems of weapons, equipment and tactical actions defined by tactical-technical characteristics of the systems of weapons and equipment, to maximize the manifestation of the combat capabilities of the forms, formed from tactical units, at the same time minimizing the expenditure of resources. There are general opinions about the current tactics structure, which are exponentially being developed and changed with organizational and technological changes in the physiognomy of contemporary armed conflicts. Along with the historical development of tactics, its theory has also formed corresponding hypotheses about the essence of the activities of forces organized at the tactical level and the problems of preparing and conducting combat operations and other activities at the tactical level in combat and non-combat operations (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 19). With the development of scientific thought, besides the concepts and principles of its organization and use, theorems and the lawfulness of the development of models of use of specific forces on a tactical level appear as well, bearing in mind the application of contemporary methods in researching combat actions of tactical units. "The theory of tactics has its practical role as well" (20). "Theory is used for examining the achieved knowledge (for example, based on historical-comparative and case-study methods, it is possible to examine the method of implementation of unmanned platforms in different armed conflicts and comprehend the application of new tactical procedures in different phases of operation conduct)" (20). "Cognition, in this sense, is directed

towards discovering the truth within the combat actions. It is directed towards perceiving the truth in other activities as well, at a tactical level of engagement of forces. In this sense, and bearing in mind the significant social character, occurrence, process, and events during engagement of tactical units, scientific knowledge is usually possible at the level of scientific description, classification, and explanation, and significantly scarcer at the level of scientific prediction” (20–21).

The applied role of the theory of tactics is directed towards resolving concrete, practical problems in the military at the tactical level of engagement. For example, the applied role is depicted in the needs for implementation of the process of modernization of weapons and equipment systems and seeking for new tactical procedures and models of the use of units, based on cognition on a specific level of scientific knowledge on the method of engagement of army forces in armed conflicts at a tactical level.

Tactics research method

The method has always been the most disputed constituent of every science. “It is disputed even today because scientists have not succeeded in completely harmonizing their positions on its conceptual definition, structure, and perception of method in general” (Sakan 2011, 40). “In can be said that method, as a constituent of science, represents a “complex of mutually linked, coherent, systematized procedures which together approach the science subject and proving scientific truth” (41). It is also acceptable to perceive science method as a “set of scientifically verified knowledge, scientifically-theoretically and practically examined rules and norms, thoughts and practical activities, instruments and procedures that enable approach to the subject of science, show the way of its research from different aspects and direct towards the method of acquiring new scientific knowledge and their integration into a unique theory of science” (41). The method of science represents a set of procedures for research, examination, or justification of scientific truth.

The analysis of combat actions and other activities conducted by the units at the tactical level of organization in contemporary armed conflicts has shown that these are quite dynamic actions distinguished by fast changes in combat situations and electromagnetic spectrum warfare. In such conditions, predicting the outcome of conducting combat operations is extremely difficult.

Bearing in mind all the previously stated, it is necessary to stress that besides philosophical, general (above all the method of modelling – every tactical practice also represents a simplified image of the real conflict situation; statistic and historical-comparative method (“analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction, definition-classification” etc.) and empirical methods (“method of observation, examination, content analysis, experiment method”), the methods of resolution of operation problems are increasingly used for researching phenomena, processes and events at tactical level of activities of the armed forces (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 21). These methods are based on contemporary information technology and significantly improve the process of making operational decisions while conducting combat actions based on available information in real time.

The most often implemented methods for this purpose are mathematical methods of prognosis and management of organizational systems, methods (methods of operational research. The case study method has significant application value in examining the concrete forms of armed conflicts and the methods of engagement of army forces in specific phases of conducting operations.

The language of tactics

As a constituent of military sciences, the language implies a “specific system of conventionally adopted signs that have a defined meaning and that are used as a means of communication in autochthone and other military sciences and scientific disciplines” (Sakan 2011, 36). Tactics uses literary language with some specifics emerging from the language of military sciences, as well as the applied technological solutions and tactical procedures of the army forces (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 22). The tradition of the language of tactics is based on the tradition of the language of military sciences, concerning the specifics of the technological advances and organization of armed forces throughout warfare.

It is necessary to stress that the language (scientific, artificial, as well as the object-language and target-language) of tactics is developing fast with the emergence of new terms, syntagms, sentences, and paragraphs, by the accelerated development of technological solutions applied in armed conflicts at a tactical level. Therefore, today some terms are in use which, several years ago, were not even taken into consideration upon analysis of the use of force (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017,

23). We are speaking of the following terms: “suicide drones”, “loitering ammunition”, “micro-unmanned aircraft”, etc. Nowadays, weapons and military equipment defined by these terms often have a decisive role in executing tasks in combat actions.

Bearing in mind that often, upon formulation of classification of autochthone military sciences, the criterion of organizational level of forces executing or participating in an operation is being used, here we are presenting a brief reflection on the object of research of tactics. “In science, object often refers to the comprehensive reality, i.e., a set of phenomena, and if we are speaking of a social science, a set of social phenomena. Moreover, the object itself can be presented as a part of a whole, or as a separate unit consisting of special parts” (Pečujlić and Milić 1991, 178; Compare Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73).

“In comparison to the object perceived in such way, the subject is manifested as the side that is prone to examination” (Marček and Kovač 2011, 23; Compare to Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73). When speaking of the “object of research of military sciences, historically speaking, first it was war, and then armed conflict or armed forces” (Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73). From the standpoint of classification of military sciences by the criteria of level of organization of forces, it is acceptable that the research object of autochthone military sciences should be a military activity in its narrower sense, that is, a defense activity in its broader sense. Based on this criterion, the research object of strategy is military activity as a whole (the army’s activity as a whole), and the object of operations is the military activity of operational units. In contrast, the research object of tactics would be the military activity of units of tactical significance (the activity of units and temporary joint forces up to the level of a brigade) (74). According to this criterion, it is possible to conduct another determination of tactics as a military science. In this case, tactics would be conceptually defined as an autochthone military science (*genus proximum*) representing a set of systematized and methodologically verified theoretical and practical knowledge on the armed forces’ activities at a tactical organizational level (*differentia specifica*).

CLASSIFICATION OF TACTICS AS MILITARY SCIENCE

The dialectical unity and the battle of opposites permeate the science as well. Such is the case with the methodological framework, which also deals with researching the cognition of a suitable level of scientific knowledge. For example, we have analysis on one side, and on the other, synthesis, as general scientific methods. When speaking of special scientific methods, we have deduction and induction. The scientific methods, which, among others, represent a symbiosis of unity and oppositeness, are the methods of defining and classification. While the conceptual definition of tactics defines this concept as an abstractly formulated human thought of a concrete form of objective reality, classification divides the concept at a lower level of generality (specific and individual concepts are separated from the general concept according to a specific classification criterion). In essence, classification represents the division of the general term by a specific criterion (which, upon definition, represents a “higher term”, i.e., *genus proximum*), based on the “specific difference” (*differentia specifica*) that content-wise separates lower terms consist in a logically higher term. Therefore, to conduct classification, it is necessary to define the criterion used for it.

Bearing in mind all the complexity of autochthone military sciences, including tactics, there are numerous criteria based on which it is possible to classify tactics (See Blagojević, Starčević and Zogović 2019). According to research, tactics can be classified as engagement and combat tactics (“individual operations, counter-operations, actions and reactions”). “About the space of conduct of combat actions used as a classification criterion, tactics can be classified as follows: land tactics, water tactics (sea, internal waterways, etc.), and airspace tactics” (Sakan 2003, 312). “However, the cosmic and cyberspace also raise the question of the development of tactics in these spaces. Moreover, it should be mentioned that combat activities are increasingly being conducted in a set of several spatial segments at once. Thus, the classification of tactics might be supplemented with the tactics in semi-ambiental space as well” (Devetak 2023, 139). According to the criterion referring to the front line, tactics can be classified as follows: the front-line tactics, the rear area tactics and the occupied territory tactics” (Sakan 2003, 312). According to the criterion of symmetry of armed conflict, tactics can be classified as follows: the tactics of symmetric conflicts, tactics of dissymmetric

conflicts, and tactics of asymmetric conflicts (this classification is especially significant, bearing in mind the physiognomy of armed conflicts after the breakdown of the bipolar division of the world). Regarding the emergence of asymmetric warfare, Barišić points out: "Therefore, it was quite logical that the concept of asymmetric war, as a new-old idea of conflict management, emerged during the first decade of the new century, in an attempt by American military theorists to provide an adequate conceptual response to terrorism and other threats of a non-military and non-state nature" (Barišić 2024, 84).

Maybe the most popular classification of tactics is conducted by the criterion of structural organization of the army. According to this criterion, tactics are classified as follows: general tactics and branch tactics (in our army, we are speaking of the land forces tactics, air force tactics, and air defense tactics).¹ Here we should mention that this classification is conditional and depends on the organization of the forces. For example, when speaking of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, "air force" and "aerospace defense" are separate branches, and thus, conditionally speaking, additional classification can be made. According to this criterion, branch tactics are classified into combat arms and services. Further classification of combat arms (services) can be conducted into subdivisions by the army's organizational structure. "Through the analysis of classification of tactics, we can conclude that some classification criteria are not completely justified, and on the other hand, there are no divisions of tactics by the type of units or special combat systems" (Devetak 2023, 140).

At this point, it is worth mentioning that classification is an integral characteristic of tactics as a science, and it will further develop by the determinants that define the development of tactics itself.

CONCLUSION

The human mind has created and destroyed since the beginning of civilization until today. Like Kant's philosophical contemplation, which refers to the difference between mind and reason, or the human ability to create and develop civilization on the one hand, there is also this phylogenetic pathology that leads to civilizational destruction. In such conditions, armed forces and their military formations that materially shape the application of military force in armed conflicts have been

¹ Since the Republic of Serbia does not have a sea, it does not have a navy.

developed throughout history. As a consequence of the previously mentioned, tactics develop as well, implying the most extensive and frequent set of combat and non-combat activities conducted in the battlefield at the level of the lowest tactical units. The organization of military units (both human and material) is constantly changing and aligning with the demands of warfare. Until about ten years ago, no one would have thought of developing special departments in tactical units whose purpose was to create false positions and set up mock-ups and false sources of electromagnetic radiation, as well as departments for conducting electronic operations. Today, this is a reality, based on the experiences from Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh. These changes are quantitatively and qualitatively comprehensive; they are changing the physiognomy of the contemporary armed conflict and creating a new epoch of development of military sciences, especially tactics and an autochthone military science. Namely, these changes are most visible at tactical levels and result from vast technological and organizational changes. All this represents a significant challenge for tactics and the use of tactical units, with which tactics essentially deal. Bearing in mind all the previously stated, there is no doubt that tactics as a science will undergo significant changes soon. This will all result in the need for constant updates of scientific and professional information on tactics, including constant research and systematization of new knowledge referring to all constituents of tactics as a science. The following tasks are set before military theoreticians: constant systematization of tactical knowledge, promotion of theory, method, language, and even research subject. Only in this way is it possible to constantly improve one's military forces, material and human organization, tactical procedures, and other combat and non-combat activities, to make the army always ready to respond to any future security threat, challenge, and risk.

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ТЕОРИЈСКО ОДРЕЂЕЊЕ ТАКТИКЕ КАО ВОЈНЕ НАУКЕ***

Резиме

Развој цивилизације довео је до настанка и развоја држава и војски, чија је основна намена била одбрана државе. Ово је за последицу имало развој сазнања која се односе на начине вођења оружане борбе. Ова сазнања су се временом систематизовала и тако настају знања која се односе на ову област названу ратна вештина. Од 19. века све се више говори о војним наукама (тактици, оператици и стратегији), које замењују синтагму ратна вештина. Међутим, оба правца, источни и западни, препознају тактику као базичну војну науку. Ни до данашњих дана није у потпуности извршено теоријско одређење тактике. Због тога је циљ овога рада опис теоријског одређења тактике као војне науке. У првој глави рада је извршено појмовно одређење тактике као војне науке. У другој глави рада извршена је дескрипција основних конституената тактике. Трећа глава рада се односи на класификацију тактике према више критеријума. Сагледавање поимања кључних термина и опис резултата рада извршено је применом следећих метода: анализе садржаја, методе дефиниције и класификације, историјско-компаративне методе, аналитичко-синтетичке методе и дедуктивне методе. Појмовно

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*** Овај рад је писан као део научно истраживачког пројекта финансираног од стране Министарства одбране Републике Србије: ШНО/ДХ/1/24-26.

одређење, опис конституената и класификација тактике као војне науке представља резултат овог рада.

Кључне речи: тактика, војне науке, конституенти, нивои оружане борбе, операције.

* This paper was received on April 7, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

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UNMANNED AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES: CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY APPLICATIONS AND THE NEED FOR NEW COMPETENCIES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL ***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The development of unmanned autonomous vehicles represents one of the most dynamic directions of contemporary technological evolution, with increasingly widespread applications in the civilian and primarily the military domain. Although *unmanned and autonomous vehicles* are often used interchangeably, this paper highlights their essential distinction and the importance of integrated decision-making capabilities for achieving full autonomy. Modern trends in the production of sensors,

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*** The paper is a result of research conducted in the project of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia: Design of an expert system based on artificial intelligence for assessing the situation on the battlefield (BA-TT/1/25-27).

communication, and power components have enabled the development of complex systems for environmental perception, path planning, and motion control, significantly influencing the transformation of concepts in military operations. The paper analyzes the historical development of unmanned autonomous vehicles, the levels of their autonomy, and their impact on the execution of modern military operations. Considering the pace of technological advancement and achievements, an even more intensive use of autonomous systems can be expected in future armed conflicts, which imposes the need to define the required knowledge and competencies for military personnel involved in their development and operational use. These competencies include mechatronics, automatic control, guidance, artificial intelligence, deployment tactics, and logistical support. The paper recognizes the need to enhance military education by integrating technological innovations and developing new academic programs to train personnel capable of creating, maintaining, and efficiently operating unmanned autonomous systems in a dynamic security environment.

Keywords: Unmanned Autonomous Vehicle, Control system design, Guidance system design, Military application of Unmanned Autonomous Vehicle, Military education.

INTRODUCTION

An unmanned vehicle (UV) is a vehicle controlled without a human operator on the vehicle itself, i.e., the vehicle is controlled from a suitable control station based on an appropriate communication link and various sensor systems. On the other hand, the unmanned autonomous vehicle functions without a human crew and conducts specific driving functions without direct human intervention by using advanced sensory systems and decision-making algorithms, environment recognition, and planning the movement path. Therefore, even though unmanned vehicles and autonomous vehicles are often used as synonyms, it should be stressed that unmanned vehicles are also autonomous, i.e., vehicle autonomy depends on the integrated ability of independent movement and decision-making on planning the movement path.

In the last years, with the development of the production technology of electronic and energy components, the field of research and examination of unmanned, and above all, autonomous vehicles experienced significant progress, which enabled the development of sophisticated systems of environment perception, direction and control of the vehicle, and thus the more efficient application of autonomous systems in different fields, including transportation, industry, agriculture, and above all, military use. Therefore, designing and developing guidance systems of autonomous vehicles is becoming quite a significant direction in scientific research papers (Wang 2023, 4; Gao 2021, 10; Huang 2022; Boretti 2024).

The development of highly sophisticated systems significantly impacted the change in the structure of conducting military operations. For example, using drones significantly improves the possibilities of movement reconnaissance and sudden attack on the opposing forces, unmanned autonomous vehicles contribute to higher mobility during operations of passage of ordnances, logistical equipment, and transport of the wounded. In contrast, the armed autonomous vehicles generated significant steps forwards in the evolution of contemporary military operations, carrying along numerous advantages in terms of efficiency, security, and the ability to conduct the most complex tasks in high-risk conditions for human crew (Đorić i Glišin 2023; Miljković i Beriša 2023).

The classical development of military education in Europe is, above all, linked to the famous considerations of von Clausewitz (Clausewitz 2021), in which the war is defined as the continuance of politics with different means and the development of the Prussian model of officer training and introduction of war games, in whose defining Helmuth von Moltke played a decisive role (Himmel 2024). In France, the work of Antoine-Henry Jomini (Rapin 2023, 1) in the period following the Napoleon wars and the foundation of the academy in Saint-Cyr, which fosters an approach to officer education through humanistic education and rigorous military training, stands out. The education of officers in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), above all, included rigid military training and ideological education, and the foundation of this system can be found in the works of Mikhail Frunze (Frunze 2019). On the other hand, the establishment of the hegemony of the United States of America (USA) in the Western hemisphere contributed to the development of learning through discipline, engineering skills, and the theory of fast

decision-making in combat (observe-orient-decide-act loop) (Boyd 2011). In the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), the intensive impact on military education was made by the concept of total defense and protection (*Strategija opštenarodne odbrane i društvene samozaštite* 1987), which examined the method of frontal and guerrilla war.

The dynamic environment and fast technological development of weapons and military equipment that characterize modern conflicts also condition intensive changes in military education. In this segment, several directions can be noticed, such as fast adjustment to the new security challenges and threats through the process of continued improvement of curriculum and training (Arquilla 2021), digitalization of military training and intensive use of simulators working in virtual reality (Arquilla 2021), the application of neuro-sciences for better decision-making and experimental use of the “brain-computer” interface (Brose 2020), the preparation for hybrid and asymmetric warfare through improvement of the training concept and development of leadership skills for raising the level of psychological endurance of soldiers, officers and NCOs (Singer 2009). In this way, the concept of “lessons learned” is established and applied in the planning of contemporary military operations, which also influences the development of modern theories of military education.

The subject of this research is the application of unmanned autonomous vehicles in modern combat and non-combat operations and their development, as well as the consideration of necessary knowledge from modern technologies for designing, exploiting, and maintaining these systems. Given that the unmanned autonomous vehicles represent complex mechatronic systems, for them to be used properly in modern combat operations, the military staff developing and using them must know the fields of complex system management, mechatronics and mechanic transmission systems, as well as designing and development of artificial intelligence algorithms, to conduct optimal processing of signals gathered via various sensors in real-time and the use of unmanned autonomous vehicles on a tactical and operational level.

This paper is organized in the following order: After introductory deliberations, in the second chapter, a brief historical overview of the development of unmanned vehicles and their basic classification is presented. The developed levels of the unmanned vehicle’s autonomy are analyzed in the third segment of this paper. In contrast, the aspects

of the influence of these vehicles on conducting modern military operations are presented in the fourth chapter. In the fifth chapter, the challenges in designing the control and guidance systems are identified, while in the sixth chapter, the necessary competencies of the military staff in terms of the use and development of such systems to provide an adequate response to the new security challenges and threats are deliberated. Finally, in the concluding segment of this paper, suitable conclusions are defined, and directions for further research are suggested.

DEVELOPMENT AND TYPES OF UNMANNED VEHICLES

The development of unmanned vehicles began with systems that enabled remote control without absolute autonomy in the guidance system. Even in the 1930s of the 20th century, the first examples of simple remote-controlled platforms emerged, predominantly used for military and industrial purposes. The Soviet and German radio-controlled tanks were used in high-risk missions, such as munition transport and handling explosive ordnance. Even though technologically primitive, these systems present conceptual predecessors of the modern unmanned solutions, stressing the potential of the dislocation of the human factor from directly dangerous combat situations.

The second phase represents the second half of the 20th century, during which the unmanned system concepts broadened to partial or complete autonomy. The turning point was reached with the development of the mobile robot *Shakey* at Stanford University at the end of the sixties. This system, equipped with a camera and ultrasound sensors, represented the first mobile robot capable of independent data processing and decision-making based on the environment's perception, making it the predecessor of modern autonomous vehicles.

The intensive development of autonomous systems started at the beginning of the 21st century, and above all through projects such as the *Grand Challenges*, initiated by the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of the United States of America. This initiative strongly incentivized the improvement of the sensory systems and the development of sophisticated navigation, control, and path planning algorithms. The results of this research set the technological foundation for contemporary autonomous platforms, both in civilian and military use.

By different operational tasks and conditions, different forms of unmanned autonomous vehicle propulsion systems were constructed. The basic classification includes four types, whose basic characteristics are provided in the following segment.

Vehicles with wheels represent the most widespread type of unmanned systems. Their popularity comes from the simplicity of their construction, efficiency in movement on flat and well-maintained surfaces, and the lower complexity of the control system. They rely on the rotational movement of the wheels connected to the undercarriage, while the number of axles and the powertrain configuration depend on the requirements for maneuverability and stability (Rubio 2019, 16).

Tracked vehicles – use tracks that provide a big contact surface with the ground, thus increasing the traction force and stability. The independent drive of each track enables precise control and high maneuver capability on uneven and challenging terrains. These systems are distinguished by high robustness, thus making them suitable for combat and reconnaissance tasks in harsh conditions (Zou 2018, 110).

Legged vehicles – these systems imitate the movement of animals by using a series of actuators and joints that enable dynamic balancing and movement on inaccessible terrains. The high level of mobility makes them especially efficient in urban environments and when performing tasks that demand overcoming obstacles and stairs (Zhao 2023, 11).

Hybrid vehicles combine propulsion systems (wheels, tracks, and/or legs) to achieve maximum adjustment and performance. These systems represent a compromise between different types of mobility and enable operations in diverse and changeable conditions, even though technologically most demanding, hybrid systems enable a high level of flexibility upon use (Zou 2018, 110).

AUTONOMY LEVELS OF UNMANNED VEHICLES

Contemporary autonomous vehicles are based on integrating different propulsion and sensory systems, including the global navigation satellite system, radar systems, *LiDAR* systems, and other technologies that enable efficient perception and interaction of the vehicle with the environment in which it is located. The typical function of autonomous

vehicles can be divided into three basic categories: environment perception, seeking an optimal movement route and making other decisions, and controlling the propulsion actuators to follow the desired trajectory and implement the decisions made. These three components can be perceived as the functions of the sense of sight, brain, and limbs of a human being, and they are implemented by designing suitable systems of guidance and control.

To better understand the development until now and the directions of future research, it is essential to further examine and analyze the concept of autonomy in detail. As previously mentioned, autonomy, in the context of unmanned vehicles, refers to the level at which the vehicle can function independently from human intervention. A generally accepted and widely recognized unmanned vehicle classification system defines six levels of driving autonomy, starting from level 0 (no autonomy level) to level 5 (complete autonomy), which can be explained in more detail in the following way (Sethi 2024):

Level 0: No autonomy. At this level, the vehicle functions completely based on the operator's guidance without autonomous capabilities. The vehicle can provide some technological assistance to the operator, such as various warning systems.

Level 1: Autonomy with the operator's assistance. This category of vehicles includes basic functions of autonomy that provide limited assistance to the operator. These are the systems, such as automatic speed control or assistance in maintaining the tasked trajectory, and the systems for controlling the speed and brakes. However, the operator remains completely in charge of control and guidance over the vehicle.

Level 2: Partial autonomy. Vehicles can conduct more complex tasks by combining two or more autonomous functions, such as maintaining the tasked trajectory or adaptive speed regulation. The vehicle can control the movement and speeding/slowing down in specific conditions, but the operator must be ready to intervene at every moment.

Level 3: Conditional autonomy. This level represents a significant step towards genuine autonomy. Vehicles with level 3 autonomy can conduct all driving tasks in specific, limited conditions, such as driving along a defined trajectory. The driver must not constantly monitor the surroundings, but be ready to take over the guidance when the vehicle asks for that.

Level 4: High autonomy. Vehicles can perform autonomously in the majority of movement scenarios, even if the operator does not respond to the demand for intervention. However, their operation can be limited to specific fields and projected operational domains.

Level 5: Complete autonomy. The vehicle is completely autonomous and capable of conducting all movement tasks in all conditions manageable by the human operator. No human intervention is needed.

This specter of the level of autonomy emphasizes the increasing sophistication and complexity of unmanned autonomous vehicles, i.e., the control and guidance systems, through which the desirable level of autonomy is achieved. While lower levels offer operator assistance, advanced research focuses on reaching higher levels of autonomy to realize challenging tasks in complex environments. Even though achieving complete autonomy (Level 5) is still in the development process, the current scientific research is focused on the improvement of the performance and abilities of vehicles at levels 3 and 4 in complex and challenging scenarios in realistic environments, which demands the projection and application of advanced guidance and control algorithms.

ASPECTS OF THE INFLUENCE OF UNMANNED VEHICLES ON MILITARY OPERATIONS

One of the key aspects of autonomous vehicle applications in the military is the ability to take up tasks previously deemed highly risky for the human crew. These tasks were, in the beginning, primarily linked to the use of unmanned vehicles in the field of reconnaissance and monitoring the opposing forces. Such systems, such as *QinetiQ TALON* (Army Technology 2020) or *Milrem THeMIS* (Milrem n.d.), possess sensors that act in different parts of the electromagnetic spectrum for the reconnaissance of the combat layout and early warning of enemy maneuvers. Moreover, small unmanned vehicles can be used for ruins and tunnel reconnaissance during operations in urban environments. Another aspect of the use of unmanned vehicles, which has been increasingly used in recent years, refers to the use of armed versions of such systems directly in combat actions (the Russian *Uran-9* [CKБ МОПФ n.d.]) or *Milrem Robotics Type-X* [Milrem Robotics n.d.], as well as in the self-destruction missions (the Ukrainian *Ratel-S* *Global Defense News Army Recognition Group*

[GDNARG] 2024, for anti-tank warfare). Another aspect of using unmanned autonomous vehicles also refers to the conduct of logistical tasks (supply of ammunition, medical equipment, etc.), especially when the risk to the human crew is high. Additionally, unmanned vehicles can be equipped with electronic warfare devices and, as such, can be used in missions of electronic jamming of opposing forces or electronic protection of one's own forces.

All previously mentioned applications of unmanned vehicles in combat and non-combat tasks of the army bring along changes in the operational and tactical actions and procedures. In cases of attacks, using these vehicles in the initial phases of offensive actions enables reduced risk exposure of the personnel during advancement towards the enemy positions, as well as support to classic armored and mechanized units. Using unmanned vehicles in coordinated attacks on one target (attack of the unmanned vehicles swarm) enables efficient use of force to destroy enemy high-profile targets (bunkers, command centers, etc.). With all that, one should not ignore the psychological effect on the enemy morale when fighting unmanned autonomous systems. When conducting defensive combat actions, unmanned vehicles can be used on duty on the first line for efficient use of forces and for assessing the combat situation, the strength of the enemy's forces, and the enemy's maneuvers. Besides, using these systems reduces the possibility of tactical surprise of the enemy forces, while the self-destructing unmanned vehicles enable all forms of anti-tank fighting. The advantages of the use of unmanned platforms in reconnaissance missions against enemy forces reflect, above all, the increased combat endurance of these systems on the battlefield because these systems are complex to uncover, as well as the fact that they acquire and process information on the enemy forces in real-time, which is extremely significant for the commander's decision-making and the conduct of combat actions. In the logistical sense, combat platforms enable better protection of the forces upon supply of ammunition and other logistical needs to the units in direct combat contact, as well as the possibility for extracting the wounded and injured from the direct combat contact. As one of the most complex contents of combat actions stands urban warfare and, thus, unmanned platforms can be used as fire support to one's forces in narrow passages and streets, as well as the elements of reconnaissance of the combat layout of the enemy stationed in buildings and passages before the

appearance of one's forces. Due to fast adjustment to changeable conditions of conducting combat actions (enemy activity, change of weather conditions, or specific tasks that call for precise navigation through harsh terrain), unmanned platforms enable high flexibility in planning and conducting operations.

However, the transition to unmanned autonomous systems introduces challenges regarding the security of use, ethics, and tactics. Namely, unmanned platforms are vulnerable to electronic jamming and deception, and interference with the connection to the command station can disrupt control of their work. Besides that, the opponent's possibility of taking control over the unmanned system represents a special challenge in its use and demands improvement of cyber system security. Moreover, unmanned vehicles of small dimensions are sensitive to direct hits from infantry weapons and have limited autonomy of work due to their relatively small capacity of energy capacity. The probability of correct classification of targets upon automatic detection and target classification is not entirely secure, which means there is a possibility of wrong target classification (for example, a civilian vehicle can be detected as a military vehicle). At the same time, failure of unmanned platforms can happen in critical moments of a mission. From an ethical standpoint, unmanned autonomous vehicles dehumanize combat actions and, thus, raise the issue of whether such systems can make decisions on the death or wounding of the enemy. The question of responsibility for mistakes of these combat systems remains open: Can the commander, programmer, or operator of an unmanned system be held responsible for any civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure?

Based on the previously said, we can stress that autonomous vehicles are transforming military tactics and operations, thus enabling faster, more secure, and more efficient task completion while setting new challenges in security, regulation, strategy, and warfare tactics.

CHALLENGES IN THE DESIGN OF GUIDANCE AND CONTROL SYSTEMS

From a technical development standpoint, designing the guidance-and-control system for the unmanned autonomous vehicle implies various challenges. In contrast, both systems have special tasks at the desired level of autonomous movement. The guidance system is in charge of the perception of the environment and planning the trajectory. It collects and processes data from integrated sensors of the vehicle to create a model of the surroundings and determine the optimal route of movement for different scenarios of autonomous movement. This system secures key data for the guidance system, including information on the vehicle position, obstacles, and dynamic changes in the environment. The main reasons for the design and implementation of the guidance system include data processing in real-time, the accuracy of perception of the environment and enemies in unfavourable conditions, and decision-making in complex situations. On the other hand, the control system is responsible for conducting the task instructions from the guidance system. Based on the planned trajectory, it controls the actuator components (control, propulsion, and brakes) so that the vehicle closely follows the tasked trajectory. The key challenges include precise regulation of speed and direction, robustness in variable load conditions, and system resilience to unforeseen disturbances. Moreover, the control system must be resilient to malfunctions and ensure the vehicle's stability in all working regimes. These two autonomous movement systems' connection and efficient integration are essential for the safe and reliable functioning of unmanned vehicles.

Challenges in designing the guidance system

Achieving a high level of autonomy of movement sets significant challenges upon design of the guidance system of an unmanned vehicle, especially for complex tasks of autonomous movement with a high level of perception of the environment, such as moving along the task trajectory, moving towards the task coordinates in space, following a leader moving before or after the vehicle, detection, recognition and avoiding obstacles upon movement, recognition of enemy forces and assessment of threat, etc. Realizing such systems demands precise cognition of the current position of vehicles in space, as well as

cognition of the environment and elements of interest located in the surroundings. Data integration from different types of wide-frequency sensors and the projection and implementation of sensor data processing algorithms in real-time are often needed. So, for example, upon moving along the task trajectory or towards a task coordinate in space, integration and processing of data acquired from inert sensors and global positioning sensors are needed. In contrast, following the leader, detection, recognition, and avoiding obstacles require applying optical, laser, and/or radar sensors. Moreover, in detecting and following the defined trajectory, autonomous vehicles must be able to function in environments in which the trajectories are not clearly defined and where different obstacles might impose limitations on the vehicle's sensor field of view. The key challenge in designing guidance algorithms is the generation of the optimal trajectory of the vehicle in dynamic and unpredictable environments, with minimization of energy consumption, as well as the noise in the sensor data. Besides that, bearing in mind the demands for acting in real-time, optimization of the computing complexity of the algorithm is necessary because computationally demanding algorithms demand big resources of the realization hardware, which raises the price of the unmanned vehicle. Moreover, guidance systems sometimes demand additional functionalities, such as human movement and pose recognition, or recognition of movements and formation of other unmanned vehicles, complicating the system's design and realization. The previously mentioned challenges stress the need for a guidance system that uses robust algorithms and can adjust to changeable environmental conditions and unexpected disturbances.

Challenges in designing the control systems

Designing the unmanned vehicle control systems sets high demands, above all, because of its complex dynamics and kinematics of movement, as well as the most often changeable interaction of driven actuators with the field, leading to the effect of slipping of the drive wheels/tracks and/or lateral and longitudinal sliding of the vehicle. Non-linear effects, time-varying parameters, and the impact of changeable loads and different terrains complicate the precise modelling of vehicle movement. Thus, control systems must be robust to different disturbances, unfamiliarity, and non-stationarity of the plant model.

Besides robustness, the demand for high performance during autonomous movement is also imposed. This means the movement control system must ensure the precise following of the reference trajectory, stability, and fast reaction to environmental changes. However, achieving high performance often demands complex algorithms, which introduces a challenge in balancing the realization's complexity and the system's efficiency. Too complex algorithms can be computationally demanding, which complicates their implementation on hardware with limited resources.

Another essential aspect is the energy efficiency of the designed control system. Namely, unmanned vehicle control algorithms should ensure stability and precision and minimize energy consumption, especially for electric vehicles with limited battery sources. This implies intelligent control strategies that reduce unnecessary energy consumption through optimizing the use of powertrains and reducing unnecessary vehicle acceleration and braking.

Based on the previously stated, it can be concluded that the control system should satisfy the trade-off between robustness, performance, complexity, and energy efficiency to ensure safe, stable, and economical autonomous movement of unmanned vehicles in different working conditions. Thus, it is clear that, in the majority of cases, standard industrial control methods cannot provide for satisfactory system characteristics, i.e., the development of suitable control systems demands the application of advanced control techniques, such as adaptive, robust, and intelligent control.

THE NEED FOR NEW COMPETENCIES OF THE MILITARY PERSONNEL

Unmanned autonomous systems are available in the market, but procurement of the systems and their components is, in the majority of cases, perceived as procurement of arms and military equipment, which demands the acquisition of special permits and *end-user* certificates and can, therefore, be the subject of restrictions or technological limitations upon delivery. Access to key military technology, armament, and military equipment (including, among other things, the unmanned autonomous systems) can be limited in crises. Thus, the procurement of these systems represents a strategic security risk. As an alternative to importing already developed equipment and technology imposes independent production of

these technologies, in which the key role is played by the highly educated expert professional military personnel, which possesses the necessary knowledge in the field of projection of unmanned autonomous platforms and maintenance and efficient use in combat and non-combat situations. One of the necessary steps in ensuring that the professional personnel are ready to dedicate themselves to solving the issue of designing and exploiting these complex systems, and above all, unmanned autonomous platforms, is the modification of the existent or definition of new study programs in military schools and the Academy by the imposed challenges.

One of the fundamental contemporary theories in higher education is defining the necessary competencies for suitable personnel (Dragoo 2016, 2; Dyson 2019, 2). Applying such an approach is also necessary upon setting the demands for the knowledge of future officers for conducting the entry-level duties, i.e., defining the study program structure for military schools and academies. In the previously described context of accelerated development and the use of unmanned autonomous systems in military operations, the Military Academy of the University of Defense in Belgrade must examine the emerging challenges, modify the existing ones, and suggest new study programs. As previously mentioned, the unmanned autonomous platforms represent complex systems whose projection, maintenance and use demand additional knowledge from the field of electrotechnical and computer engineering (designing the guidance and control algorithms for these vehicles, as well as the methods and techniques of data processing from different sensors located on these vehicles, application of techniques of artificial intelligence for their autonomous movement upon conducting missions and tasks, understanding the method of functioning of such systems and their efficient application) and machine engineering (designing the power unit, as well as transmission elements and materials that enable sufficient protection of these vehicles, as well as understanding of machine construction of vehicles, which ensures their more efficient use). It can be concluded that, upon graduation, the future officers should possess the abilities to analyze, synthesize, and predict solutions and possible consequences, as well as to master the methods, procedures, and processes of logical thinking to solve the development, maintenance, and exploitation of unmanned autonomous platform issues. Additionally, bearing in mind the complexity of autonomous systems and their accelerated technological advancement, it is necessary to develop the communication abilities of graduated cadets, not only regarding their close working and social

environment but also the broader academic and scientific community, to ensure passing and improvement of knowledge and skills in this field.

Based on these needs for the education of highly proficient professional personnel, we can identify the following essential fields that should complement the existing curricula and study programs:

Mechatronics and autonomous systems – Unmanned vehicles are complex mechatronic systems combining mechanical structures, actuators, sensory systems, and computational control. Officers must gain basic and advanced knowledge in this field to understand the vehicle's principle of functioning and its efficient control.

Advanced automatic control techniques – due to the complex dynamics and kinematics of autonomous vehicles' movement, classical control techniques are often insufficient. It is necessary to introduce content regarding robust and adaptive guidance, trajectory optimization algorithms, and artificial intelligence for making decisions in real time.

Advanced systems of guidance and navigation – precise positioning of unmanned vehicles require a combination of several technologies, including GPS, inertial navigational systems, and other methods of defining the vehicle's position. The future officers must understand how these systems function, the principles of data fusion, and the methods of optimal trajectory generation.

Sensory data processing and artificial intelligence – autonomous vehicles use various environment perception sensors. Thus, educating officers in processing and analyzing data collected by sensors operating in different parts of the electromagnetic spectrum and in developing and implementing artificial intelligence algorithms, especially machine learning for object recognition and real-time decision-making, is particularly interesting.

Tactical use – tactical applications of unmanned vehicles demand that, besides possessing technical knowledge, future officers understand the abilities and advantages of unmanned autonomous systems compared to conventional weapons. This implies new strategies and reconnaissance tactics, logistical support, combat operations, and integration of autonomous platforms with the existing weapons systems.

Besides the defined professional-specialist and applied knowledge, additional attention must be given to developing highly motivated personalities of future officers and developing their leadership skills in their direct working environment. To fulfil this goal, it is necessary to reevaluate the role of army morale, military psychology and other

fields of military social sciences to implement knowledge and develop a highly motivated personality of officers, as well as provide answers to ethical challenges of the application of new technologies, above all artificial intelligence, which is extremely pronounced in unmanned autonomous systems.

Accordingly, it is evident that, shortly, the Military Academy is expected to accredit new study programs, and one of the imperatives of developing new curricula is the identification of new technological challenges and security threats, as well as defining the necessary knowledge of military personnel, as part of responding to them, to defend the independence and autonomy of the Republic of Serbia.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, the use and challenges in the development of unmanned autonomous vehicles are analyzed. Besides that, the military personnel's knowledge is also identified for designing, exploiting, and maintaining these systems. The fundamental aspects of tactical and operational use in military operations and the development directions of unmanned autonomous vehicles were examined through the prism of designing vehicle guidance and control systems. Regarding the necessary competencies of the military personnel, we can conclude that it is necessary to develop different multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge to understand and use all the benefits of autonomous systems and ensure the improvement of the existing capabilities. By that, knowledge and experience acquired during this research will represent the basis for modifying existing and implementing new study programs within the military education systems.

Further research directions will refer to the challenges of designing expert systems for support in military decision-making based on artificial intelligence, which will improve the capabilities of autonomous systems and define the competencies of future officers necessary for confronting future challenges and threats to security.

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БЕСПОСАДНА АУТОНОМНА ВОЗИЛА: ИЗАЗОВИ У РАЗВОЈУ И ВОЈНОЈ ПРИМЕНИ И ПОТРЕБЕ ЗА НОВИМ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЈАМА ВОЈНОГ КАДРА***

Резиме

Развој беспосадних аутономних возила представља један од најдинамичнијих праваца савремене технолошке еволуције, са све широм применом у цивилном, а пре свега војном домену. Иако се термини беспосадно и аутономно возило често користе као синоними, овај рад указује на њихову суштинску разлику и значај интегрисане способности доношења одлука за пуну аутономију. Савремени трендови у производњи сензорских, комуникационих и енергетских компоненти омогућили су развој сложених система за перцепцију окружења, планирање путање и управљање кретањем, што је нарочито утицало на промену концепта извођења војних операција. У раду се анализира историјски развој беспосадних аутономних возила, нивои њихове аутономије и утицај на извођење савремених војних операција. Имајући у виду тренутну брзину технолошког развоја и достигнућа, може се очекивати још интензивнија употреба аутономних система у наредним ратним сукобима, што намеће потребу за дефинисањем потребних знања и компетенција војног кадра који ће се бавити развојем и употребом истих. Потребна знања

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укључују области мехатронике, аутоматског управљања, вођења, вештачке интелигенције, тактике употребе, логистичке подршке и других. Рад препознаје потребу за унапређењем војног образовања кроз модификацију постојећих и развој нових студијских програма за образовање кадрова способних за развој, одржавање и ефикасну експлоатацију беспосадних аутономних система у динамичном безбедносном окружењу.

Кључне речи: Беспосадна аутономна возила, Пројектовање система вођења, Пројектовање система управљања, Војна примена беспосадних возила, Војно образовање.

* This paper was received on April 22, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

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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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*** This paper is a part of the scientific research projects conducted based on the Plan of scientific research activity in the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Army for 2025: “Value orientations and attitude of the Military Academy cadets towards tradition” (no BA ДХ/1/24-26).

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” (Gvozdrenović 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.

* This paper was received on April 7, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

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QUALITATIVE INSIGHT INTO FACTORS OF ENROLLMENT IN MILITARY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

This paper explores the factors that influenced the decisions of cadets at the Military Academy (MA) and the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical Military Academy (MF MMA) to enroll in military higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Republic of Serbia. The research aimed to identify, through qualitative analysis of focus group responses, the reasons and motives behind cadets' enrollment decisions and their reflections on those decisions. The theoretical framework of this paper is based on empirical research findings and theoretical considerations regarding the factors and models of HEI selection applicable to both civilian and military contexts. The research was conducted on a sample of 32 cadets, and the data were sorted and analyzed through ten thematic categories. The results reveal that the decision of cadets to enroll in military HEIs in the Republic of Serbia was shaped by a complex mix of

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*** The research was conducted for the purpose of completing a doctoral dissertation.

social, institutional, and economic factors, many of which have already been identified in relevant scientific literature. The insights gained from this study can provide a foundation for developing an instrument for future quantitative research and refining higher education institutions' communication strategies.

Keywords: Military Academy, Faculty of Medicine of the Military Medical Academy, cadets, HEI choice, military profession, focus group.

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties of the 20th century, in the context of accepting the marketing orientation as a model of institutional development of tertiary education institutions, it was noticed that the surrounding factors, which influence the business orientations worldwide, unavoidably and unequivocally impact them (Vrontis, Thrassou and Melanthiou 2007, 979). Higher education started being perceived as “goods” or “services” offered to potential students, i.e., “buyers” or “clients”. In this sense, universities adopted marketing in response to the following challenges: financial sustainability, increased competitiveness, globalization, and the perception of education in the sense of its market value (Maringe and Gibbs 2008, 29–43; 60). For higher education institutions to be able to develop efficient marketing strategies and position themselves strategically, they must understand the factors and recognize the legitimacy of decision-making processes among future students.

Although numerous research dealing with theoretical conceptualizations and empirical research on factors and models of choice of civilian higher education institutions (HEIs) have been published in the previous decades, in scientific literature, there is almost a complete absence of analyses relating to military higher education institutions (see Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2015; Paulsen 1990). The only empirical research identified in relevant databases refers to the choice of the Military Academy in the Republic of Türkiye, while in Serbia, research systematically dealing with this topic is not known (see Balik and Başpınar 2022). We are speaking of a deficiency that indicates a need for new, scientifically founded insight into the nature and dynamics of

decision-making among the youth who opt for the officer calling by enrolling into the Military Academy (MA) and the Faculty of Medicine of the Medical Military Academy (FM MMA), which is the key research problem of this paper.

During the significant reform of the higher military education in Serbia in the first decade of this century, the key determinants were the following: normative and doctrinal assumptions, educational determinants (above all, the Bologna declaration), defining the profile of an officer and previous results of research of the military education system (Marček i Jeremić 2009, 182–183). By adjusting to the demands of Bologna, the military higher education institutions (MHEIs) in the Republic of Serbia made a huge step towards integration into a unique educational system and, with their civilian counterparts, they compete in the “educational market” with the inevitable need for understanding and anticipating the current challenges of competitiveness. The question of opting for the MHEI holds specific significance in light of generational changes and the specifics of Generation Z, whose communication habits, values, and career preferences significantly deviate from the previous generations (see Turner 2015; Perić, Mamula-Nikolić and Deliće 2020). The youth today place great value on stability and job security. At the same time, they expect flexibility, room for advancement, and respect for personal values, which in many respects does not fit into the strict hierarchy and structure of the military system (Savić, Lazarević and Grujić 2023, 130–132; Deloitte n.d.).

The subject of this research is the factors influencing the decision of young people to enroll in MHEI in the Republic of Serbia, with a special reference to their subjective interpretations of motivation and evaluation of their own decision on enrollment. The research is directed towards understanding the determinants in the decision-making process regarding enrolment and the meaning the youth gives to military education as the initial step in the forthcoming career of an officer.

This paper aims to identify and interpret the reasons and motives that influenced the MA and the FM MMA cadets to enroll in MHEI through a quantitative analysis of the focus group results and to offer insight into their satisfaction with that decision. The results presented in this paper offer a basic insight into the reasons for choosing these specific institutions and represent a foundation for the continuance of empirical research in the following, quantitative phase.

The analysis is based on two interrelated and complementary aspects: the reasons and motives of cadets for enrollment on one side and their satisfaction with the decision made on the other. In this way, it is possible to examine the factors that could influence the decision of young people to opt for a military career through education at the MHEI and compare them with the results obtained through scientific research in the field of choice of civilian and military HEIs.

METHODOLOGY

The focus group method was used for conducting the qualitative research. Contrary to a group interview, its methodological predecessor, in a focus group, focuses on the interaction among participants (Merton 1987, 556–557). According to Kitzinger (1994, 122), focus groups are “a form of group discussions organized for researching a defined set of questions. The group is focused on some form of collective activity. Most importantly, the focus groups differ from the broader category of group interview by explicit use of group interaction as research data” (Stalmeijer et al. 2014, 1). In a focus group, the moderator (or interviewer) directs the discussion to a specific topic or a set of questions, inciting participants to exchange opinions. Focus groups are often used in early phases of research to identify patterns in participants’ responses, which could be used as a foundation for developing hypotheses to be confirmed or discarded through quantitative research (Merton 1987, 558). Bearing in mind the fact that, in the available literature, there is no applicable and scientifically verified instrument (scale) used for examining the influence of different factors on opting for the MHEI and that, when speaking of civilian HEI, the factors are examined in the literary as contrasted to social, economic, political or geographic (regional) context. In the given example, qualitative research enables the identification of five variables that will provide a broader insight into this issue and create a basis for the quantitative phase of empirical research.

The research on which this paper was based was conducted in April 2024 based on the consent of the University of Defense rector, the head of the Military Academy, and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the MMA. A mixed group of 32 cadets was formed: 20 from the Military Academy (twelve males and eight females) and twelve from the Faculty of Medicine of the MMA (four males and eight females), evenly distributed according to their study years. The Command of the Cadet

Brigade ensured cadets' participation with different academic success and territorial origin, per the statistical regions of the Republic of Serbia.

During the focus group, the participants were informed that they were expected to name the decisive reasons regarding their decision to enroll in the military HEI. In the first round of giving statements, the cadets were offered the possibility to present one or two main reasons or motives. Afterwards, interaction within the focus group was encouraged, which took place in a constructive and encouraging atmosphere since a certain number of cadets were reserved and sparse in their responses during the first statement. After presenting the reasons and motives for opting for the MHEI, the discussion was initiated on satisfaction with the decision to enroll in MA and FM MMA. The responses and statements of participants were recorded in the previously prepared table form and afterwards classified into thematic categories. By the previously examined literature, they were prepared for further qualitative analysis.

RESULTS

After the systematization of data acquired from the chosen group regarding the question on the reasons that were determinant for their decision to enroll into the Military Academy, that is, the Faculty of Medicine of the MMA, a total of 34 different answers were acquired, all presented and ranked in Table 1 in accordance to the type of MHEI, gender and in total (the values are presented in %, for more straightforward interpretation, are rendered whole). The majority of answers/reasons (12) were mentioned up to four times. Six responses have a score of 5, the highest score simultaneously, while three statements, that is, reasons, were mentioned only once.

Table 1 – Ranking of responses of the focus group to the question of reasons that were determinant for opting to enroll in MA and FM MMA according to frequency

R	Response	MA		FM MMA		M		F		?	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Support of parents.	2	10	3	25	3	19	2	13	5	16
2	Officers “enjoy” high social status.	2	10	3	25	2	13	3	19	5	16
3	In military schools, you develop the ability to overcome all challenges (both personal and professional).	2	10	3	25	3	19	2	13	5	16
4	Military schools have the advantage compared to civilian ones due to special skills acquired at them - driving test is passed, certificate of foreign language proficiency is obtained, cadets learn to ski, etc.	2	10	3	25	3	19	2	13	5	16
5	People who graduate from the Military Academy or the FM MMA are more mature and ready for life than their counterparts from the civilian world.	2	10	3	25	3	19	2	13	5	16
6	I could overcome the education challenge at the MA/FM MMA.	2	10	3	25	3	19	2	13	5	16
7	It is important to me to have a guaranteed job after completing my studies.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
8	Because I see myself as a patriot.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
9	Because I believe that every man should be ready to defend their country with arms in case of war.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
10	I like order and discipline.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
11	I want to acquire highly proficient titles and competencies throughout my career.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
12	Studies at the MA and FM MMA offer a unique combination of theory and practice.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13

13	As an officer of the Serbian Army, I would enjoy respect from the people I know.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
14	In military school, you train your soul and your body equally.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
15	Because the army was always highly respected in my family.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
16	The positive attitude of my peers.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
17	People from my close surroundings have a high opinion of the army.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
18	I believe I am talented in leadership and command.	2	10	2	17	2	13	2	13	4	13
19	Because (MA/FM MMA) is an exquisite educational institution.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
20	Because education is free, and cadets have a monthly "wage".	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
21	I always enjoyed military/war-themed movies.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
22	The predictability of my career is important to me.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
23	The Military Academy/FM MMA truly prepares you for your future profession.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
24	Because I believe that modern teaching means and methods are used at the MA and FM MMA.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
25	I feel powerful in the uniform.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
26	Because of good sports content.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
27	I knew I would be extremely physically prepared when I graduated from military school.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
28	Since childhood, I have listened to the stories of the military and military topics from my parents and close relatives.	2	10	1	8	1	6	2	13	3	9
29	Because the diploma of the Military Academy or the FM MMA is worth more than the diploma from civilian faculties.	1	5	1	8	1	6	1	6	2	6

30	Top professors teach at the Military Academy/Faculty of Medicine of the MMA.	1	5	1	8	1	6	1	6	2	6
31	I was born to be an officer/military doctor.	1	5	1	8	1	6	1	6	2	6
32	As an officer of the Serbian Army, I will have a good salary.	1	5	0	0	1	6	0	0	1	3
33	I enrolled in military school because I knew I could advance in my career and be promoted to higher ranks.	1	5	0	0	1	6	0	0	1	3
34	I enrolled in military school because I wanted to become independent.	1	5	0	0	1	6	0	0	1	3

Source: Author’s analysis

Each cadet provided at least one and up to five responses to the question asked. The majority of cadets (25 out of 32) listed two determinant reasons for enrolling in MHEI. Two cadets listed only one reason each, while one listed five answers. The distribution of the number of responses (reasons) according to respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Distribution of responses

Number of repeated answers	1	2	3	4	5
Number of cadets according to the number of answers	2	25	12	6	1

Source: Author’s analysis

During the discussion in the focus group, statements of cadets reflecting their satisfaction with the decision to enroll in the Military Academy, that is, the Faculty of Medicine of the MMA, are recorded. The responses are recorded by the interviewer and systematized in Table 3. The cadets had an opportunity to confirm more answers with which they agreed. Out of ten recorded statements, five statements presented, confirmed by at least eight cadets (25% of the total), were chosen.

Table 3 – Overview of statements of the MA and FM MMA cadets on their satisfaction with their decision to enroll

R	Statement	MA		FM MMA		?	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I am proud that I will become an officer of the Serbian Army.	10	50	4	33	14	44
2	The Military Academy/FM MMA was my first choice upon choosing a higher education institution.	8	40	4	33	12	38
3	When the moment came for me to apply to the MA/FM MMA, I had no doubts whether I should do it.	9	45	3	25	12	38
4	I do not regret that I enrolled in the MA/FM MMA.	7	35	4	33	11	34
5	I recommend that the person I hold dear and close enroll in a military school.	5	25	3	25	8	25

Source: Author's analysis

The results presented in this chapter are the foundation for analyzing and categorizing the acquired data, which will be put into the context of relevant literature.

DISCUSSION

The quality of responses to the question about the motives and reasons for choosing the MHEI was balanced among the cadets of the MA and the FM MMA. This was not the case despite the expectations that the responses of MA and FM MMA cadets would significantly differ. To a certain extent, this can be explained by the fact that both belong to the Cadet Brigade; they share the living and working space, leading to specific responses to homogenization. Moreover, on the specific sample, it is possible to conclude whether there are significant differences in the distribution regarding gender. In specific responses, a convergence of opinions, identified by Merton as one of the potential flaws of focus groups (Merton 1987, 555), is noticeable. For example, a response that one of the reasons for enrolment was “the inclination towards watching

movies with the military, that is, war thematics”, listed by one cadet in the first round of statements, was later mentioned two more times during the discussion. A similar was the case of the following responses: “I deemed myself capable to overcome the challenge of education at the MA/FM MMA”, “In military schools, you develop abilities of overcoming all challenges (both personal and professional)” and “I enrolled into military school because I want to become independent”.

Through the analysis of the quality and content of the answers provided regarding reasons for enrolling in the MHEI, they were systematized into ten groups and ranked in Table 3 by the average number of repetitions, starting from the highest to the lowest, as follows:

1. *Cultural capital* – personal inclinations and values passed along to the individual from their family and social environment they grow up in (see Balik and Başpınar 2022; Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp 2010; Chung et al. 2009; Bourdieu 2018). This group of responses includes the ones speaking of patriotism, beliefs that defending a country is every man’s (patriot) duty, inclinations towards order and discipline, and the love towards movies on military topics. This group of answers could have been named “inclination towards military profession” since it, in concretum, refers to the nature and fundamental values of the military calling. In this sense, the army is an essential institution for creating national identity and accepting common values (Starčević 2024). Some research identifies inclination towards a specific calling as the key factor in the choice of future faculty, whose significance surpasses all other factors (López-Bonilla et al. 2012);

2. *Status* – perception or the wished image of an officer’s position in society. This group of responses points to a specific number of cadets of the MA and the FM MMA who, probably under the influence of cultural capital, built up on the attitude regarding the prestige of the officer profession and the opportunity to climb the social ladder in this way. Laura Perna elaborates on the sociological models of acquiring status as a background for her conceptual model of the choice of HEI (see Perna 2006, 110–114). In the research conducted by López-Bonilla and others (2012), the perceived reputation of a specific profession in society, besides personal motivation – inclination towards a specific calling – is among those that significantly influence the decision to choose the HEI. This factor of choice is identified in the research of factors contributing to the choice of MA in Türkiye as well (see Balik and Başpınar 2022);

3. *Personal growth* – attending the MHEIs as an opportunity to mature and master the abilities and skills that cannot be acquired in civilian schools. We are speaking of a specific group of responses which, to a certain extent, can be linked with the elitist idea of the military profession, but still stand out in terms of a clearly expressed wish and need for personal growth. In a limited sense, this can also be perceived through the prism of “social and experiential benefits” mentioned in their work by Callender and Jackson (Callender and Jackson 2008, 413). In the said research, the respondents stated the following: “going to college is a worthy experience”, and “one of the best aspects of going to the university is the development of oneself as a person” (Callender and Jackson 2008, 413);

4. *Influence of close individuals* – support and encouragement to the cadets from their families and friends upon enrolling in the MHEI. We are speaking of a factor of choice quite extensively examined in the literature (see Gao, Ng and Lee 2021; Balik and Başpinar 2022; Prakhov, Kotomina and Sazhina 2020; Iacopini and Hayden 2017). Even though the influence of parents is more often mentioned as being decisive in choosing the institution of tertiary education, the focus group most often linked in their responses the parental encouragement with the attitude of their close surroundings regarding the possibility of enrolling in a military school. Therefore, the responses regarding the influence of parents, family, and friends are put into one common category;

5. *Quality of military education* – a set of answers emphasizing the specificity of the educational offer of higher education institutions and their study programs, i.e., their specific institutional characteristics. According to the paper written by Bonnema and Van der Waldt (Bonnema and Waldt 2008), the factor of choice named “content of the study program” is especially important to the students who are taking the quality and relevance of the curriculum into consideration in relation to their academic and professional goals. According to these authors, the students put special value on academic and practical components of the curriculum, including the method of conducting the program and applicability of the knowledge in comparison to their personal academic and professional goals (Bonnema and Waldt 2008, 6–8). Callender and Jackson call in their paper upon the stance of the Government of Great Britain that “the choice of students will be an increasingly significant driver of quality of education since students are choosing quality courses that will offer them higher-level skills necessary during their working

life” (Callender and Jackson 2008, 413). This explains the answers in which it is stated that the reason for choosing the MA and FM MMA is the directionality of their study programs towards the unity of theory and practice, carrying along a set of specific knowledge and skills necessary for the officer profession, i.e., military doctor, which is in accordance with the research on the topic of choosing the MA in Türkiye (see Balik and Başpınar 2022);

6. *Auto-perception* – beliefs on personal capabilities and talents in the context of being predisposed to the military perception. In this group of responses, the ones showing that the MA and FM MMA cadets see themselves as gifted for the callings of officers and military doctors are systematized. Suppose this group of answers is perceived in the context of Chapman’s college choice model. In that case, it is clear that they uncover a set of individual characteristics of students the author calls “Aptitude”, i.e., “Self-image”, as presented in their model by Hansen and Litten (see Chapman 1981; Vrontis 2007, 981–982). Balik and Başpınar single out self-assessment of abilities and talents for the military career as a significant factor in the choice of the military academy in Türkiye (Balik and Başpınar 2022, 56);

7. *Benefits* – the reasons for enrolment are dominantly based on economic parameters, which point out the advantages of free education, safe employment, and the expected wage. The most influential factor was the certainty or security of employment after completing the studies in the research on factors of choice of HEI in Serbia (see Mitić i Mojić 2020). The significance of this issue is stressed in other research (see Platz and Holtbrügge 2016; López-Bonilla et al. 2012; Maringe 2006). The response that the reason for choosing the MHEI was “good wage” is also supported by the results of a research series (see Mitić i Mojić 2020; Delavande and Zafar 2019). The benefits of free education in military HEIs in Serbia and monthly stipends (wages) provided to the MA and FM MMA cadets, when listed as motivation for enrolment, can be linked with research stressing the significance of stipends and financial benefits upon choosing civilian HEIs (see Kaye 2021). Almost the same factors of choice of the Turkish MA are listed by Balik and Başpınar (Balik and Başpınar 2022), who established that the financial stability and social benefits of military service, with the possibility of being awarded a stipend, make choosing this MHEI significantly more attractive to future students;

8. *Career* – this group includes responses related to beliefs that the military career is predictable and enables advancement, high ranks, knowledge, and professional competencies. We are speaking of a set of institutional characteristics that result from a specific role of the MHEI to school officers for the army's needs (Morin and Chanut 2018). The said reasons are entirely by the results of the research conducted by Balik and Başpınar (Balik and Başpınar 2022), who include the professional development and the possibilities for advancement into a factor of choosing the Turkish MA, called “career possibilities”, which is, as stressed, attractive to young and ambitious people. Besides, in the quoted paper, this factor is not examined in the literature in a manner that would be suitable for interpreting responses to questions given in the focus group. As a term, the career perspectives are most often linked in research to the possibility of employment and high wages upon graduation;

9. *Physical culture* is a specific group of answers that are singled out because they mention reasons for enrolling in the MHEI, due to the sporting content and the education and training system, which promotes the development of physical abilities. It is necessary to stress that the said factor is rarely mentioned in literature as independent, and its attributes are most often linked to location, infrastructure, and quality of educational plans and programs. In their research, Bonnema and Van der Walldt (Bonnema and Walldt 2008) attribute the possibility of playing sports during studies as a factor in the decision on the enrolment of the less motivated students, with little *direction*. Akareem and Hossain concluded similarly (Akareem and Hossain 2016, 62), discovering that students who play sports (and participate in extracurricular activities in general) usually have lower academic expectations than the ones not doing so. However, the results of this qualitative research do not offer the possibility to confirm such statements. In the responses making up the group “physical culture”, there are also some contextual overlaps with the group called quality of military education, in concretum, in the case of the following answer: “In military school, you train your soul and body equally” and “I knew that, when I graduate from military school, I will be extremely physically prepared.” Moreover, the response “due to good sporting contents” can also be interpreted as emphasizing the significance of the sporting infrastructure since the focus group cadets stressed their impressions of the sports center, the athletic hall, and the Military Academy. Still, this paper's answers were singled out for their specificity and for conducting further quantitative research. It is necessary

to stress that this factor is not identified in the research on the factors of choice of the MA in Türkiye (Balik and Başpınar 2022);

10. *Reputation* – a set of responses on the reasons for enrolling in the MA and FM MMA based on the reputational characteristics of the MHEI. We can presume that the said reasons are closely linked to the ones presented in the groups’ “cultural capital” and “influence of close individuals” since the perception of the reputation of the MHEI among future students in this period must have been generated in the closest surrounding and eventually through the media. In terms of examining the reputation of HEI as a factor of choice, there is a series of research that directly confirms its influence (see Mitić and Mojić 2020; Platz and Holtbrügge 2016; Munisamy, Jaafar and Nagaraj 2013).

Table 4 – Overview of responses by groups

R	Response/statement/claim	Factor	Literature
1	Because I see myself as a patriot.	Cultural capital	Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp 2010; Chung et al. 2009; Bourdieu 2018.
	Because I believe that every man should be ready to defend their country with arms in case of war.		
	I like order and discipline.		
	I always enjoyed military/war-themed movies.		
2	I feel powerful in the uniform.	Status	Balik and Başpınar 2022; Perna 2006; Bourdieu 2018; López-Bonilla et al. 2012.
	Officers “enjoy” high social status.		
	As an officer of the Serbian Army, I would enjoy respect from the people I know.		
3	People who graduate from the Military Academy or the FM MMA are more mature and ready for life than their counterparts from the civilian world.	Personal growth	Callender and Jackson 2008.
	In military schools, you develop the ability to overcome all challenges (both personal and professional).		
	I enrolled in military school because I want to become independent.		

4	Because the army was always highly respected in my family.	Influence of close individuals	Gao, Ng and Lee 2021; Balik and Başpınar 2022; Prakhov, Kotomina and Sazhina 2020; Iacopini and Hayden 2017.
	Support of parents.		
	Since childhood, I have listened to the stories of the military and military topics from my parents and close relatives.		
	The positive attitude of my peers.		
	People from my close surroundings have a high opinion of the army.		
5	The Military Academy / FM MMA truly prepares you for your future profession.	Quality of military education	Bonnema and Waldt 2008; Akareem and Hossain 2016.
	Military schools have the advantage compared to civilian ones due to special skills acquired at them – driving test is passed, certificate of foreign language proficiency is obtained, cadets learn to ski, etc.		
	Studies at the MA and FM MMA offer a unique combination of theory and practice.		
	Because I believe that modern teaching means and methods are used at the MA and FM MMA.		
6	I could overcome the education challenge at the MA / FM MMA.	Auto-perception	Balik and Başpınar 2022; Vrontis 2007; Chapman 1981.
	I was born to be an officer/military doctor.		
	I believe I am talented in leadership and command.		
7	It is important to me to have a guaranteed job after completing my studies.	Benefits	Kaye 2021; Mitić and Mojić 2020; Delavande and Zafar 2019; Platz and Holtbrügge 2016; López-Bonilla et al. 2012; Callender and Jackson 2008; Maringe 2006.
	As an officer of the Serbian Army, I will have a good salary.		
	Because education is free, and cadets have a monthly “wage”.		

8	I enrolled in military school because I knew I could advance in my career and be promoted to higher ranks.	Career	Balik and Başpınar 2022; Morin and Chanut 2018; Platz and Holtbrügge 2016; Bonnema and Waldt 2008; Akareem and Hossain 2016.
	The predictability of my career is important to me.		
	I want to acquire highly proficient titles and competencies throughout my career.		
9	In military school, you train your soul and your body equally.	Physical culture	Bonnema and Waldt 2008.
	Because of good sports content.		
	I knew I would be extremely physically prepared when I graduated from military school.		
10	Because (MA/FM MMA) is an exquisite educational institution.	Reputation	Mitić and Mojić 2020; Platz and Holtbrügge 2016; Munisamy, Jaafar and Nagaraj 2013.
	Because the diploma of the Military Academy or the FM MMA is worth more than the diploma from civilian faculties.		
	Top professors teach at the Military Academy/Faculty of Medicine of the MMA.		

Source: Author’s analysis

If we perceived the previously examined responses, that is, groups of responses, as potential influence factors regarding the choice of the MHEI, their broad generalization by the criteria developed by Paulsen (Paulsen 1990) or Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2015) would be limiting. Paulsen classifies the factors of choice of HEI into three broad groups: 1) characteristics of the (future) student – high school success, socioeconomic status, influence of family and peers and personal preferences; 2) institutional factors, which include location, availability and quality of study programs, schooling expenses and selectivity of acceptance and 3) factors of environment, which include demographic changes, economic circumstances and public policies (see Paulsen 1990). In the systematic overview of literature on the topic of influential factors regarding the choice of university, Hemsley-Brown and Platka also singled out three groups of factors as follows: 1) factors

linked with students – demographic and academic; 2) factors linked to the institution – general characteristics of the HEI, outcomes and benefits and quality and 3) interaction factors between characteristics of students and the HEI, referring to – financial aspects, sources of information, location and physical availability (see Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2015).

For example, according to Paulsen, the factor (group of answers) of status, which reflects the perception or the desired image of the officer's position in a society, can be classified into any of the three broad groups. Since *status* points to personal preferences, it can be perceived as a characteristic of a (future) student. Moreover, this group of answers indeed is linked with the perception of institutional characteristics of the MHEI in a narrower sense and the military (as the umbrella organization) in a broader sense. Ultimately, the *status* is linked with wider social and economic circumstances, which could also classify it among the environmental factors. A thought experiment with the same variable gives a similar result in the context of Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka's classification (2015). *Status* is, to a great extent, a reflection of the characteristics of a future cadet and the features of the institution which member (cadet) they wish to become. Moreover, *status* also has an interactive component because, as a factor of choice, it influences the future cadet and the institution without giving either party an exclusive sphere of influence.

The previous conclusion explains that Balik and Başpınar (2022), when researching influential factors of choosing the MA in Türkiye, did not resort to generalization, but indeed to specification of influential factors for their more precise and more clear examination, which would be more suitable in this case.

Based on the heterogeneity of the identified factors in this qualitative research, it can be assumed that the model of choosing the MHEI in the Republic of Serbia most probably would not exhibit excluding attributes of classical social models of gaining status but could possess specific characteristics of economic models of investment into human capital (see Perna 2006). Such acquired typology can serve as a foundation for constructing instruments in further qualitative analysis of the choice of the MHEI in Serbia.

CONCLUSION

The results acquired at the focus group point to the fact that the cadets of the MA and the FM MMA made their decisions to enroll into these institutions most probably based on the attitudes and opinions on the army and the military profession formed in their childhood and early youth, under the influence of family and close individuals. For them, education and the Military Academy and the Faculty of Medicine of the MMA represent an opportunity to rise on the social ladder and acquire affirmation of their perceived inclinations and talents, and develop psychophysical abilities.

They perceive as advantages of education at the MHEI as the directionality of their study programs towards acquiring concrete knowledge and skills needed for the upcoming service, the possibilities for acquiring additional qualifications and secured employment, secure career advancement, and financial benefits of the military service. For them, the military HEI has a reputation for academic excellence and elitism compared to its civilian counterparts.

Considering the acquired responses' comprehensiveness and diversity, we can conclude that the decision to enroll in the MHEI results from actions of several mutually connected personal, familial, institutional, and broader social factors. This research offered an initial qualitative insight into the field that has not been sufficiently examined in the scientific literature until now.

The limitation of this research is primarily embodied in a relatively small sample and the possible influence of the work dynamics on the honesty of specific responses, which is also one of the pronounced flaws of the focus group method. In these limitations, we could also include that the research was reduced to exclusively MA and FM MMA cadets and did not include enrolment candidates. Moreover, the retrospective of the research could have led to the deformation of respondents' attitudes, especially those from the senior years of study. Thus, it is possible that they were corrected to a certain extent under the influence of many years of living in the military environment.

Despite the previously mentioned limitations, the acquired results offer a solid foundation for the creation of instruments and hypotheses for the next qualitative phase of research which will, with the use of suitable statistical methods, and a significantly bigger sample, enable

more clear and more precise examination of influential factors that opt the youth to enroll into the MHEI.

In light of contemporary challenges of marketization of higher education, the specifics of the current generation and positioning of the military profession as one of many career choices offered to young people, this research can also serve as a guideline for creating and adjusting the promoted activities of the MA and the FM MMA, by the expectations and values of the target group.

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КВАЛИТАТИВНИ УВИД У ФАКТОРЕ УПИСА ВОЈНИХ ВИСОКОШКОЛСКИХ УСТАНОВА У РЕПУБЛИЦИ СРБИЈИ***

Резиме

Овај рад се бави идентификовањем и анализом фактора који су утицали на одлуке кадета Војне академије (ВА) и Медицинског факултета ВМА (МФ ВМА) да упишу војне високошколске установе (ВВШУ). Циљ истраживања био је да се, путем квалитативне анализе одговора добијених у фокус групама, идентификују разлози и мотиви кадета за упис као и искази којима они вреднују своје одлуке. Теоријски оквир рада ослања се на резултате емпиријских истраживања и теоријска разматрања фактора и модела избора цивилних и војних ВШУ. Истраживање је спроведено на узорку од 32 кадета, а подаци су разврстани и анализирани кроз десет тематских категорија. Резултати указују да је на одлуку кадета о упису на ВВШУ у Републици Србији деловао сложен амалгам потенцијалних фактора социјалне, институционалне и економске природе који су, у највећој мери до сада идентификовани у релевантној научној литератури. Добијени увиди могу послужити као основа за развој инструмента за даља

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*** Истраживање је спроведено за потребе израде докторске дисертације аутора.

квантитативна истраживања и прилагођавање комуникацијске стратегије ВВШУ.

Кључне речи: Војна академија, Медицински факултет ВМА, избор факултета, кадети, војна професија, фокус група.

* This paper was received on April 18, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

UDC: 355.231(497.11)+316.346.2/3

DOI: 10.5937/pnb29-58249

Original scientific paper

The Policy of National Security
(Политика националне безбедности)

Year XVI vol. 29

No. 2/2025

pp. 123-153

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SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CADETS OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY^{*}**

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The subject of this paper was the research of the socioeconomic characteristics of the Military Academy cadets in an attempt to define them at the individual, family, and regional levels. The aim was to gain insight into the basic socioeconomic characteristics of cadets, their description, and their connection with the broader socioeconomic context. Primary and secondary data were collected. Correlation, factor analysis, and clustering were used in the study. The results show that regional affiliation is a characteristic that can classify respondents into two groups – those who came from developed regions in northern Serbia and the ones coming from the less developed southern regions of the country, that the participation of female members in the cadet population is at the level of developed European countries, that almost 70 percent of cadets come from urban and semi-urban areas, that two-fifths of cadets come

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*** This paper is the result of the engagement of its authors within the scientific research project BA/ДН/1/24–26 “Value orientations and relation towards tradition of the Military Academy cadets”.

from the region of Šumadija and Western Serbia, and that more than half of the cadets have a working-class social background, while slightly more than one-fifth have military background. Almost three-quarters of cadets have a Military grammar school or civilian gymnasium as their secondary education, and the success they have achieved in their education so far can be characterized as very good for more than half of the cadets.

Keywords: socioeconomic characteristics, socioeconomic status, cadets, Military Academy, Serbia.

INTRODUCTION

There is almost no phenomenon in the social sciences whose research does not involve the inclusion of socioeconomic characteristics of the research population. These characteristics allow us to get to know the respondents, better describe or explain the most important socioeconomic conditions, and indicate their attitudes, problems, or preferences (Buder et al. 2024; Antonoplis 2023; Manstead 2018; Nichols 2023; Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. 2019; Das et al. 2020).

The very name of these characteristics refers to the two sciences, sociology and economics, which play a key role in their explanation. While sociology explains through the concepts of class, status, prestige, and position, economics insists on the categories of income, wealth, ownership, and income distribution. The common denominator of sociology and economics in defining socioeconomic characteristics concerns socioeconomic inequalities. Moreover, these inequalities can be viewed at three levels – individual, family, and regional (Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. 2019).

The subject of this paper was the study of the socioeconomic characteristics of cadets of the Military Academy in Belgrade, with an attempt to determine them at the individual, family, and regional levels. Several motives determined this definition of the research subject. First, socioeconomic characteristics are one of the most important explanatory factors in the social sciences (Harrison 2023, 6731–6733; Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. 2019). Second, to the knowledge of the authors of this paper, the socioeconomic characteristics of cadets of the Serbian military academy have not been the subject of a systematic

study. In this sense, there are gaps in knowledge that need to be filled. Third, there was also a personal motive of the authors to get to know the population they teach, but also to outline the basic coordinates in which future officers of the Serbian Armed Forces should be observed for the higher education institution in which they work.

The paper aimed to provide insight into the basic socioeconomic characteristics of cadets, their description, and connection with the broader socioeconomic context. The fulfillment of these objectives was to provide an opportunity to highlight several contributions that this paper can have for theory, other researchers, and those who work directly with cadets during their education, and can use the results obtained in this research to improve their work with them. By the above, the purpose of this paper was exploratory and descriptive.

The main research question on which this work is based was: Who makes up the Military Academy cadets today? Over the past quarter of a century, Serbia has changed its political and economic system, which has affected the society and socioeconomic characteristics of its inhabitants (Uvalić 2007; Lazić 2020; Orlović 2011; Manić and Mitrović 2021). Therefore, it is justified to assume that the population of Military academy cadets has also changed, and to verify this, six individual characteristics were researched that related to the structure of cadets by gender, place of birth on the rural-urban continuum, regions from which they come, social background, previous education, and success in school. These characteristics were sought by collecting primary data, and in order to better understand the subject of research and the quality of the analysis, secondary data were also collected.

Besides the introduction, this paper also consists of a literature review on socioeconomic characteristics and socioeconomic status, focusing on how they are measured. The methodology describes the purpose, research design, types and methods of data collection, and methods, techniques, and procedures for their analysis. After presenting the results, the discussion provides several explanations in light of which the results obtained should be interpreted, and a few parallels are drawn with the results of similar studies. The conclusion summarizes the most important results, indicates contributions to theory, other research, society, and the Military academy, and lists a few limitations in light of which this research should be viewed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the terms socioeconomic status (SES) and socioeconomic characteristics (SEC) are often used, there is no consensus in the literature on their definition, operationalization, and measurement. According to some authors, SES can be defined as the socioeconomic position of an individual or group of people and includes the relationship between biological characteristics and those acquired during life (Harrison 2023, 6731–6733). Others emphasize that SES is a combination of education, occupation, and income, with education rooted in Weber's theory of social status, occupation being the concretization of education in the socioeconomic milieu, and income being the latter's outcome (Baker 2014; Powers 2021). A third group considers that possession of resources and the prestige they bring is the essence of SES, with resources referring to the social, economic, and cultural benefits to which one has access, and prestige determining an individual's inequality in social hierarchy (Krieger et al. 1997).

The phenomena of inequality and stratification are central issues in sociology as a science (Grusky and Weisshaar 2014; Nichols 2023; Garner et al. 2017). In Marxism, class and class conflicts between those who control resources and those who are forced to exchange their labor for wages are central to understanding society (Atkinson 2023; Grusky and Weisshaar 2014; Garner et al. 2017). Weber expands the discussion on the concepts of status and power, emphasizing that status is the most important and represents inequality based on differences in the esteem of individuals and groups in society (Grusky and Weisshaar 2014; Guidetti and Rehbein 2017). Durkheim argues that stratification is necessary for the functioning of society and that different roles preserve social order (Durkheim 2023). According to Parsons, the value system is fundamental, and those who are "successful" in social values have higher positions in the social hierarchy (Ormerod 2020).

In economics, there is a dualistic approach to SES and SEO. On the one hand, they are either ignored, minimized, and treated as a given of capitalism, while on the other hand, they are recognized, emphasized, and analyzed as a consequence of the unequal distribution of wealth and income (Zafirovski 2023). While in the first tradition, with its subjective theory of value and methodological individualism, the focus shifts from classes, strata, and groups to the individual, the second tradition focuses on the causes of inequality, and one of the indicators

of SES is an individual's access to public services (Neck 2021; Titmuss 2018; Esping-Andersen 2015). The contemporary debate in economics about wage-led and profit-led regimes, rooted in the macroeconomic theories of Mikhail Kalecki, Nicholas Kaldor, and Luigi Pasinetti, can be interpreted as a confirmation that tensions between different socioeconomic groups in society over the distribution of income are still important and relevant (Lavoie 2017; Lavoie and Stockhammer 2023).

There is disagreement in the literature on how to measure SES. The main challenge is choosing representative indicators for classification and comparison (Harrison 2023, 6731–6733). Some discuss the objective and subjective measurement of SES, whether it is more appropriate to have respondents self-declare their status or to determine it based on indicators such as income or achievements (Tan et al. 2020; Manstead 2018). Others argue for and against measuring with individual or composite indicators (Broer et al. 2019; Sitthiyot and Holasut 2020; Syrovatka and Schlossarek 2019). The third group of authors question whether measuring at the individual or collective level is more appropriate (Yang and Gustafsson 2004; Dickinson and Adelson 2004). The fourth group of authors considers previously stated as secondary, emphasizing that indicators must be consistent with the scientific field, the population researched, and the chosen definition of SES (Harrison 2023, 6731–6733).

METHODOLOGY

The research on the SEO of Military academy cadets had an exploratory and descriptive purpose. It is appropriate when it is little known about the phenomenon under study, if the given population has not been previously studied systematically, if there is a need to gain basic insight into the research topic or the research population, and if there is a intention to further understand it (Blaikie and Priest 2019, 70–71; Saunders et al. 2024, 170–171). The quantitative methodology was chosen due to the aspirations for measuring variables, grouping them, comparing results with other studies, and highlighting similarities and differences using a comparative method (Saunders et al. 2024, 168).

The research collected both primary and secondary data to present holistic information about the subject of research (Wilson and Joye 2019). The goal of collecting primary data was to describe

the core SEO of the respondents based on the information they would directly provide, while the purpose of secondary data was to explain further the context and broader perspective of the primary data (Hox and Boeije 2005). A survey collected primary data. The nature of the phenomenon determined this choice under study, simplicity of application, the possibility of collecting a large amount of data in a short time, obtaining clear and consistent responses, and the possibility of comparing the information obtained between multiple groups of research participants (Saunders et al. 2024, 181).

Primary data on cadets' SES

Based on insights from several previous studies on the military academy cadet population, six similar characteristics were selected that were related to SES (Carreiras et al. 2020; Franke 2000; Dziwanowski 2020; Bertram et al. 2018; Caforio and Martinez 2005; Brown 1989).

The first was the gender of the respondents. It was included in the study based on the evidence that gender can cause inequalities in SES (Daly 2020; Altuzarra et al. 2021). The second was the place of origin on the rural-urban continuum. Evidence that differences along the rural-urban continuum are not only an economic, but also a major social issue that shapes human capital development, regional cohesion, and long-term growth and development trends justified the choice of this characteristic (Castillo et al. 2023). It is operationalized by the Eurostat territorial unit nomenclature into three categories: rural, semi-urban, and urban (Eurostat 2019).

The regional affiliation of the respondents was included in the research because Serbia is a country with significant differences that manifest themselves along the north-south line (Molnar 2022; Uvalić and Bartlett 2021; Manić and Mitrović 2021). Living and working conditions in different regions directly determine SES and divide residents according to the opportunities inherent to the living conditions in certain areas (Bathelt et al. 2024; Barrios and Strobl 2009). This feature is operationalized according to the classification of the Statistical Office of Serbia into the regions of Belgrade, Vojvodina, Šumadija and Western Serbia, Southern and Eastern Serbia, and Kosovo and Metohija (Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2023d).

Social origin was important for examining SES because it can indicate the milieu from which respondents come, bearing in the mind

that differences in parents' professions produce differences in family income, determine position in society, and define social attitudes and perceptions (Carchedi 2023; Muntaner et al. 2020; Garner et al. 2017; Starčević 2024). This characteristic was operationalized across six levels, offering choices between agricultural, administrative staff, working-class, entrepreneurial, military, and other social backgrounds.

The fifth characteristic was secondary education. It affects SES by associating higher levels of education with better jobs, working conditions, higher incomes, and well-being (Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. 2019; Gyimahi-Brempong and Gyapong 1991). This characteristic was operationalized across three categories that included Military grammar school, civil gymnasium, and vocational secondary school. The sixth characteristic was the respondent's academic achievement, and it was included in the study because it can influence social prestige and the acquisition of important social and economic resources (Liu et al. 2022; Broer et al. 2019).

Secondary data on cadets' SES

Since the primary data covered individual and family aspects of SES, the task of collecting secondary data was to extract information that would further explain the primary data from the aspect of the territorial units in which the respondents reside. Therefore, data were collected for five regions of Serbia on the total population, average age of the population, population density, natural increase rate, number of illiterates, poverty rate, number of higher education peoples, total income, personal consumption, average salary, amount of investment in working capital, unemployment, and computer literacy. For this purpose, the databases and publications of the Serbian Statistical Office and the corresponding databases and publications of several international organizations were used, as those for the region of Kosovo and Metohija were not available in state statistics, as this part of the territory of Serbia has been under the temporary administration of the United Nations since 1999, based on Resolution 1244.

Overview of collected primary and secondary data

Of the total 268 cadets of the 147th and 148th classes of the Military academy, 201 responded in the survey, which represents a response rate of 75 percent. It can be considered satisfactory compared to other studies in which the participants were cadets from other countries or students of higher education institutions (Carreiras et al. 2020; Franke 2000; Dziwanowski 2020; Nair et al. 2008). An overview of the surveyed SEOs in the form of frequency distributions and percentages is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. SEC of research participants

Researched SEC	Subcategories of SEC	N = 201	
		f	%
Gender	Male	143	71.1
	Female	58	28.9
Birthplace categorization	Predominantly rural environment	61	30.3
	Semi-urban environment	52	25.9
	Predominantly urban environment	88	43.8
Regional affiliation	Belgrade region	33	16.4
	Vojvodina	28	13.9
	Šumadija and Western Serbia	82	40.8
	Southern and Eastern Serbia	52	25.9
	Kosovo and Metohija	6	3
Social background	Agricultural	12	6
	Working	107	53.2
	Clerical	15	7.5
	Business	14	7
	Military	43	21.4
	Other	10	5
Previous education	Military grammar school	96	47.8
	Gymnasium	49	24.4
	Secondary vocational school	56	27.9
Previous academic success	Excellent	64	31.8
	Very good	108	53.7
	Good	29	14.4

Source: Authors’ analysis

The data in Table 1 indicate that the majority of respondents were male (71.1%), born in urban areas (43.8%), that the majority of respondents were from Šumadija and Western Serbia (40.8%), and that the dominant social background was working-class (53.2%). The most

significant number of respondents attended the Military grammar school (47.8%), and their success in studying at the Military academy can mostly be treated as very good (53.7%). More detailed SEO was collected as secondary data on some of the basic indicators of the regions from which the respondents came, and is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. SEC of the regions from which the respondents originate

SEC of the regions from which respondents originated	Belgrade region	Vojvodina	Šumadija and Western Serbia	Southern and Eastern Serbia	Kosovo and Metohija
Population in millions	1.68	1.74	1.82	1.40	1.58
Average age	42.73	43.64	44.31	44.86	32.55
Population density per km ²	519.9	80.5	68.7	53.6	49
Natural increase	-3.7	-7.3	-7.6	-9.8	0.7
Illiteracy (%)	0.27	0.69	0.61	1.05	6
Poverty rate (%)	4	5.9	7	11.1	23
Share of highly educated people (%)	27.45	14.37	11.6	12.07	6.2
Income (in RSD)	41,708	33,571	30,956	30,509	14,472
Personal consumption (in RSD)	40,197	34,371	31,482	31,145	14,212
Average salary (in RSD)	130,541	98,165	86,940	89,202	67,260
Investment in working capital (in million euros)	7,965.58	2,955.42	1,435.49	1,716.96	2,533.63
Unemployment (%)	7.2	9.1	10.3	13.2	10.9
Computer literacy (%)	60.08	43.58	39.46	39.56	35

Sources: CEIC 2024a; CEIC 2024b; Earthly Data 2024; Standard Bank Group 2024; Regional Cooperation Council [RCC] 2022; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] n.d.; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2023a; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2024; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2025; Trading Economics 2024a; Trading Economics 2024b; Trading Economics 2024c; UNICEF 2021; Vuković and Babović 2022; World Bank Group [WBG] 2024a; World Bank Group [WBG] 2024b;

The region of Šumadija and Western Serbia has the largest population in Serbia. The population's highest average age is in Southern and Eastern Serbia. Positive natural growth is recorded only in Kosovo and Metohija, where there is also the highest percentage of illiterates, the highest rate of absolute poverty, and the lowest share of highly educated people in the total population. On the other hand, the Belgrade region is the most densely populated, has the highest income per capita, the highest personal consumption, average salaries, employment, computer literacy, and the level of investment in working capital.

Methods, techniques, and procedures for data processing and analysis

Numerous methods, techniques, and procedures were applied in data processing and analysis. The computer package was the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS). In addition to descriptive statistics, Kendall's Tau correlation, exploratory factor analysis, cluster analysis, and cross-tabulation were employed.

The aim of correlation analysis was to indicate the dependence or independence of the data (Ho 2018, 147–148). Exploratory factor analysis had a role to check for the existence of a relatively stable data structure, and to determine which variable has the most significant influence (Ruso 2009, 157). Cluster analysis had tasks to group data and form a taxonomy (Hair et al. 2019, 192–201). Primary data for each of the clusters identified by cluster analysis was presented by cross-tabulation.

RESULTS

The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 3. Due to the presence of category variables with unequal intervals between their subcategories, the coefficients of the Kendall's Tau correlations τ were calculated.¹

¹ Spearman's characteristic correlation assumes that consecutive characteristics for the trait under investigation are equidistant, while, in contrast, Kendall-Tau correlation does not assume equidistant intervals between two consecutive ranks (Cleff 2025, 113–114).

Table 3. Correlation between the researched SEC

		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Gender (1)	τ (p)	1					
Birthplace categorization (2)	τ (p)	-0.10 (0.13)	1				
Regional affiliation (3)	τ (p)	0.11 (0.10)	-0.07 (0.22)	1			
Social background (4)	τ (p)	0.01 (0.81)	0.32** (0.000)	0.01 (0.82)	1		
Previous education (5)	τ (p)	-0.17** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.94)	-0.03 (0.67)	0.01 (0.91)	1	
Previous academic success (6)	τ (p)	-0.22** (0.00)	0.06 (0.32)	-0.13* (0.03)	-0.01 (0.87)	0.03 (0.61)	1

* Correlation is statistically significant at the level of 0.05; ** Correlation is statistically significant at the level of 0.01

Source: Authors' analysis

Four statistically significant correlations were obtained (negative correlation of small strength between respondents' gender and their secondary education, $\tau = -0.17$; negative correlation of small strength between gender and success as the Military academy, $\tau = -0.22$; positive correlation of average strength between urban-rural birth place and regional affiliation, $\tau = 0.32$; negative correlation of small strength between regional affiliation and academic success at the Military academy, $\tau = -0.13$). Based on these results, it was concluded that the researched SEC represents independent factors.

Exploratory factor analysis was intended to group variables measured by different instruments into factors and isolate the one that produces the greatest effect (Hair et al. 2019, 144–147).² The obtained results are presented in Table 4.

² The exploratory factor analysis was based on the method of chief components, which is more suitable for situations in which summing up numerous diverse variables and oblique rotation is more suitable for situations when it is presumed that the factors listed in the analysis should produce a common effect (Hair et al. 2019, 144–147).

Table 4. Results of exploratory factor analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity					
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for sampling adequacy				0.62	
Bartlett test of sphericity		χ^2		51.65	
		df		15	
		p		0.00	
Total variance explained					
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	1.46	24.40	24.40	24.40	24.40
2	1.29	21.45	45.85	21.45	45.85
3	1.01	16.84	62.69	16.84	62.69
4	0.87	14.57	77.26		
5	0.74	12.28	89.55		
6	0.63	10.45	100.00		
Factors loading					
				Initial	Extracted
Gender				1.00	0.57
Birthplace categorization				1.00	0.68
Regional affiliation				1.00	0.81
Social background				1.00	0.69
Previous education				1.00	0.51
Previous academic success				1.00	0.49
Extraction method: Principal component analysis					
Rotation method: oblique					

Source: Authors’ analysis

According to the data from Table 4 the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin indicator was 0.624 at the level of $p < 0.05$, and the value of the Bartlett test of sphericity was $\chi^2 (15, n = 201) = 51.65, p = 0.00$, which confirmed the appropriateness of the analyzed data for exploratory factor analysis. Cattell’s criterion of the elbow in the plot and comparison with the Horn parallel analysis procedure results in a Monte Carlo simulation that showed that three factors could be extracted with a total percentage of explained variance of 62.69 percent. The regional affiliation of the respondents was researched using SEO with the highest factor loading, $p = 0.81$, and it was taken as the basis for cluster analysis. First, the optimal number of clusters was determined, and then the secondary data on SEC served as the criterion for setting each of the five regions into the appropriate cluster.³ These results are presented in Table 5.

³ The cluster analysis was conducted by the two-step and k-means analyses, which algorithms automatically define the optimal number of clusters, and then affiliate

Table 5. Cluster analysis results

Model summary						
Number of input variables		Number of extracted clusters		Average measure of cohesion and disjunction		
6		2		0.35		
Cluster Membership						
Case number	Variable			Cluster	Distance	
1	Belgrade region			1	17129.32	
2	Vojvodina			1	17129.32	
3	Šumadija and Western Serbia			2	10010.88	
4	Southern and Eastern Serbia			2	11078.54	
5	Kosovo and Metohija			2	20985.57	
ANOVA						
	Cluster		Error		<i>F</i> statistics	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i> ²	<i>df</i>	<i>M</i> ²	<i>df</i>		
Population	0.01	1	0.03	3	0.48	0.54
Average age	8.18	1	32.37	3	0.25	0.65
Population density	53256.53	1	33853.56	3	1.57	0.30
Natural increase	0.00	1	23.88	3	0.00	0.99
Illiteracy	5.63	1	5.72	3	0.98	0.39
Poverty rate	90.13	1	46.89	3	1.92	0.26
Share of highly educated people	132.30	1	36.17	3	3.66	0.15
Income	182350845.63	1	69824843.06	3	2.61	0.20
Personal consumption	163454689.20	1	70667374.67	3	2.31	0.23
Average salary	1324202353.20	1	271797608.00	3	4.87	0.11
Investments in working capital	15252267.86	1	4400515.72	3	3.47	0.16
Unemployment	13.33	1	2.22	3	6.00	0.09
Computer literacy	320.13	1	72.22	3	4.43	0.13

Source: Authors' analysis

Correspondingly to the data presented in Table 5, two clusters are formed, the first, the northern one, including the Belgrade and Vojvodina regions, and the second, southern cluster, including the regions of Šumadija and Western Serbia, Southern and Eastern Serbia, and Kosovo and Metohija. The highest impact on forming clusters had the following variables: unemployment, $F = 6.00$, average salary, $F = 4.87$, computer literacy, $F = 4.43$, and the share of highly educated people, $F = 3.66$.⁴

each data to some cluster based on the Euclidean distance, minimizing the sum of the squared distances between data points and suitable cluster centers (Hair et al. 2019, 218).

⁴ Robustness, i.e., validity cluster analysis, was examined via logistic regression with primary data. The aim was to examine to what extent the basic SEC explain the regional division of respondents into two clusters. The model of logistical regression, based on the results of the omnibus test $\chi^2 32.18$ (13, $N = 201$), $p = 0.00$ and the Hosmer-Lemeshaw test $\chi^2 = 9.13$ (8), $p = 0.33$, can be considered valid, i.e., that it explains 69.2 percent of the variance, thus confirming the validity of results of the cluster analysis.

To get direct insight into the distribution of the researched SEC and their subcategories into clusters, Table 6 was formed through cross-tabulation.

Table 6. Distribution of fundamental socioeconomic characteristics into clusters

Categories of SEC	Subcategories of SEC	Cluster 1 $n_1 = 61$ (30.3%)	Cluster 2 $n_2 = 140$ (69.7%)
Gender	Male, $n = 143$	35.7%	64.3%
	% in the cluster, $n = 58$	83.6%	65.7%
	Female	17.2%	82.8%
	% in the cluster	16.4%	34.3%
Birthplace categorization	Predominantly rural, $n = 61$	26.2%	73.8%
	% in the cluster	26.2%	32.1%
	Semi-urban, $n = 52$	23.1%	76.9%
	% in the cluster	19.7%	28.6%
	Predominantly urban, $n = 88$	37.5%	62.5%
	% in the cluster	54.1%	39.3%
Social background	Agricultural, $n = 12$	25.0%	75.0%
	% in the cluster	4.9%	6.4%
	Worker, $n = 12$	28.0%	72.0%
	% in the cluster	49.2%	55.0%
	Clerical, $n = 15$	40.0%	60.0%
	% in the cluster	9.8%	6.4%
	Business, $n = 14$	35.7%	64.3%
	% in the cluster	8.2%	6.4%
	Military, $n = 43$	34.9%	65.1%
	% in the cluster	24.6%	20.0%
	Other, $n = 10$	20.0%	80.0%
	% in the cluster	3.3%	5.7%
Previous education	Military grammar school, $n = 96$	28.1%	71.9%
	% in the cluster	44.3%	49.3%
	Gymnasium, $n = 49$	28.6%	71.4%
	% in the cluster	23.0%	25.0%
	Secondary vocational school, $n = 56$	35.7%	64.3%
Previous academic success	% in the cluster	32.8%	25.7%
	Excellent, $n = 64$	25.00	75.00
	% in the cluster	26.20	34.30
	Very good, $n = 108$	29.6%	70.4%
	% in the cluster	52.5%	54.3%
	Good, $n = 29$	44.8%	55.2%
	% in the cluster	21.3%	11.4%

Source: Authors' analysis

Based on the data in Table 6, it is noticeable that the participation of female respondents was twice as high in the southern cluster compared to the northern cluster, that the northern cluster had a higher participation of respondents from urban areas as well as those with a military background and respondent coming from secondary vocational schools. On the other hand, the southern cluster had a higher participation of cadets who had achieved excellent success in their previous education.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of primary data showed that the majority of the Military Academy cadet population is male, with a significant participation of girls, that almost 70 percent of cadets come from urban and semi-urban areas, that two-fifths of cadets come from Šumadija and Western Serbia alone, and that over half of the cadets have a working-class background, while about one-fifth have a military. Almost three-quarters of cadets have a high school education at a Military grammar school or a civic gymnasium, and their success at the Military Academy can be described as very good for over half of them. By including secondary data in the analysis, it was shown that the regional affiliation of the respondents is a variable that affects their division into two clusters. The first, northern cluster includes cadets originating from the Belgrade region and Vojvodina, which are the most developed parts of Serbia in terms of numerous SECs, from the unemployment rate, average salaries, to the number of computer-literate people and the share of highly educated people. The second, southern cluster includes cadets from Šumadija and Western Serbia, Southern and Eastern Serbia, and Kosovo and Metohija. In order to interpret these results, it is necessary to highlight several observations from the broader socioeconomic context.

First, the regions of the southern cluster lag behind the northern ones in overall development. The north-south divide in Serbia has deepened over the past quarter century of privatization, liberalization, and deregulation, and is currently one of the highest in Europe (Uvalić and Bartlett 2021; Manić and Mitrović 2021; Molnar 2022). Monocentric development has led to the northern cluster, which accounts for about a third of Serbia, generating more than two-thirds of the gross domestic product, and having the most investments, especially those focused on knowledge and innovation (Molnar 2022). The regions of the southern

cluster find themselves in what development economics called a “vicious circle of inequality” back in the middle of the last century.

Secondly, the southern cluster has a highly unfavorable demographic-migration trend, reflected in the mass abandonment of rural and semi-urban environments by the younger and more educated population (Jandrić et al. 2024; Sauer et al. 2019). The Šumadija and Western Serbia lose around 3,500 inhabitants annually. Southern and Eastern Serbia lose around 3,000 inhabitants, while the Belgrade region increases its population by around 5,500 annually, and the Vojvodina by around 1,000 (Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2023c).

Third, the unfavorable trends are also linked to the decline of the share of the rural population in all regions of Serbia. Thus, since 2000, their number has reduced to over 700,000 inhabitants (Macrotrends 2025). However, the sustainability of rural environments of the southern cluster is far more threatened than those in the northern cluster (Drobnjaković et al. 2022).

Fourth, in both clusters, the working-class background is highly represented. It should be borne in mind that, according to available data, industrial production in Serbia is still half of what it was in 1989, that over 800,000 jobs in industry were lost during the transition, that the liberalization of labor legislation has reduced social security of employee to a minimum, that manufacturing industry has been destroyed and deprived of the opportunity to become a sector leading economic recovery once again because its share in the national gross domestic product has been reduced to 13.5 percent (Uvalić 2021; Arsić 2013; Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] 2023b).

Fifth, 60 percent of the employed are concentrated in the northern cluster, and in the southern cluster, which makes up two-thirds of the territory of Serbia, a total of 40 percent. So, of the total number of employees in Serbia, 35.6 percent work in the Belgrade region, around 25.1 percent in the Vojvodina, 22.7 percent in the Šumadija and Western Serbia, and only 16.6 percent in the Southern and Eastern Serbia (Republički zavod za statistiku [RZS] n.d.).

One of the few similar previous studies was conducted for the needs of the Yugoslav People's Army more than half a century ago (Pajević et al. 1974). A total of 5,839 high school seniors were surveyed, of whom 14.3 percent from the narrow area of Serbia, 22 percent from Kosovo, and 10.3 percent from Vojvodina, wanted to enroll in the Military academy. The rural population and those from towns with

up to 50,000 inhabitants were the ones who decided to enroll in the Military academy. In second place were respondents of working-class origin, and only those of administrative staff origin.

If we compare the research conducted among the Military academy cadets with a few available studies from other countries, also conducted among the cadet population, several similarities and differences can be pointed out.

First, by comparing gender data, we conclude that almost the exact percentages of young men and women make up the cadet population in developed European countries (Bertram et al. 2018). This shows that, regarding this SEC, the Serbian Military Academy follows the trends in developed European countries and that the percentage of girls among the cadets of the Military academy in Belgrade is even higher than in some other European countries, in which traditional values prevail, such as Portugal, where the number of girls among cadets is 14.7 percent (Carreiras et al. 2020; Starčević 2024).

Secondly, when categorizing the birthplace of Serbian cadets on the rural-urban environment continuum, the results are similar to those in developed European countries. A total of 43.8 percent of the population of Serbian cadets, compared to 50% of the cadet population in developed European countries, such as France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Portugal, come from urban environments (Caforio and Martinez 2005; Carreiras et al. 2020). This number significantly differs from the one obtained from research conducted in some countries of Eastern Europe or the Middle East, in which the cadets of military academies usually originate from rural environments (Brown 1989; Caforio and Martinez 2005). Moreover, when examined by clusters, in the northern one, we register 54.1 percent, and in the southern 39.3 percent of participants originated from predominantly urban environments.

Thirdly, regarding the regional affiliation of cadets, we have concluded that up to two-thirds of the Military Academy in Belgrade cadets come from two regions, the Šumadija and Western Serbia, and the Southern and Eastern Serbia. This information is similar to the information obtained from the research conducted among the Turkish cadets, where around 60 percent of the cadet population originates from the Anatolia and Black Sea region, which can be compared to the aforementioned regions in Serbia, to some of the basic SEC (Brown 1989).

Fourth, over half of the cadets at the Serbian military academy come from working-class families. In this sense, there is a similarity

with the situation in the Czech Republic and Poland, where around 60 percent of cadets have the same social background. There is a significant difference compared to other countries such as Spain, Sweden, and Turkey, where the military background of the cadets is dominant (Caforio and Martinez 2005; Dziwanowski 2020; Brown 1989). The second largest social group from which Serbian cadets come is the group of families with a military tradition, and in this respect, the research conducted is most similar to that conducted among Portuguese and Polish cadets (Carreiras et al. 2020; Caforio and Martinez 2005; Dziwanowski 2020; Brown 1989).

Fifth, almost half of Serbian cadets are graduates of the Military grammar school, and a quarter are former students of civilian gymnasiums. This result differs significantly from research among cadets in Poland, where 90 percent of cadets have a Military grammar school as their previous education. Only 10 percent have a secondary vocational school, while in Turkey, the cadet population consists of 63.83 percent of those who graduated from military vocational secondary schools and 36.17 percent of those who graduated from civilian secondary schools (Dziwanowski 2020; Brown 1989).

CONCLUSION

The conducted research was guided by the question of what the SEC of the cadets of the Serbian military academy is like. The purpose of the research was to gain insight into them and describe them. In terms of gender, the majority of cadets are male, with a significant participation of girls, which is around the average in developed European countries. About 70 percent of cadets come from urban areas, and two-fifths come from Šumadija and Western Serbia. More than half of the cadets have a working-class background, and about 20 percent have military backgrounds. About 75 percent of cadets have completed a Military grammar school or a civilian gymnasium, and more than half have had outstanding education success so far. The basis for dividing cadets into clusters is their belonging to the northern or southern cluster, which coincides with the division of Serbia into a developed north and a less developed south.

The main contribution of the conducted research is the systematic presentation of the SEC of cadets of the Serbian military academy. The obtained results confirm the thesis from the research on cadets of

military academies of other countries, that in modern conditions, the composition of military academies has changed and that it is mainly made up of young people whose social background does not offer the possibility of excessive social mobility when it comes to status and prestige. About research on the cadet population in other countries, the conducted research simultaneously included more SEC. It used primary and secondary data, both in order to gain a more detailed insight into the phenomenon under study. In addition, the conducted research once again confirmed the division of Serbia into the developed north and the underdeveloped south.

In a methodological sense, the paper illustrated how primary and secondary data, with the application of numerous techniques and procedures of statistical analysis, can produce detailed information that will reveal the SEC of a population. Given that the research population was only the population of Military Academy cadets, the results obtained cannot be generalized. However, for other researchers, especially those investigating the SEO of young people or students of civilian universities, it can represent a reference point for comparison and a guide to the levels of analysis.

Regardless of its exploratory and descriptive character, this paper is one of the important attempts to point out the SEC of cadets in Serbia, as similar research has been rare since the establishment of the Military Academy. Moreover, when ones interpreting its results, it should be mainly borne in mind that military academies differ from other higher education institutions because they offer full scholarships to their students, i.e. they effectively remove the financial barrier to further education, which leads to a broader spectrum of cadets' SEC compared to civilian faculties where tuition and housing costs can be a limiting factor.

Besides the contribution to theory and other researchers, this research has several practical contributions. Data obtained from secondary sources show three things. First, depopulation is most significant in the regions where the largest cadets come. Second, there is a trend of migration from rural and semi-urban areas, from which more than half of the cadets originate. Third, there is a pronounced tendency towards reduction of social classes from which more than half of cadets come due to the deindustrialization of the economy and the reduction in the number of personnel in the Serbian Army. All of the above indicates that the problem of filling the Military

academy could be more pronounced in the future. A possible solution is comprehensive measures to improve the SES of officers, which would not consist only of increasing monthly salaries, so that military conscription would attract more young people whose social background is not only working-class or military. Implementing broader measures could positively impact the military draft of a larger number of those with higher success and those who graduated from more prestigious secondary schools. This task, which from the aspect of implementation surpasses the Military academy and the University of Defense, and from the aspect of the methods of the marketing activities that have been forced so far, should start from the fact that the high reputation of the army in society, based on tradition, is not a guarantee of sufficient and high-quality personnel.

As each study is the result of trade-offs that researchers have to make at a given time, the results of this research should be viewed in light of several limitations. First, the number of surveyed SECs collected through a survey was six, and 13 are from secondary data. Second, only two out of four classes of cadets of the Serbian military academy were included in the research, and the cadets were not classified according to the study programs they attended. Third, the presented results are part of a broader research project, and the purpose of this paper was exploratory and descriptive, so it did not include the exploration of causal relationships. Fourth, the expression of SEC in collecting primary data was subjectively based and left to the respondents. Fifth, in the comparative analysis, the results obtained were compared only with those from a few available previous studies published in English. Sixth, the analyzed data were cross-sectional, and all future studies that claim to have an explanatory character and offer insight into trends should be longitudinally based.

Regardless of the previously mentioned, the authors of this paper believe that it represents a good starting point for all further and deeper research. Therefore, future research can expand the number of studied SECs, include both initial and final year cadets, regardless of the huge differences in their socialization with the conditions of living, studying and working at the Military academy, use some of the composite measures or already tested scales for assessing SES, include data based on which the social, economic and cultural capital of the families from which the cadets come can be more precisely assessed, and consider the question of how all this is reflected in their personal

value orientations, attitudes they have towards the society and economic environment in which they live and in which they decided to become a military vocation.

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СОЦИОЕКОНОМСКЕ ОДЛИКЕ КАДЕТА ВОЈНЕ АКАДЕМИЈЕ***

Резиме

Предмет овог рада било је истраживање социоекономских одлика кадета Војне академије и покушај да се он дефинише на индивидуалном, породичном и регионалном нивоу. Циљ је био стицање увида у основне социоекономске одлике кадета, њихов опис и повезивање са ширим социоекономским контекстом. Прикупљени су примарни и секундарни подаци, а у анализи су коришћене корелациона, факторска и кластер анализа, и унакрсно табелирање. Утврђено је да регионална припадност сврстава кадета у две групе – оне који потичу из развијених региона на северу Србије и мање развијених јужних региона земље, да је учешће припадника женског пола у кадетској популацији на нивоу развијених европских земљама, да готово 70 одсто кадета потиче из урбаних и полуурбаних средина, да само из региона Шумадије и Западне Србије потиче две петине кадета, и да је надполовично социјално пореко кадета радничко, док војно чини нешто више од једне петине. Скоро три четвртине кадета као средњошколско образовање има Војну или цивилну гимназију, а успех који су

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*** Овај рад представља резултат ангажовања његових аутора у оквиру научно истраживачког пројекта ВА/ДН/1/24–26 „Вредносне оријентације и однос према традицији кадета Војне академије”.

остварили у досадашњем школовању се за надполовичан број кадета може окарактерисати као врло добар.

Кључне речи: социоекономске одлике, социоекономски статус, кадети, Војна академија, Србија.

* This paper was received on April 15, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

UDC: 355.1(497.11)+316.644-057.36

DOI: 10.5937/pnb29-58263

Original scientific paper

The Policy of National Security
(Политика националне безбедности)

Year XVI vol. 29

No. 2/2025

pp. 155-183

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CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM AND LIFESTYLES OF MEMBERS OF THE DEFENSE SECTOR***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

Consumer ethnocentrism is a form of economic patriotism and awareness of the significance of buying local products to develop the domestic economy. Since consumer habits are closely linked with consumers' lifestyles, and that lifestyles, besides socio-demographic aspects, represent an important determinant of consumer market behaviour, this paper aims to determine whether there are differences in consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles of members of the defence system compared to the civilian population. The research included 180 respondents in total, members of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces, and civilians employed in other fields of the economy. Independent variables defined in the research were gender, education, generational affiliation, and belonging to the defense system, while dependent variables were

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*** The paper was written within the project "Value Orientations and Attitude towards the Tradition of Military Academy Cadets", Military Academy, University of Defence, BA/ДХ/1/24–26.

the scores on the consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyle preferences subscales. The data was processed with the help of descriptive statistics, *t*-tests for independent samples, and linear regressions. The results show differences in preferences of specific lifestyles between members of the defense sector and civilians, but not in consumer ethnocentrism. There are also statistically significant differences regarding consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyle preferences regarding socio-demographic variables. Moreover, even the preferences of specific lifestyles, as a form of consumer behavior, have been shown as statistically significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, it is only justified to dedicate more attention to future research to examine the lifestyles and consumer habits of specific groups of inhabitants to raise their awareness of the importance of purchasing domestic products to strengthen the domestic economy.

Keywords: consumer behavior, military, Serbia, values, lifestyles, Millennials, Generation Z.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer ethnocentrism

Consumer ethnocentrism represents a form of applied economic patriotism and is a legitimate field of research in three sciences: psychology, sociology, and economy. Namely, the term ethnocentrism comes from economics. It was defined in 1906 for the first time, as “a point of view in which a person believes that the group to which they belong is the center of all events and makes their judgments based on that, with all other groups being those to which they do not feel a member and which are therefore less important” (Sumner 1906, 13). Koudelka (Koudelka 1997, 25) defines ethnocentrism as favoring one’s own culture, preference, and the attitude that all other cultures are inferior. The issue of consumer ethnocentrism emerged for the first time in the economy in 1987 when Shimp and Sharma (Shimp and Sharma 1987) defined it as “the attitude of consumers that it is a non-patriotic and immoral act to purchase foreign products since it weakens the domestic

economy and influences the loss of jobs.” Stere and Trajani believe that it represents a tendency to boycott all imported products, no matter their price and quality, due to nationalism (Stere and Trajani 2015). What is common to both terms is the assumption that they are both formed in early childhood under the influence of socialization agents (Allport 1954; MacDonald 2006; Mezirow 1997; Shimp and Sharma 1987; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). Shankarmahesh (Shankarmahesh 2006) states that four factors influence the occurrence and level of ethnocentrism: socio-psychological (patriotism, conservatism, dogmatism, etc.), economic (capitalism, economic development, life standard, etc.), political (political propaganda, historical reasons, leader manipulation, etc.), and socio-demographic (gender, age, education, amount of income, etc.).

Lifestyles

It is often the case in everyday life that we speak of “consumer lifestyle”, that is, consumerism, as a permanent habit of consumers of today, where the quality of products retrieves before the quantity, styles and fashion change at an unprecedented speed, and the availability of payment cards and online shopping in just a few clicks make spending money easier than ever, especially in the era of digital marketing, where the illusion of an ideal life (*La Dolce Vita*) is emphasized through newly founded occupations, such as “influencer” and “trend-setter”. Slišković et al. believe that the consumer lifestyle is, in fact, a “syndrome”, that is, a collection of mutually linked and intertwined personality traits, values, and attitudes (Slišković et al. 2014). Consumerism emerged as a consequence of an instant culture and led towards the formation of a consumer mentality and consumer society, which, under the influence of constant exposure to marketing of various kinds, often leads to the disease of addiction since consumerism imposes itself as a paradigm for a successful life (Žakman-Ban and Špehar Fiškuš 2016). How far we have come as a civilization is shown in the data cited by McCrindle (McCrindle 2014, 230) that there is a trend of introducing the new term – “tweens” into the generational cohorts, referring to the age from eight to twelve. In our terminology, we can speak of preadolescence, which is the primary target group of digital marketing, since the value of their

annual allowance (at that moment) in Australia alone was estimated at one billion dollars, thus making them a pretty desirable group, whose ability of reason and defense from manipulations of different kinds are relatively reduced.

Consumer ethnocentrism and consumer lifestyle are of the most tremendous significance for researching consumer habits and consumer behavior (Acikdilli, Ziemnowicz, and Bahhouth 2018; Gašević, Vranješ i Tomašević 2019; Kucukemiroglu, Harcar, and Spillan 2006; Slišković et al. 2014; Slijepčević, Perčić, and Alimpić 2025). Even though this term is widely used for layman and scientific purposes, various sciences do not uniquely define lifestyle, nor is there a unified stance regarding how many types of lifestyles there are. Besides the fact that it is deeply rooted in the fields of psychology of personality and social psychology, sociology, philosophy, economy, political science (Bögenhold 2001), the term lifestyle is also examined in the field of medical sciences, and especially sports medicine and public health and sports sciences (Ilić 2007). It is usually defined as the way someone is living (Logar-Đurić, Bročić, and Bogosavljević 1999; Gašević and Tomašević 2019) and indicates the social status of an individual, their consumer habit, and the way they spend their free time (Anderson and Golden 1984; Logar-Đurić, Bročić, and Bogosavljević 1999). On the other hand, the issue of defining and operationalization lifestyles is closely linked with the term value, as well as value orientations. In locally published research (Joksimović 1992; Kuzmanović 1986; Popadić 1995), lifestyle is, conditionally speaking, presented as the most applied value system, which is reflected in the everyday way of putting values into action while simultaneously building and organizing a life script around the values that lie in their background. In this context, the definition provided by Matić (Matić Tandarić 2021, 5), stating that “lifestyle represents a classical way of behavior which, besides the behavioral component, also includes values, identity and resources an individual possesses”, is also representative. Jensen (Jensen 2007) believes that lifestyle consists of four factors: global consumption, structural-national, and positional-subcultural, defined by socialization agents, as well as the reflection of individual identity, manifested through functioning in everyday life.

What is common to both previously defined and described constructs (consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles) is the fact that

they represent tendencies in the personality that form behavior, but, contrary to personality traits, are more prone to the influence of *Zeitgeist*. For example, in life crises on an individual or global level, consumer behavior is conditioned not only by economic parameters but social and historical circumstances. Consumer ethnocentrism is especially pronounced in times of crisis, when the threat to national identity is registered (Grant 1993; Lee, Lee, and Li 2017), bearing in mind that numerous studies point to the fact that patriotism is the most significant correlate to consumer ethnocentrism (de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998; Marinković 2017; Pavlović and Savić 2017; Sharma and Wu 2015; Vida and Reardon 2008; Zdravković, Šapić, and Filipović 2020). Patriotism can also be defined as a feeling of love towards homeland, loyalty to one's country and the pride of individuals because they hold their citizenship and are connected to it (Sharma and Wu 2015) or as love and care of individuals for their own country, at the same time including the connection with their state and its symbols (Pentz, Terblanche, and Boshoff 2017). At the same time, it holds the instrumental component (the individuals perceive themselves as citizens of this state) and the emotional component (the individuals feel that their personal values embody what is right and in accordance with their country's values).

Generation gap

One of the significant influences of *Zeitgeist* is also the development of techniques and technology, whose advances are nowadays measured by years, instead of decades and centuries. Therefore, entire cohorts, within just five years, differ greatly from each other in terms of consumer habits, technological literacy, and the values they adopt, but also in the way they spend their free time (McCrindle 2014). It has already been discussed that the digital literacy gap exists between generations and within generations, with a tendency of further intergenerational misunderstanding. McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that the lifespan was never longer than today, which leads to the fact that society was never this much dispersed according to age, and the working life was never longer and more prone to career transitions and market shocks in the nomenclature of occupations. Therefore, in sociopsychological

research, generation takes primacy over cohort as the most effective measurement of age differences. According to Salt (Salt, in foreword McCrindle 2014), a generation represents “a complex amalgam of personal demographic characteristics, shaped by wider social and political influences” (the authors of this paper would add cultural and historical influences as well). The biological definition of a generation as an “average interval or passage of time between the birth of parents and their children” is deemed as surpassed, since the period of 20 to 25 years between generations is no longer valid, primarily due to the decades-long trend of shifting the age limit for giving birth to first-borns (McCrindle 2014, 1). On the other hand, the sociopsychological definition of a generation, according to Strauss and Howe (Strauss and Howe according to McCrindle 2014, 2), would be that “generation, as a developmental category, is conditioned with specific passage of time and represents a group of people sharing a common moment and place in history, thus creating in this way their collective Persona. Therefore, McCrindle (McCrindle 2014, 1) gives advantage to sociological definitions of a generation (shortening the time span of cohorts to 15 years), “due to accelerated technological advancement of humanity and globalization processes, where specific events, trends and discoveries represent a milestone of development of not only a specific social group but the entire humanity.” He defines a generation as a “group of people born in the same time span, whose consciousness is formed by influences characteristic of this period of time and under influence of same social factors” or, simply put, as a “cohort that shares age and life, social and living circumstances, development of technology, important events and experiences” (2). Moreover, he states that our social identity is determined “(besides gender, place of residence and the culture we live in) also by the choice of lifestyle and media consumption, and in turn, collective thinking of a generation shapes consumer habits and behavior of its members” (235). His standpoint is by Inglehart’s hypothesis on socialization (Inglehart 1971), which states that with the change of generations at the same time there is a change of value system, not only in individual societies but on a global level as well. This premise was adopted by Hofstede (Hofstede 2001) as well, who stated that the differences in values among inhabitants of the same country or representatives of the same culture are the consequence of

the maturation of the generation to which an individual belongs and the effect of the period, implying that the change in the value system occurred due to sudden and unexpected circumstances, such as wars, natural catastrophes, pandemics, economic crises, etc.

McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that in the current moment, there is an entire specter of up to seven generations in the world, which are currently as follows: Builders – 1946, Boomers 1946–1964, X 1965–1979, Y 1980–1994, Z 1995–2009, Alpha 2010–2024, Beta 2025–2039. These generations' education, philosophy of life, social norms, values, lifestyles, and consumer habits quite differ. Therefore, it is important to remember this social developmental component since the life standard of inhabitants of the countries perceived as members of the “Western culture” is on the rise, but they still essentially represent nations in decline. McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) mentions Europe as an example, in which there is a high decline in natality and an increase in mortality, which will undoubtedly have a consequence, given that it is divided into up to 50 internationally recognized countries at this moment, there are huge changes in the demographic structure of the population, first regarding age, education, job market but also religion, nationality, language.

Zeitgeist

In the last few years, regarding social circumstances, there has been a global comeback of nationalism worldwide, contrary to the decades-old imperative of globalism. The nationalism at the present moment can also be manifested in the form of consumer ethnocentrism, was not an issue of survival of small countries and their economic autonomy, self-sufficiency and independence anymore (especially in African countries, where the issue of the nation is not entirely resolved, since the formal-legal independence the majority of them gained after World War Two and thanks to the Non-aligned movement did not bring along the expected economic freedom and management of one's resources). Consumer ethnocentrism has also become the central issue of the US internal and foreign policies and the program promoted by the current President Donald Trump for a few years again (*Make America Great Again – MAGA*), based on the motto of the campaign

of another Republican US President, Ronald Reagan, from 1980. The *MAGA* movement program is focused on raising economic standards and prosperity of the US, firstly the working class, reducing economic and political influences of other countries regarding the internal situation in the US and on the world political scene, with simultaneous refinement of internal traditional understanding of the American multiculturalism and the approach towards immigration policy (especially regarding the Central and Latin American countries) and reduction of the impact of globalization (especially its economic aspect) and agendas (*Diversity, equity, and inclusion – DEI*) based on the values of accepting differences, introduction of diversity into the society, enabling the society of “equal chances” and justice for all individuals and social groups that differ from the mainstream in some sort, whatever that difference might be. Moreover, economic issues and consumer behavior also represent one of the central questions of the internal and foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China, exhibited through, nowadays decades-old, platform *One Belt – One Road Initiative*, in which the Republic of Serbia actively participates (Petrović 2018; Popović i Stević 2018; Trailović 2020). So, it is not wrong to think that the *MAGA* movement is, in fact, a reaction to the *One Belt – One Road Initiative* where besides political and economic interests, sociological and psychological factors, such as attitudes which include both behavioral and emotional component of functioning of every individual, emerge as increasingly significant factors. In terms of consumer ethnocentrism, this means not only favoring domestic products upon purchase and strengthening the domestic economy in this way, but also implies holding an attitude towards products coming from other countries with which, i.e., the country has a long history of different forms of conflicts, and even wars in the past, where the archetypal, and even stereotypical perception of a nation (by an individual, form of government, etc.) directly impacts the perception and purchase potential of goods coming from that country (Marinković 2017; Pavlović and Savić 2017; Zdravković, Šapić, and Filipović 2020). On the other hand, products arriving from countries with little historical relation would be treated positively (if previous experiences between the two nations were positive) or neutral (Yagci 2001). A similar relation exists regarding certain brands (trademarks) or producers. That is why McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that the older

generations, contrary to generations Y and Z, are more inclined towards traditionalism, patriotism, and a conservative approach to purchasing, relying primarily on purchasing local products and remaining loyal to brands throughout decades.

Research problem

According to the all above mentioned, it should also bear in mind that the defense industry in the field of weapon production, despite constant wars throughout the world, is losing its primacy and that other forms of warfare, centered around the survival of capital and the possibility of active use of economic resources of a country targeted by wars and sanctions, gaining the trust of the local population and using it for the making of profit is becoming increasingly active (Petrović 2021). Economic security represents one of the subsystems of national security (Lazić 2022). On the other hand, knowledge of different aspects of values shared by the same nation might be of great importance in process decision making of different strategic documents in defence system (Stojković 2013), and defence of crucial national interests in process of privatization of strategic sectors as energetics, public health and education also, and identity matters as school textbooks and media with national coverage (Đurković 2017). So, it is not irrelevant what is the attitude of the nation towards consumer ethnocentrism, especially younger generations, as well as the active members of the security sector of different professions, whose primary mission is defence of the country from outer threats and maintenance of inner stability and defence of the Constitution and state order. Therefore, the subject of this paper is to examine consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles of members of the defense system to distinguish possible differences in comparison to the civilian population, by the stance of Havelka (Havelka 1995) that the choice of occupation is linked to the value system of the respondents. In the current research, the emphasis is more on career than the choice of the profession itself, but also on determining possible differences in socio-demographic characteristics that previous research in the world has detected and which have not been examined in this way in our population until now. Given the results of previous research, it is expected that there are differences in terms of gender, age, and level

of education regarding consumer ethnocentrism and the evaluation of lifestyles of respondents and their affiliation to the defense system. Moreover, the hypothesis, which was additionally examined, refers to the assumption that evaluating specific lifestyles, besides socio-demographic variables, can significantly predict consumer ethnocentrism as a form of consumer behavior.

METHODS

Sample: Snowball sampling – a virtual exponential non-discriminatory sample was used (Parker, Scott and Geddes 2019), which is especially suitable for examination of various groups that are highly unreachable for researchers for various reasons, such as the defense system in this case. The detailed review of the sample is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample¹

Defence System Affiliation		Gender		Generation		Education Level	
Yes	No	Male	Female	Y (1981–1996)	Z (1996–2005)	III and IV	VI and VII
79	101	80	100	52	128	43	137
56.1%	43.9%	44.4%	55.6%	28.9%	71.1%	23.9%	76.1%

Source: The Author’s analysis

Research variables:

- 1. Independent variables: defense system affiliation (member of the system or civilian), gender (male or female), age (Generation Y or Generation Z representative), education (III and IV level of education or VI and VII level).
- 2. Dependent variables: consumer ethnocentrism defined through scores and subscales of tendencies towards ethnocentrism and evaluation of ten offered lifestyles.

¹ Procedure: Participation in research was voluntary and anonymous. All respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and the fact that they could refuse to participate in the research and that they could give up filling out the questionnaire at any moment. The research was conducted online, during August and September 2024.

Instruments:

a) The lifestyle scale (Popadić 1995) describes ten lifestyles. The respondents were asked to provide an answer to the five-level Likert scale of evaluation to which extent it is important to them to live in the described lifestyle, which represents a modification about the original instrument in which the lifestyle preference – which lifestyle the respondents would like to live (1 – I do not agree at all to 5 – I agree entirely) is emphasized. The scale included ten lifestyles: Familial-sentimental style, Altruistic orientation, Cognitive style, Utilitarian style, Popularity-oriented, Egoistic orientation, Promethean activism, Hedonistic orientation, Religious-traditional style, and Power-oriented lifestyle. A higher arithmetic mean indicates a greater importance of the measured lifestyle. Also, the part of the instrument that refers to the lifestyles that respondents like the most and least, as well as the current lifestyle, was omitted due to the confidentiality of data related to members of the defense system.

b) Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale (*CEESCALE*) (Siamagka and Balabanis 2015) is multidimensional and consists of five subscales: Prosociality, Cognition, Insecurity, Reflexiveness, Habituation.

Data processing: Data were obtained by SPSS 22 (descriptives, t tests for independent samples, and linear regression).

RESULTS

In Table 2, an overview of the descriptive statistics for the *CEESCALE* is provided. All subscales showed an adequate level of internal consistency (0.76–0.86). Respondents who were not members of the defense system had the highest score on the Prosociality scale, while the members of the defense system exhibited the highest scores on the Habituation subscale. It should be mentioned that scores on all subscales of the *CEESCALE* were higher among respondents who were not affiliated with the defense system. However, no statistically significant differences emerged. Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences according to gender: males reached the highest scores on the Prosociality scale, while women reached the highest scores on the Habituation scale. Both genders had the highest scores on the Cognition scale.

On the other hand, the results showed that there are significant differences in the Prosociality ($t = -2.753$, $df = 177$, $p < .007$) and Habituation ($t = -2.452$, $df = 174$, $p < .015$) scales when speaking of the age of respondents. Representatives of Generation Y ($M = 3.99$) reached higher scores than Generation Z ($M = 3.63$) on the Prosociality scale. Moreover, representatives of Generation Y ($M = 3.91$) reached higher scores than Generation Z ($M = 3.58$) on the Habituation subscale.

The results showed statistically significant differences in the Insecurity ($t = -2.050$, $df = 177$, $p < .042$) and Reflexiveness ($t = -3.245$, $df = 178$, $p < .001$) subscales. The respondents with a lower education level ($M = 3.10$) reached lower scores than those with a higher level of education ($M = 3.40$) on the Insecurity subscale. Moreover, the respondents with a lower education level ($M = 3.13$) reached lower scores than those with a higher education level ($M = 3.58$) on the Reflexiveness subscale.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of subscales of the Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale

Subscales	Military		Civilian		Men		Women		Generation Y		Generation Z		Levels III and IV		Levels VI and VII	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Prosociality	3.60	.85	3.83	.77	3.76	.76	3.71	.85	3.99	.75	3.63	.82	3.67	.81	3.75	.82
Cognition	3.11	.96	3.19	1.00	3.15	.96	3.16	1.00	3.31	1.09	3.09	.93	3.05	1.04	3.19	.96
Insecurity	3.26	.72	3.38	.94	3.29	.95	3.36	.77	3.49	.91	3.26	.82	3.10	.78	3.40	.87
Reflexiveness	3.42	.88	3.56	.88	3.45	.94	3.54	.83	3.69	1.03	3.42	.80	3.13	.99	3.62	.81
Habituation	3.64	.89	3.70	.81	3.59	.87	3.74	.81	3.91	.80	3.58	.84	3.51	.97	3.72	.80

Source: The author’s analysis

It turned out that the defense system affiliation is the most important factor of individual differences regarding lifestyle importance. Namely, statistically significant differences were acquired regarding Cognitive ($t = 2.554$, $df = 177$, $p < .011$), Utilitarian style ($t = 2.612$, $df = 178$, $p < .010$) and Popularity-oriented ($t = 2.580$, $df = 178$, $p < .000$) importance. Members of the defense system reached statistically significantly lower scores on the Cognitive ($M = 3.70$), Utilitarian style ($M = 3.58$) and popularity-oriented style ($M = 2.47$) in comparison to the civilians: Cognitive ($M = 4.06$), Utilitarian style ($M = 3.98$) and Popularity-oriented style ($M = 3.15$). It should be mentioned that for both groups of respondents, the familial-sentimental lifestyle was

the most important, but the least important lifestyle for members of the system was a Popularity-oriented and a Power-oriented style for the civilians.

Regarding gender, it turned out that there are statistically significant differences regarding the importance of a Power-oriented lifestyle ($t = 2.557$, $df = 178$, $p < .011$). Men ($M = 3.32$) value this lifestyle more than women ($M = 2.90$). Moreover, for both groups of respondents, the most significant lifestyle was familial-sentimental, while the Popularity-oriented lifestyle was the least significant among men, while among women, it was the Power-oriented lifestyle. Regarding age, it turned out that there is statistically significant importance of the Utilitarian style ($t = -2.277$, $df = 178$, $p < .024$). Members of Generation Y ($M = 4.08$) value this lifestyle more than Generation Z ($M = 3.69$). Moreover, for both groups of respondents, the most significant lifestyle is Familial-sentimental, and the least important lifestyle of Popularity-oriented. When speaking of education, it turned out that there are statistically significant differences in the importance of Familial-sentimental lifestyle ($t = -3.020$, $df = 178$, $p < .003$). The respondents with a lower level of education ($M = 4.09$) value this lifestyle less than the respondents with a higher level of education ($M = 4.50$), even though for both groups of respondents, this lifestyle was considered the most significant. Moreover, both groups of respondents considered the Popularity-oriented lifestyle the least important.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of lifestyles importance

Lifestyle	Military		Civilian		Men		Women		Generation Y		Generation Z		Levels III & IV		Levels VI & VII	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Familial-sentimental style	4.51	.73	4.32	.81	4.31	.89	4.47	.67	4.35	.97	4.42	.69	4.09	1.06	4.50	.64
Altruistic orientation	3.90	.94	4.13	.87	4.05	.79	4.01	.99	3.94	1.07	4.06	.83	4.05	1.02	4.02	.87
Cognitive style	3.70	.98	4.06	.87	3.89	.93	3.92	.94	3.90	1.03	3.90	.89	3.76	.98	3.95	.92
Utilitarian style	3.58	1.07	3.98	.97	3.91	1.06	3.72	1.00	4.08	1.06	3.69	1.00	3.86	1.19	3.79	.98
Popularity-oriented	2.47	1.16	3.15	1.19	2.77	1.30	2.91	1.15	2.81	1.31	2.87	1.19	3.09	1.29	2.77	1.19
Egoistic orientation	4.01	.99	3.99	.94	4.14	.88	3.89	1.01	4.11	.81	3.95	1.02	3.79	1.12	4.06	.90
Promethean activism	3.90	.84	4.05	1.04	4.09	.89	3.90	1.01	4.04	.99	3.96	.95	3.95	1.00	3.99	.95
Hedonistic orientation	3.61	1.17	3.89	.87	3.82	.95	3.72	1.07	3.69	.98	3.80	1.04	3.74	1.07	3.77	1.00
Religious-traditional style	4.21	.78	4.11	.90	4.15	.90	4.16	.81	4.10	.99	4.18	.79	4.00	1.09	4.20	.76
Power-oriented	3.15	1.06	3.04	1.17	3.32	1.13	2.90	1.09	3.29	1.05	3.01	1.15	3.23	1.15	3.04	1.12

Source: The author's analysis.

In the prediction of individual aspects of consumer ethnocentrism, it turned out that, to different extents, sociodemographic variables and lifestyle importance are important predictors (Table 4). Prosociality was a subscale whose score could have been predicted to the greatest extent based on the knowledge of the importance of Promethean activism and the age of the respondents. Members of Generation Z who valued Promethean activism more, most significantly, tended to the prosocial aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the subscale of cognition could have been predicted exclusively based on the knowledge of the Promethean activism importance: the higher importance of this style automatically implied a higher level of the cognitive aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the Insecurity subscale could have been predicted with the help of knowledge of the importance of lifestyles among respondents (Popularity-oriented and Promethean activism), as well as based on the knowledge of their socio-demographic traits (age and education). The level of insecurity among the respondents was, to the highest extent, conditioned by the significance of the Promethean activism. Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued a more Popularity-oriented lifestyle and Promethean activism reached higher results on the subscale of the Insecurity aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the Reflexiveness subscale could have been predicted with the help of the significance of the respondents' lifestyle (Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism) and based on the knowledge of their sociodemographic traits (age and education). To the greatest extent, the level of Reflexiveness among the respondents was conditioned by the significance of Promethean activism. The members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued a more Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism scored higher on the subscale of the Reflexiveness aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the subscale of Habitation could have been predicted to a greater extent with the help of the significance of respondents' lifestyles (Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism, Population-oriented and Power-oriented lifestyles) than based on the knowledge of their age. The level of aspect of Habituation of consumer ethnocentrism was conditioned to the greatest extent by the significance of the Familial lifestyle. Members of Generation Y who valued the Familial lifestyle,

Promethean activism, and Popularity-oriented lifestyle scored higher on the subscale of the aspect of Habituation of consumer ethnocentrism.

Table 4. Predictors of results on the subscales of the Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale

	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p	Partial	p
Prosociality							
Generational affiliation	.605	.366	.311	6.715	.000	.245	.002
Promethean activism						.380	.000
Cognitivity							
Promethean activism	.427	.182	.113	2.615	.002	.199	.010
Insecurity							
Generational affiliation	.519	.270	.207	4.300	.000	.179	.022
Education						.182	.019
Popularity-oriented						.219	.005
Promethean activism						.294	.000
Reflexiveness							
Generational affiliation	.537	.288	.227	4.724	.000	.198	.011
Education						.231	.003
Familial-sentimental lifestyle						.253	.001
Promethean activism						.264	.001
Habituation							
Generational affiliation	.534	.285	.222	4.553	.000	.252	.001
Familial-sentimental lifestyle						.274	.000
Popularity-oriented						.222	.000
Promethean activism						.170	.031
Power-oriented						-.180	.022

Source: The Author's analysis.

DISCUSSION

The highest values on the Prosociality subscale on the total sample point to the fact that (bearing in mind that the scale is being used for the first time in Serbian sample) there is a high level of patriotism and ethnocentrism, which did not emerge based on previously cognitively formed schemes, and that the purchase choice is not determined exclusively by the country of origin, since the lowest scores were present on the Cognitivity subscale. Bearing in mind the fact that statistically significant differences among respondents regarding defense system

affiliation were not acquired, these findings can be treated in the context of the broader patriotism of respondents and not in the context of their profession: employment in defence system can be caused by other reasons, not only by patriotism (Nikolić 2024). The lack of statistically significant differences in terms of gender, speaking of consumer ethnocentrism, it is in accordance with the results acquired by some researchers (Bečić 2016; de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998), but it is not in accordance with researchers who register a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism among women (Erdogan and Uzkurt 2010; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Othman, Ong, and Wong 2008; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013), while others register a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism among men (Habibur Rahman, Morshed, and Takdir Hossan 2011; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013).

Members of Generation Y scored higher about Generation Z on the subscales of Proportionality and Habituation, which is entirely in accordance with the development of their personalities, bearing in mind that at older age, altruism, community orientation and cooperation rise, as well as the fact that these generations were less mundialist and globalist oriented due to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the rise of national consciousness, but also the unavailability of digital technologies based on the use of the Internet in the earliest age. Moreover, foreign research also stresses that ethnocentrism grows with old age (Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013; Hsu and Nien 2008; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa, and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013; Tragos 1998).

This resulted in the respondents with a lower level of education scoring lower in comparison to the respondents with a higher level of education on the subscales of Insecurity and Reflexiveness, which is in accordance with the results acquired by other researchers (Bečić 2016; Habibur Rahman, Morshed, and Takdir Hossan 2011; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013), even though there is research that proves the opposite: that the higher level of education is linked with a lower level of consumer ethnocentrism (de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998; Hsu and Nien 2008; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa, and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Shankarmahesh 2006; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). The result acquired in this research can be explained by the fact that the respondents with lower education, just because of the lack of education and training, are less conscious of the significance the purchase of local products can have on the increase of their own, but

also state revenue through the capital which remains within the borders of Serbia in the form of acquisition of raw materials, workforce, tolls, living expenses, fees and taxes, instead of importing the end product, thus generating revenue for other countries. Therefore, it seems that campaigns directed towards purchasing local products in the previous period were not created well enough to make this message clear to the less educated segments of the population.² Other authors also emphasize the significance of educating consumers regarding socioeconomic situations in the world and the country regarding purchasing decisions (Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013).

Speaking of lifestyle importance, both generations rated the Familial-sentimental lifestyle as the most significant and the Popularity-oriented lifestyle as the least significant, which is surprising in the era of social networks, where it is more difficult to remain anonymous than to become famous. On the other hand, Generations Y and Z are in the stadium when the majority of them have formed their nuclear families.

² There was a long-term campaign in Serbia, “Buy domestic products - rebuild Serbia”, 2004–2010 (Vlada Republike Srbije [VRS] 2004; Kankaraš Trklja 2017). Its real effects failed, although the main idea was good, since it was primarily informative and promotion-oriented. However, bearing in mind that the Law on trade does not permit law solutions which could enable direct impact of the state in mercantile freedom, all merchants and trade must have equal treatment: the state cannot directly interfere in trade freedom. (Marinković 2015). On the other hand, through different campaigns, numerous associations have been trying to emphasize the importance of this problem, pointing out to the citizens the positive effects of buying domestic products and services. However, these campaigns rest without significant effects (a similar situation is in the Republic of North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro), in contrast to Croatia, whose governments decide on a long-term strategy, based on the activities of the Croatian Chamber of Economy since 1997. Their campaign “Let’s Buy Croatian”, supported by trademarks “Croatian creation” and “Croatian quality” (Hrvatska gospodarska komora n.d.). The effects of conducted campaign are visible longterm, in generation terms: 95.7% of Z generation, whenever the price was equal purchase domestic products and services (71.96% of them make the purchase decision based on these two criteria) since it means that even 95% of the income, through different channels, stayed in country of origin (Kankaraš Trklja 2023). Data showed that 94.8% Croatian consumers which belong to the Z generation is lead by ideas of patriotism and consumer ethnocentrism in recommending of buying domestic products to their family members and friends, what is by McCrindle point that generation Z is characterised by high level of social activism (Hrvatski radio–Radio Zadar 2024). Also, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia in 2020 initiated the project “Created in Serbia” and the “Housekeeper” trademark (Večernje novosti 2025), but there is no exact data from the institutions about changing the trends in consumer behavior in Serbia that could be compared.

Members of Generation Y value the Utilitarian lifestyle more than Generation Z, which means they are oriented towards ensuring material security for themselves and their families. The situation is the same regarding comparison with the level of education. Still, respondents with a lower level of education value the Familial-sentimental lifestyle less, which means that family values are linked with the level of education and a wider level of importance of social responsibility. Even though the Familial-sentimental lifestyle is the most important one for both genders, men more than women value a Power-oriented lifestyle, which is in accordance with still quite conservative attitudes present in Serbian culture regarding gender roles and jobs that are generally acceptable for women and their roles in raising their families.

Affiliation to the defense system turned out to be the most significant factor of individual differences regarding lifestyle valuation, which confirms Havelka's hypotheses of correlation of values and occupations and that their relation is two-tailed and mutual: values of an individual affects the choice of occupation, but affiliation to a specific profession (through working experience and with the passage of time) also affects the modification of the individual's value system, thus making them contextually dependent despite their relative temporal stability in terms of priority, intensity, behavioral manifestation, and even the occurrence of new values in an individual (Havelka 1995). In his research, Havelka (Havelka 1995) came across results that personal specialization, religiousness, and media popularity were the least important values in all contexts researched, which is in accordance with the results acquired from the sample of members of the defence system. Namely, members of the defense system valued less the Cognitive, Utilitarian and Popularity-oriented lifestyles, which can be directly treated as the consequence of their occupation, since in the defence system, far more importance is attached to rules and norms, as well as conservatism, which makes the transformation of the value system less susceptible to changes within this system, while less importance is attached to the acquisition of knowledge, especially general knowledge. Moreover, the job of a member of the defense system can hardly be seen as a highly profitable profession that can provide an individual with luxury and wealth, which are the fundamental strivings of individuals who prefer the Utilitarian lifestyle. All the same, in the defense system, popularity

in the sense of public appearances and highlighting one's personality is not something that is perceived as highly desirable. Moreover, there is a tendency to emphasize mediocrity as a measure of group cohesiveness and the compactness of the defense system (Kostić 2000).

Members of Generation Z who valued the Promethean activism more had, to the greatest extent, a tendency towards the prosocial aspect of consumer ethnocentrism since they were more prepared to put their social activism into the function of economically expressed patriotism, which makes them more ready to engage in a concrete plan. The Cognitive dimension of ethnocentrism could also be predicted based on Promethean activism: the respondents who are prone to different forms of social activism were also more ready to buy local products and services, i.e., to value the product and purchase them about the country of origin, which is listed as significant factors by other research as well (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004; Good and Huddleston 1995; Shankarmahesh 2006; Vida and Damjan 2000).

Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued Popularity-oriented lifestyle and Promethean activism more scored higher on the subscale of the insecurity aspect of consumer ethnocentrism, which means that they were more ready to actively directly engage, personally and socially, in purchasing local products and use the service sector at the moment when they perceive that the economic stability of the country is endangered in any way, thus acquiring secondary benefit through ensuring reputation and influence in the society through active participation, and therefore, become more socially accepted.

Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued Familial-sentimental lifestyle and Promethean activism more scored higher on the subscale of Reflexiveness aspect of the consumer ethnocentrism, which means that creating of their own nuclear family and readiness for social engagement reactivated their consumer habits which were previously formed in their childhood and based on consumer ethnocentrism. Members of Generation Y seem to want to revitalize some of the values present in their upbringing, most likely in the form of loyalty to certain brands, whose validity and personal value they want to show to their descendants.

Members of Generation Y who valued a Familial-sentimental lifestyle, Promethean activism, and Popularity-oriented lifestyle, and did not value a highly Power-oriented lifestyle, scored higher on the subscale of Habituation aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. Given that on the habituation dimension, patriotism and consumer ethnocentrism are perceived as moral norms of a society, older respondents who are oriented towards their own nuclear families and more oriented towards gaining popularity in the society, and less oriented towards their own status and position were more prepared to actively promote and use local products and services, in their nuclear families and among their peers who, among these two generations, according to McCrindle (McCrindle 2014), possess even higher influence on behavior and beliefs of their members than the family. This result is in accordance with his attitude that members of Generation Y are prone to purchasing local products in local stores, which, in turn, contributes to strengthening their personal identity and sense of belonging to the local community. Moreover, he believes that the Millennials (Generation Y) go through life led by their personal interests and previously adopted values (hedonism, globalism and tolerance, social consciousness, and social activism).

CONCLUSION

In a moment when the political and economic situations in the world have never been more prone to sudden, mutually conditioned changes, besides standard criteria (gender and education), generational affiliation can contribute to a better understanding of consumer behavior and its prediction, not only in the context of valorization and adoption of lifestyles but also active promotion of values they based on. On the other hand, profession choice greatly shapes the lifestyle chosen by an individual. There is an assumption that the profession choice in the defense system is, at least to a certain extent, determined by the level of patriotism of an individual and that this patriotism would manifest in other fields of life as well, i.e., consumer habits defined through consumer ethnocentrism. In this research, the results show that Prosociality, as a form of consumer ethnocentrism referring to the readiness to help and sacrifice oneself for their nation, is not linked to patriotism manifested as affiliation to the defense system. On the other

hand, belonging to the defense system is an important factor for the valorization of lifestyles such as Cognitive, Utilitarian and Popularity-oriented lifestyles, which are perceived among this population as less important ways of spending one's life, while at the same time, the values on which these lifestyles are based on are perceived as less important. Generation and education turned out to be more significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism than gender. The research results show that the most significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism among respondents were generation and Promethean activism, i.e., the readiness to direct participation in social life and the willingness to express one's attitude and shape the society by the incorporated values of an individual, it seems, generally distinguishes the Millennials in Serbia. On the other side, members of Generation Z who valued more Promethean activism were more ready to put their personal social activism in the service of promoting consumer ethnocentrism as a form of economic patriotism. In further research, it is necessary to examine in depth the correlation of generational affiliation and different forms of patriotism and conduct research about various aspects of values among the youth in Serbia to investigate the current social moment and use the opportunity to strengthen the economic potential of Serbia as best as possible.

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ПОТРОШАЧКИ ЕТНОЦЕНТРИЗАМ И ЖИВОТНИ СТИЛОВИ ПРИПАДНИКА СЕКТОРА ОДБРАНЕ***

Резиме

Потрошачки етноцентризам представља вид економског патриотизма и свести о значају куповине домаћих производа за развој домаће привреде и економије. С обзиром на то да су потрошачке навике блиско повезане са начином живота потрошача, те да су животни стилови, поред социјалнодемографских аспеката, битна одредница тржишног понашања потрошача, циљ овог рада је био да се утврди да ли постоје разлике по питању потрошачког етноцентризма и животних стилова припадника система одбране у односу на цивилну популацију. Истраживањем је обухваћено укупно 180 испитаника, припадника Министарства одбране и Војске Србије и цивилних лица која су запослена у другим гранама привреде. Независне варијабле у истраживању су биле пол, образовање, генерацијска припадност и припадност систему одбране, а зависне варијабле су биле скорови на субскалама потрошачког етноцентризма и преференција животних стилова. Подаци су обрађени помоћу дескриптивне статистике, т теста за независне узорке и линеарне регресије. Резултати су показали да су постоје разлике у преференцијама појединих животних стилова између припадника сектора одбране и цивила, али не и потрошачког етноцентризма, као и да постоје статистички значајне разлике по питању потрошачког етноцентризма и преференције животних

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*** Рад је настао у оквиру пројекта „Вредносне оријентације и однос према традицији кадета Војне академије”, Војна академија, Универзитет одбране, ВА/ДХ/1/24–26.

стилова и када су у питању социјалнодемографске варијабле. Штавише и преференције појединих животних стилова, као вид понашања потрошача, показале су се као статистички значајни предиктори потрошачког етноцентризма. Стога је оправдано више пажње у будућим истраживањима посветити изучавању животних стилова и потрошачких навика одређених групација становништва, како би се код њих подигла свест значају куповине домаћих производа у сврху оснаживања домаће привреде.

Кључне речи: понашање потрошача, војска, Србија, вредности, животни стилови, Миленијалци, генерација Z.

* This paper was received on April 16, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

UDC: 355.48+930.85(339.7)"1532"

DOI: 10.5937/pnb29-58132

Original scientific paper

The Policy of National Security
(Политика националне безбедности)

Year XVI vol. 29

No. 2/2025

pp. 185-201

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THE BATTLE OF CAJAMARCA: THE CIVILIZATIONAL COST OF MILITARY (MIS)EDUCATION**

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

This paper analyses the Battle of Cajamarca as a paradigmatic example of the civilizational cost of military miseducation. Exploring the context, course, and consequences of the battle between the Spanish conquistadors led by Pizarro and the Inca, commanded by the divine ruler Atahualpa, the author argues that the victory of the drastically outnumbered Spanish force over the Inca army was not merely the result of technological and tactical superiority, but primarily a consequence of the Spanish commanders' superior educational tradition, including military education in the broader sense. Through the analysis of advantages in weaponry, tactics, and the foundations for strategic decision-making on both sides, the author demonstrates that the Spanish conquistadors derived their advantage from a wide array of knowledge – military engineering, tactics, the social sciences, and a deep understanding of enemy culture – while the Inca, deprived of literacy and an institutionalized educational system, relied on superstition and improvisation. The author concludes that this battle must not remain a mere historical curiosity but should serve

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** This paper is a result of research conducted in the research project of the Strategic Research Institute – “Military Profession in Serbia in the Contemporary Security Environment” (ИСИ/ДХ/3/24-26).

as a warning about the necessity of systematic, high-level intellectual military education in modern armed forces to prevent potential strategic catastrophes in future conflicts – catastrophes that could mark the end of a culture or even an entire civilization.

Keywords: military education, military engineering, tactics, strategic-level education, Battle of Cajamarca, Inca Empire, conquistadors.

INTRODUCTION

History of civilizational-wise significant changes and shifts might be *prima facie* seen as a centuries-old story about a series of single and decisive events that changed the course of history and shaped the direction of movement of our species. History textbooks are filled with big and significant single events, findings, discoveries, natural disasters and battles, and related names of magnificent people who seemingly independently influenced the future of entire nations, peoples, and civilizations. However, without in any way diminishing the true historical significance of individuals who are nowadays part of a general culture of humanity, as well as some central events of our exciting story, it seems incredibly naive to perceive historically paradigmatic changes as products of exclusively one event or one man, no matter their significance. Significant phenomena and events, as a rule, represent a final critical juncture of the eruption of numerous accumulated deep causes and motives that, quite possibly, accumulate and precipitate for decades and centuries, and their articulation into one concrete event cannot be stopped or postponed.

One can get the impression that this is very clearly evident, precisely in observing the history of political movements of societies and their internal or mutual conflicts. Even though this path of a long historical movement is painted by moments that represent turning points – great revolutions, uprisings, combats, battles, invasions, campaigns, and finally wars – they are almost definitely only a crown of long-term and, above all, complex processes that have been simmering for decades or even centuries under the seemingly calm surface. One such symbolic turning point in the history of an entire civilization indeed is the famous Battle of Cajamarca from the beginning of the 16th century, which, according to the majority of authors who dedicated their careers to researching the

Inca civilization in South America, has marked the point in which begun the end of an entire relatively developed civilization. Still, following the logic of the necessity of deeper reasons and causes of every grand and turning point in history, the Battle of Cajamarca should be perceived as an articulation of many factors that led to the military breakdown of an immensely superior force in numbers. Among numerous factors that contributed to the defeat of the Inca army, of which some have been examined and explained in detail by researchers specialized for this period and/or the Inca civilization, special attention is given to the influence of (mis)education of warriors-participants of this battle on its outcome, and thus the introduction into the collapse of the entire civilization. A look at the impact of (lack of) education in the sphere of military affairs, and related spheres, in the Battle of Cajamarca can still be used today, after almost five centuries, as an exceptional reflection on the importance of military education in all societies, as well as the potentially cataclysmic cost of its lack today.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE BATTLE OF CAJAMARCA

In the rich history of human civilization, one phenomenon is rarely examined as essentially and epochally significant as the entire series of natural and social-humanist sciences is with Columbus's discovery of the "new world". Namely, the "discovery" of America, i.e., Northern, Central and South America, by European sailors at the end of the 15th century marked an epochal change and the beginning of a new phase in perceiving and examining the world – from the perspective of geography and cartography, the perception of the appearance of the planet was completely changed; from the standpoint of biology begun the era of the so-called "Columbus's exchange" of flora and fauna and new genetic combinations; from the perspective of anthropology and sociology, almost everything we knew of societies and cultures had been turned upside down; from the standpoint of economy, the world was in a completely new beginning of the trade process, exploitation of resources, etc. Still, it seems that the significance of this phenomenon is best illustrated in the perception of this phenomenon from the standpoint of history as a science, since indeed the discovery of America is taken as the moment that marks the end of the Middle and the beginning of the New Century.

Not long after the “discovery” of the new world did one of the most significant and, at the same time, most controversial processes in the known history of humankind begin, which social sciences explain not only as a military imperial endeavor but also as a process of an essential and complete transformation of social and economic relations, and the culture as well, not only of the undiscovered but also until then known “Old” World. Of course, we are speaking of the proselytizing “conquest” of America by the Spanish conquistadors with the declared goal of noble civilizing and Christianizing “savage” peoples, with the inevitable “collateral” and profane reward in the form of gold and adventurous glory. Even though in the first years upon the discovery of America, the Spanish expeditions conquered Caribbean islands such as Cuba and Haiti, the first grand success and triumph of conquistadors against one powerful empire was Cortés’s conquest over contemporary Mexico, i.e., the then-empire of the Aztecs. Already in 1519, that is, less than 30 years after Columbus discovered America, the famous Spanish conquistador Hernan Korteز succeeded in defeating the Aztec emperor Moctezuma II and taking over the capital Tenochtitlan, which soon marked the fall of one grand empire of the new world under the boots of a small expedition that came from the old one. The second big American civilization, which succeeded in establishing the biggest empire of the New World and the entire planet at that moment, was the Inca civilization (Cartwright 2016). At its peak in the early 16th century, the Inca empire, Tawantinsuyo, occupied a significant part of South America, primarily the present-day Peru, Chile, and Ecuador territories. The rapid collapse of the Inca Empire marked the beginning of the end of an entire civilization, opening up the path for European empires and the spread of Europeans onto the newly discovered continent, which has remained until present days an overseas outpost of European religion, culture, and the entire European civilization.

CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS AT CAJAMARCA

The battle in the city of Cajamarca on the Peruvian plateau on November 16, 1532, in the history of warfare, is marked as one of the 100 most significant battles ever led (Davis 2001, 190–194). This battle’s significance and general historical importance “can be sought at many levels, where different analyses could certainly be reached” (Sowell 1993, 68), given that it is an event that has shaped the future of a continent and

civilization at different levels. However, from the narrow perspective of military science, this battle is surely that significant and precious for research primarily because, in this battle, the victory was taken by the side which was 476 times (!) smaller in number than the opponent, that is, it is “one of the seemingly ‘most impossible’ episodes in the history of warfare (Guilmartin 1991, 36).

Francisco Pizarro (1478–1541), besides Hernán Cortés, by all means, the most famous Spanish conquistador, left in September 1532 his base in San Miguel de Piura on the west coast of South America towards the Andes and the city of Cajamarca, which he reached with his 168 soldiers¹ on November 15. To the surprise of the Spanish, the city was abandoned entirely since the Inca forces retreated to a hill near the city. At the head of the Inca army, which numbered an impressive 80,000 soldiers, was the god-emperor Atahualpa himself, with his entire court retinue and imperial officials. The conquistadors entered the abandoned city and took over the objects surrounding the central city square. After a sleepless night, Pizarro called the god-emperor Atahualpa to meet in Cajamarca on the central city square. Deployed and hidden in the buildings around the square, the Spanish waited for Atahualpa to enter the city with around 6,000 soldiers, and after a short dispute between Atahualpa and the Dominican friar who accompanied Pizarro,² they attacked their enemies from an ambush. In an attack in which the Spanish used cavalry, infantry, cannons, and rifles, all 6,000–7,000 of Atahualpa’s soldiers were killed in less than an hour while he was captured (Kubler 1945, 419). Not only that not a single Spanish soldier was killed,³ and the conquistadors asserted that only the night saved the rest of Atahualpa’s army outside the city from destruction (Dajmond 2022, 86). Pizarro kept Atahualpa in captivity for almost eight months, all until he extracted an incredible ransom in gold and silver from the Incas. Still, even after receiving everything he asked as the price for the ransom of the god-emperor, on July 26, 1533, Pizarro finally executed Atahualpa. The Battle

¹ Pizarro’s “unit” consisted of 106 infantrymen and 62 cavalries, from which Pizarro also had two cannons (Cartwright 2016).

² According to historical sources, Valverde gifted Atahualpa with the *Holy Scripture*, which the leader of the Incas threw to the ground, angry with the fact that anyone even talked about some “other” God in his presence. Valverde then angrily called on Pizarro to order an attack due to the great insult to Christianity that Atahualpa had committed since he was “not impressed” with the word of God (Seed 1991, 17).

³ The only recorded injury was a cut sustained by Pizarro himself, caused by a careless swing of the sword by one of the conquistadors (Davis 2001, 193).

of Cajamarca and the death of Atahualpa were the introduction to the further advance of the conquistadors and the final collapse of the Inca Empire, which followed soon. How was such an outcome even possible, and which factors led to a completely contra-intuitive dissolution of the conflict, in which a little bit less than 200 Spanish triumphed over the 80,000 soldiers of the Inca Empire? Finally, how could such a mighty empire, counting more than ten million people, be destroyed that fast by a few hundred Spanish (Wachtel 2008, 207)?

FACTORS AND CAUSES OF PIZZARO'S “IMPOSSIBLE” VICTORY

Every reductive monocausal explanation of any complex phenomenon by the necessity dictated by nature is shallow, superficial, and, in essence, wrong. When speaking of historically significant phenomena in which thousands of people participate and whose consequences and implications concern tens of millions, it is clear how pointless it would be to seek one unique and singular cause/reason. In the context of our research, this does not refer solely to the attempt at explaining the entire empire and civilization numbering more than ten million people, in which more than 30 languages are spoken, but also any attempt to explain the outcome of the Battle of Cajamarca by reducing it to one cause, no matter how attractive and comfortable as a “solution” to the problem of explaining one completely unexpected outcome of the clash of 168 and 80,000 people. The weakness and collapse of the Inca Empire were certainly not caused *solely* by heavy defeat in this battle, nor *solely* by the death of Atahualpa – the internal weaknesses of the empire were evident even before November 16, 1532. According to Conrad and Demarest, the internal “economic structure and religious ideology of the Tawantinsuyu Empire” was not sustainable and led to economic collapse (Guilmartin 1991, 40); fierce civil war between the brothers-pretenders to the throne – Atahualpa and Huáscar⁴ significantly weakened the empire from inside, while, according to the most significant interpreters of the said period, exactly this weakness led to the Atahualpa’s decision to let Pizarro’s men even to start their journey towards Cajamarca and his misjudgment about potential allies in the fight against his brother (Kubler 1945, 414–418).

⁴ According to historical sources, Atahualpa killed almost 200 sons of his belated father to eliminate potential pretenders to the throne, as well as the entire Huáscar family (Davis 2001, 192).

Additionally, six to seven years before the encounter with Pizarro, the empire was already under attack from a dangerous European “conqueror”, as deadly epidemics caused by European microbes causing illnesses such as smallpox spread across the continent and, in some places, wiped out almost 90% of the population (Sowell 1993, 68; Cartwright 2016; Dajmond 2022, 95).

The list of causes that led to the victory of the Spaniards in the Battle of Cajamarca and the capture of Atahualpa is not short. However, if we were to seek the smallest common denominator, i.e., for the sublimation of different causes and reasons for Pizarro’s triumph into one common root, we would end our search with success with *education*, that is, *the lack of education* of the opposing military leaders and their warriors. Each of the key factors that, in synergy, determined the outcome of this famous battle can essentially be perceived as a product and result of a lack of education from the military affairs field and education that is indirectly but imperatively important for military leaders.

Superior weapons of the conquistadors

There is a clear consensus among historians and researchers who have studied the Battle of Cajamarca that the *superior weaponry* of the conquistadors compared to that of the Inca warriors was of great importance for the outcome of this battle. Namely, conquistadors were equipped with steel swords, spears, and armor, while facing them were soldiers equipped with clubs and stone weapons, “armored” only with primitive leather and woven tunics (Kubler 1945, 421; Dajmond 2022, 87). Unlike advanced Spanish steel, “the civilizations from the Andes did not possess even bronze weapons, let alone steel ones” (Guilmartin 1991, 41). A significant difference was that the Europeans had *horses*, animals never seen before by the inhabitants of the New World, and thus, they “never learned how to defend from the cavalry attack” (42) or adjust to that type of combat. However, researchers place the most emphasis on the fact that Pizarro’s forces possessed *firearms* entirely unknown to their enemies and which were able to cause deadly damage that the Incas had never dreamed of.

The fact that the scale of Spanish supremacy in weapons and equipment was similar to the supremacy of the Incas in numbers and that the victory was taken by the better armed and equipped army, even though significantly inferior in numbers, speaks in favor of the decisive

importance of scientific and technological development in the military field, as well as education in the fields of construction and weapons improvement in the broadest sense. Moving within the discourse of contemporary armies and modern military education, today we could say that the historical example which is the focus of our interest in this paper indicates the historically exceptional significance of education in the field of defense technologies in the broadest sense, i.e., in the fields of military mechanical engineering, military electronic engineering, and military chemical engineering. The Battle of Cajamarca showed that the *power of knowledge* in developing weapons and equipment could compensate for a huge disproportion in the size of the two opposing armies.

Still, to avoid the aforementioned trap of reductivity and monocausality in explaining complex phenomena, it should be stressed that all the previously mentioned factors were insufficient for the triumph of 168 soldiers, no matter the superiority of their weapons, over tens of thousands of their enemies. Even the most significant comparative advantage of the Spanish – firearms – could not bring an advantage on its own. Namely, Pizarro had at his disposal only two primitive cannons, which took a long time to charge before being fired next time, while the total number of rifles was only ten. Moreover, they were arquebuses, muskets known for relatively imprecise shooting and taking a long time to load the rifle for every next shot (Dajmond 2022, 89). Equally important was *how* the Spanish soldiers used their weapons.

Superior tactic of the conquistadors

The Battle of Cajamarca also stressed that *knowledge* of how to most efficiently and most effectively use the personnel, weapons, and equipment available to the commander on a tactical level is at least equally important as the material-technical factor of the military power itself. Even though, according to historically available data, a “minimal number of Spanish had any direct military experience from Europe” (Hennessy 1993, 14), and thus practically exactly in Cajamarca had their “Baptism of fire” in combat, their organization, cohesion and discipline were categorically advanced compared to their enemies, primarily thanks to their commander Pizarro, often described as “a decisive military strategist who single-handedly conducted appointment and commanding the troops” with extensive preparations and planned reconnaissance before the battle (Seed 1991, 16). The revolutionary Spanish tactic and

“combat method” from the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century had no rivals even among the European armies, let alone in a clash with an opponent who lacked elementary tactical education.⁵ As Guilmartin (Guilmartin 1991, 55; 64) concludes, “tactical innovations of Gonzalo de Córdoba [...] as well as the appearance of *tercio*, probably before the permanent military formation in the contemporary sense of the word, are the evidence of Spanish warfare ingenuity in this key era” and the finesse of the Spanish soldiers’ combat, perfected during the wars in Italy. The ingenuity was confirmed in full in the battle in which the Spanish battled an almost 500 times bigger in size enemy.⁶

Pizzaro used the tactical naivety of Atahualpa,⁷ who retracted the army from the city onto the hill nearby and used the “architecture of this city of the Incas, which resembled a labyrinth” (Cartwright 2016) to set deadly ambushes with very few people and equipment. Pizzaro divided his cavalry into several strike groups and did similarly with the infantry while positioning the few people with rifles and two cannons onto the highest points of buildings surrounding the square where he met the Incas. As he was well aware of the “multiplying effect of surprise of combat efficiency” and “significance of tactical coordination” of troops (Guilmartin 1991, 54), the Spanish commander kept his troops completely hidden until the order was given that through a coordinated attack by several cavalry and infantry strike groups, accompanied by cannon and rifle fire from the rooftops completely paralyze the enemy, bring panic and havoc among their ranks.⁸ Moreover, finally defeated to such an

⁵ This does not mean that the Incas were incapable of learning during the war and adapting to what they saw and experienced in battle. However, the lack of education that would enable them to *enter* the fight prepared and adapted instead of paying the expensive price of learning proved to be cataclysmic.

⁶ The Battle of Cajamarca, of course, was not the only confirmation of this fact. In the next few years, the Spaniards succeeded in defending with only around 200 people cities that were attacked by several dozen and even hundreds of thousands of soldiers (Dajmond 2022, 88). According to historical sources, about 190 conquistadors managed for almost a year to defend from the siege of Cusco in 1536/1537, although the size of the army that besieged Cusco during that year ranged between one hundred and four hundred thousand soldiers! (Guilmartin 1991, 50).

⁷ Davis records that “the fact that Atahualpa left such a fortress to people with firearms clearly shows that he did not have a clue about what he was facing” (Davis 2001, 192).

⁸ Pizzaro also relied on the sound of horns and bells he put on horses to produce greater fear and panic among the Incas (Dajmond 2022, 85). It could even be said that Pizzaro’s idea, as well as the behavior of Incas in Cajamarca, are the blatant historical examples of the definition of panic in combat several centuries later Todor Pavlović provided,

extent that well-informed observers of the event would write centuries later that “it was not a battle, but a massacre” (Davis 2001, 193). Even though the circumstances, of course, changed compared to what Pizarro faced in 1532, the significance of researching and knowing his tactical decisions is not small even today, given that, as Todor Pavlović writes, there is a connection between what tactics are now and what they once were: every development is a continuous continuation of the changes in the initial sprout” (Pavlović 2025, 43).

The exquisite capability of commanding and optimally using people, equipment, and the space in which the Battle of Cajamarca took place is a practical demonstration of the importance of the education of commanders in the field of tactics, but also in the fields of what we would call today command and control. Faced with a drastically more numerous enemy in enemy territory and far from any reinforcements, Pizarro relied on a coordinated and well-thought-out use of the resources at his disposal, making ample use of the advantages of the terrain in which the battle was being fought, as well as the tactical elements of surprise and instilling panic in the enemy ranks.

Military education of the “strategic” level

The conquistador commander’s exquisite skill in using the product of the Spanish military technical thought and the tactical-command finesses and innovations “honed” during the decades before his arrival in the New World⁹ was instrumental in achieving the ultimate, strategic goal of destruction of the Inca Empire and takeover of the entire continent. The key assumption for achieving the final goal was the capture of the God-emperor Atahualpa in combat, since such a scenario was the only one that rationally ensured the fulfillment of the strategic intention of the conquistadors. Pizarro managed to turn the distinctive feature of the complete centralization of authority in the personality of the

according to which panic is not produced only “with real danger, but also with the idea created of it”, and which turns the military caught by it into a “crowd of frantic fugitives” (Đukić i Starčević 2025).

⁹ We must not forget Pizarro’s exquisite skill in the sphere of what we today call military logistics in the context of military science, in the dimension in which the absolute superiority was on the side of the Incas (Guilmartin 1991, 50). Pizarro managed to equip his unit for a long march to an unknown location and then fight in unfamiliar terrain, with no chance of any logistical communication with the “base” or the supply of any resources for this endeavor.

God-emperor in the civilization and culture of the Incas, militarily articulated through direct, strategic command and control, into their greatest weakness, which he then exploited with “cruel efficacy” to the maximum (Guilmartin 1991, 54) – even after the capture of Atahualpa, the army of the Incas remained for almost eight months under his direct command, which they carried out without question while he was in the hands of the Spanish.¹⁰ Of course, Pizarro was not only guided by the example and lessons learned from his famous “colleague” conquistador Hernán Cortés, who had only conquered around fifteen years earlier, to be exact. On November 14, 1519, “arrested” by trickery, that is, captured the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma in his capital, Tenochtitlan. That way, it quickly conquered Mexico and sent Aztec civilization into history (Davis 2001, 192). However, he also “set his ambush to Atahualpa openly, following the footsteps of the successful Cortés strategy” (Dajmond 2022, 94). As Sowell (1993, 69) aptly notes, the Spaniards *learned* quickly and thus, in only a decade and a half of conquering the New World, “they *learned* how to attack and defeat the mighty imperial force” they could never be able to defeat by “classical” approach and fight to the last man.

At this level, the drastic disparity and difference in the level of education between the Incas and the Spanish is perhaps most evident. Pizarro’s idea was not only based on the previous experience of Cortés but also on the fact that the Spaniards made a significant effort to *examine* and *understand* the culture of the people in the New World, i.e., the culture and habits of their war enemies, and thus, they arrived before Cajamarca completely prepared. Additionally, the military and historical education of the Spaniards enabled them to also rely on the experiences of not only the legendary military leader El Cid from the glorious period of Reconquista of the 11th century but also on more recent experiences from the Italian wars during which, on many occasions, victories were reached by capturing the “noble” hostages, such as the King Francis I of France, who was captured by the Spanish in the Battle of Pavia, or Pope Clement VII, captured during the fall of Rome (Covey 2019, 2). In short, the conquistadors belonged to the “tradition of education”, in which there was a centuries-old practice of education and learning of “civilizations

¹⁰ Dozens of thousands of Atahualpa’s soldiers who surrounded Cajamarca did nothing to save their God-emperor, neither during the battle nor during his captivity, since he ordered them so via Spanish intermediaries (Davis 2001, 192). It is only natural that such, or any other unfavorable order, would never pass the first obstacle and “censorship” of his captors.

distant from Europe, and about several hundred long European histories” (Dajmond 2022, 94). The conquistadors did not arrive at the New World by carrying only advanced weapons and tactical knowledge, but also the invaluable heritage of *knowledge* on history, culture, man, and human societies accumulated over centuries. On the other hand, the commander-in-chief of the Incas, like his colleague Moctezuma, was prone to superstitions and misbeliefs, completely uneducated and not at all interested in understanding the enemy (Hennessy 1993, 11). Moreover, Atahualpa, even in captivity, remained completely limited by assumptions of his culture and was unable to comprehend and understand the motives of his captors or their final goal, which cost him his life and his empire, even though he filled the chambers of conquistadors with gold and silver (Kubler 1945, 422–425).

Again, avoiding the trap of reductionism and monocausality of complex phenomena, one should in no way diminish the influence of the superior weapon and tactical superiority of the conquistadors; however, it seems that the crucial and essential weight in the Battle of Cajamarca was the Spanish military education of a “strategic” level. Knowing the military history and psychology, the opponent’s culture, society, social and state structure, civilizational habits, and ways of thinking about the world and the conflict enabled the Spaniards to use superior tactics and weaponry to reach the final strategic goal, the Battle of Cajamarca. The Spaniards’ belonging to a tradition of education enabled them to make war decisions not based on personal whims or “signs from heaven”, but on “drawing” from an almost endless reservoir of knowledge accumulated over millennia from the most diverse areas of human social existence. Returning to the discourse of contemporary military education, we can conclude that the vast and decisive influence on the outcome of the battle which determined the fate of a civilization, in which a drastically numerically inferior side, completely isolated and cut-out, triumphed in the heart of the enemy territory, has the winner’s *strategic-level education*, i.e., education in the fields of history, sociology, philosophy, political science, anthropology and psychology. In one word, knowledge from the field of social and humanistic sciences.

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF THE LESSON FROM CAJAMARCA

The Battle of Cajamarca is not and should not remain just an interesting dash from the rich history of warfare, only a curiosity and an interesting fact from military history. When examining the outcomes and lessons learned from the analyzed battle from the standpoint of contemporary societies and modern military education systems, it is important to stress two key things so that the lessons from Cajamarca would remain relevant and applicable in the 21st century. First, an obstacle to military education among the Incas was the lack and tradition of illiteracy – today, we could hardly imagine a conflict in which one side would belong to the tradition of illiteracy. However, the appearance of anti-intellectualism in many contemporary armies of the world points that even in literate societies and literate systems, resistance to *education*, i.e., *functional and operational literacy*, can emerge, especially when speaking of the key education of strategic level, which asks for deeper understanding of occurrences and processes significant for military affairs. This is precisely the key level of education that enabled the Spaniards to shake down an entire empire with, from the current standpoint, a banally small army.

Second, though equally important, it is necessary to distinguish between military education and military training. Moreover, just as it would undoubtedly be disastrous for any army to forsake training for the sake of intellectual education, due to the very nature of the army as an institution, history seems to indicate that neglecting education at the expense of training would be equally disastrous in the event of a conflict with an army that did not neglect that same education. As Jeftić and Vuruna (2009, 164) write regarding the reform of military education in the Republic of Serbia, “we are speaking of two processes which only together can give the desired result”. Kime and Anderson (1997, 4), in their study on the difference between education and training in the military, take a step further and state that at the dawn of the third millennium, military training is completely ineffective if the foundation of military education is missing. Therefore, military education must be understood as a strategic issue in every modern army, especially those facing not-so-naïve security challenges, risks, and threats.

CONCLUSION – CIVILIZATIONAL PRICE OF (MIS)EDUCATION

The Battle of Cajamarca represents one of the most significant battles in the history of the study of war, as it opened a historical abyss into which a monumental empire and, with it, an entire civilization soon plunged irretrievably. Sublimation of the entire discussion on the factors and causes of the “impossible” win of the conquistadors over the Incas is most precisely formulated from the anthropological standpoint, according to which the “encounter between Atahualpa and the Spaniards constitutes an episode which would the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss call ‘the lesson of literacy’, i.e., a classical scene of encounter between the literate and illiterate culture” (Seed 1991, 8). The literacy of the European civilization enabled the military education of Pizarro and conquistadors, which, through the synergy of knowledge from the field of military engineering, tactics, logistics, social and humanistic sciences, etc., brought down at Cajamarca a numerically and logistically completely and categorically superior empire, thus marking the beginning of the end of the entire civilization and all its attributes - culture, language, religion, art, etc. The epistemological vacuum created by the tradition of illiteracy, and thus the miseducation of military leaders and soldiers of the Incas, could not be compensated for even by the advantage measured in hundreds of thousands of soldiers clashing with a vastly smaller army; however, the army, which consisted of less than 170 soldiers, also carried with it the accumulated knowledge and experience of a glorious and advanced thousand-year-old European civilization.

The Battle of Cajamarca represents an illustrative and blatant example of the civilizational price of the lack of education of military leaders – the ones standing between civilization and its irreversible historical abyss. Thus, it is necessary that contemporary armies, including the Military of Serbia in the contemporary security environment, have in mind at any moment the significance and importance of optimal and systematic military education of members of the military profession, as well as to perceive it in its true essence – as a necessary high-intellectual and functionally different from military training.¹¹ Looking through the theoretical prism of Habermas (1971, 301–317), military education from different fields must have a goal to develop all three types of knowledge

¹¹ Naturally, such education is just as meaningful in the context of “expanded deterrence”. More on this concept in (Blagojević 2025, 41–57).

– analytical, hermeneutic and critical – so that modern officers could know “what”, “how” and “why” in the moments when the fate of an entire civilization and culture potentially rests on their shoulders.

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БИТКА КОД КАХАМАРКЕ: ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИЈСКА ЦЕНА ВОЈНОГ (НЕ)ОБРАЗОВАЊА**

Резиме

У овом раду аутор анализира Битку код Кахамарке као парадигматичан пример цивилизацијске цене војног необразовања. Истражујући контекст, ток и последице битке између шпанских конкистадора предвођених Пизаром и Инка на чијем је челу био бого-цар Атавалпа, аутор указује да победа бројчано драстично инфериорне шпанске војске над војском Инка није била резултат само технолошке и тактичке надмоћи, већ превасходно последица супериорне традиције образовања, укључујући ту и војно образовање у ширем смислу, из које су дошле шпанске војсковође. Кроз анализу предности у наоружању, тактици и темељу за доношење стратегијских одлука обе стране, аутор показује да су шпански конкистадори своју предност деривирали из широког обима знања из области војног инжењерства, тактике, и друштвено-хуманистичких наука те познавању непријатељске културе, док су Инке, лишене писмености и институционализованог система образовања, своју судбину препустиле сујеверју и импровизацији. Аутор закључује да ова битка не сме остати пука историјска занимљивост, већ напротив мора представљати опомену о нужности систематског војног образовања на високо-интелектуалном нивоу у савременим војскама, како би се избегла потенцијална стратегијска катастрофа у будућим конфликтима која може означити крај једне културе или чак цивилизације.

Кључне речи: војно образовање, војно инжењерство, тактика, образовање стратегијског нивоа, Битка код Кахамарке, царство Инка, конкистадори.

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** Чланак је резултат рада на пројекту Института за стратегијска истраживања „Војна професија у Србији у савременом безбедном окружењу” (ИСИ/ДХ/3/24-26).

* This paper was received on April 10, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.

REVIEWS

UDC: 355.231/.237(497.11)''1850/2025''

DOI: 10.5937/pnb29-59787

Review

The Policy of National Security
(Политика националне безбедности)

Year XVI vol. 29

No. 2/2025

pp. 203-207

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175 YEARS OF MILITARY EDUCATION

In the year we celebrate a significant jubilee – 175 years of military education, many discussions have been initiated in Serbian society on the topic of education and the education system of our country in general. The contradictions emerging between the holders of political power and the holders of the implementation of educational function – the universities and faculties, the consequences which followed as a result of the inconsistency and mismatch of the motives, interests and goals, as well as the possible methods of fulfilling and achieving them, have cast a shadow on the significance of this big jubilee of ours, and our plans to mark it throughout the entire calendar year in a dignified way. Because of this, we are incredibly grateful to *The Policy of National Security* journal for reserving a position for us among the essential subjects of national security, even in these complex social circumstances. The Editorial team has, thus, shown their ability to truly appreciate the power of deduction and deductive knowledge, no matter the current inductive phenomena and processes. With a deductive approach, it is not difficult to conclude that military education held strategic significance for the

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state of Serbia, and the politics of national security would be only an empty phrase without discussion on institutions of strategic significance and the true desire for their permanent development.

The development of every society, whether we are speaking of the modern society or its predecessors, is impossible without the development of educational and upbringing function/s. In proportion to the above, the development of the military and the defense function is unimaginable without the development of military education and upbringing, which make up the essence of all future development directions, and determine, through their quality, its ultimate reach, and quite often, the fate of states and peoples as well.¹

Revolutionary events in the neighboring Austrian Empire impacted the foundation of the military school in the Principality of Serbia. As a response to these events, on March 18, 1850, Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević approved the Project on the Organization of the Artillery School, created by Ilija Garašanin. The original name did not reflect its whole purpose. Since its founding, it was a general military academy, which educated the officers of infantry, cavalry, engineering, and artillery (see Đukić 2025).

“With the foundation of the Artillery School in Belgrade in 1850, the most significant chapter in the development of the officer profession was opened. Until then, Serbian officers acquired their ranks by the sword or abroad. Without it, there could be no talk of military professionalism in Serbia. With its foundation, the perspectives of creating a modern army, as a fundamental state institution, by leading opinions of the 19th century, opened up”²

From its inception until today, military education has been in touch with the educational function of our state and society. It is an important factor, not only a factor of development of both the military and the defense function, but also a factor of development of the state and its significant political functions. Besides officers, four full professors of the Higher School of Belgrade also stood among its first teachers. Later on, even officers taught at the Higher School, and one of the most prominent ones was Colonel Jovan Dragašević (see Jovović i Šuljagić 2016). Less than 30 years later, the complete independence of the Principality of Serbia was

¹ One of the characteristics of modern society is that essences stand in contrast to assemblies, and that wider application of the assembly theory when speaking of social organization and methods of their organizations can negatively impact the essence of things. More on the relation between assemblies and essences, see Delanda 2018.

² Srđan Starčević, in the preface of the reprint of the book Pavlović 2025, 8–9.

recognized in 1878. To this greatly contributed the officers, who made up one-fourth of the highly-educated population of then Serbia. This gave impetus to a comprehensive reform of state administration and the army, and at the suggestion of Colonel Jovan Mišković (see Mučibabić 2004), the Minister of War, Prince Milan Obrenović, approved the Law on the Organization of the Military Academy in 1880. “Enrolling in the Military Academy, at that time, was quite a significant step not only for each young man but also for the Serbian Army and Serbia. The history of this officer school is inextricably linked with the history of Serbia [...]” (Mučibabić 2004).

In the very establishment of the Artillery School, its first director, a Czech by nationality and a lawyer by profession, František Zakh (*František Alexandr Zach*), who only put on an officer’s uniform and epaulettes upon the establishment of the school – the official predecessor of the Military Academy, played an indispensable role. From the rank of captain in 1850 to the rank of general 20 years later, he was one of the strong promoters of the idea that Serbia should become the key subject around which the South Slovenes would unite and a participant in the Serbian-Turkish wars of 1876–1878. Therefore, František-Franjo Zakh left an indelible mark as one of the most significant reformers of the army and undoubtedly the founder of military education in Serbia (see Jovanović 2010).

From the first reform until today, the Military Academy followed the currents of development of military skills and military sciences, valued its capabilities and capacities about current and future needs, measured itself against other European and world academies, changed and adapted to the needs of the time, the army, the state and the society.

From the single Military School, through the established Lower and Higher schools, later branch-specific academics, post-war schools, through seven military academies spread across the former Yugoslavia, school centers, relocations of schools and academies, and their reintegration, the Military Academy shared the fate of our army and our state. Its endurance speaks of the fact that it rests on solid foundations, built on knowledge, skills, feats, thoughts, and ideas, but also the lives of our predecessors, directors, chiefs, commanders, professors, and all the officers educated there. That is why it is our duty to nourish a special form of gratitude to our predecessors.

The Military Academy today is a higher-education unit of the University of Defense of strategic significance. At the same time, it is both a military unit and a higher-education institution, fostering a blend

of the military and academia, traditional and modern, theoretical and practical. Gazing at academic heights, firmly girded, it duly practices the military profession and science. The professor calling in it is performed honorably and continuously, and its essence is the selfless giving and construction of everything an officer needs – knowledge, skill, physical and mental force, experience, fighting spirit, patriotic charge, and a sense of collectivity. Its greatest value is hardworking and honorable people.

Besides completing regular tasks, noteworthy results have also been achieved recently. For the first time, master's and doctoral studies in military sciences are accredited.³ After a break of many years, the Air Defense study program and the Geodesy module, both in the field of military sciences, were accredited again. The number of papers published in relevant professional and scientific journals increased, a monograph, "175 years of Military Academy", was published, a documentary was filmed, a postage stamp was created, and after many decades, the first issue of the magazine *Akademac* was published. The housing capacities were increased, and three newly prepared classrooms have been fully equipped and ceremonially opened – the Radar Engineering and Aerospace Engineering classrooms, and Technological Engineering. We have equipped ourselves with the most modern combat equipment. We have integrated the cadets into the basic training process in the role of instructors and the security system of the *General Jovan Mišković* barracks in the role of guards. We have increased the number of cadets in training, and in the past three years, we have doubled the number of cadets – future pilots. We have conducted a vast number of international activities, exchanged experience, and competed with the most advanced world academies. We responsibly stated that we are at the very top of the world regarding the exit competencies of our youngest officers.

This year, the Military Academy will graduate the largest generation of officers in the last ten years. These young people are equally familiar with the weapons and tactics of their branch and service, which they confirmed at a recent demonstration of their capabilities. They speak one world language and understand at least another foreign language. They are computer literate, physically fit, hardened by long marches in all weather conditions, tempered through martial arts sections, and adorned with sports medals and awards from various competitions: knowledge, culture, and skills. Brave, motivated, dedicated. They participate in many media

³ See more on the problems existing in the previous period, when military sciences were not recognized in the science system in Serbia, in Blagojević, Starčević i Zogović 2019.

and public appearances and are confirmed humanitarians and voluntary blood donors. They represent the most nationally educated segment of the younger population of our society. They are ready for the challenges of the current times and the future. They are our pride and our hope.

We are grateful to all subjects of the defense system who contributed to fulfilling educational and upbringing results – to the Rectorate of the University of Defense, commands and units of the Serbian Army, and all educational and scientific institutions with which we foster long-term cooperation.

I acknowledge and congratulate the members of the Military Academy on this great jubilee. Be proud to be a part of a historical record almost two centuries old.

I would also like to use this opportunity to message our future officers. *Dear cadets, wherever your boot steps, whatever military and academic heights you reach, never forget your origin, family, and the Academy. The Military Academy persisted and developed all this time because whatever it gave, the Serbian officers always gave back to it as well.*

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* This paper was received on June 26, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on June 30, 2025.

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The academic journal *The Policy of National Security* publishes articles that result from the latest theoretical and empirical research in the field of political science. Authors should refer mainly to the results of scientific research published in academic journals, primarily in political science journals.

Manuscripts should be submitted in Serbian (Cyrillic script) with a mandatory English translation or in English.

The journal is published three times a year. The deadlines for submitting the manuscripts are February 1st, June 1st, and October 1st.

Two consecutive issues cannot contain articles written by the same author, whether single-authored or co-authored.

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Authors are required to provide their ORCID numbers along with their (preferably) institutional email addresses, which they include in the manuscript text in a footnote alongside their names and surnames.

Research articles can have up to 40,000 characters with spaces, including footnotes. When counting the characters leave out the reference list. Exceptionally, a monographic study can be larger in scope in accordance

with the provisions of *the Rulebook on procedure, method of evaluation, and quantitative presentation of scientific research results*.

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Data in bibliographic parentheses and the list of references should be written in **Latin script**.

Below are the rules and examples for citing the bibliographic information in the reference list and in the text. For each type of source, a citation rule is given first, followed by an example of citation in the reference list and bibliographic parenthesis.

The bibliographic parenthesis is usually set off at the end of the sentence, before the punctuation mark. It contains the author's surname, the year of publication, and page numbers pointing to a specifically contextual page or range of pages, as in the following example: (Mearsheimer 2001, 15–17).

Books

Books with one author

Surname, Name. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

(Mearsheimer 2001)

Books with two or three authors

Surname, Name, and Name Surname. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Brady, Henry E., and David Collier. 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

(Brady and Collier 2010, 211)

Pollitt, Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

(Pollitt, Birchall and Putman 1998)

Books with four or more authors

Surname, Name, Name and Surname, Name and Surname, and Name and Surname. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Pollitt, Christopher, Colin Talbot, Janice Caulfield, and Amanda Smullen [Pollitt *et al.*]. 2005. *Agencies: How Governments do Things Through Semi-Autonomous Organizations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

(Pollitt *et al.* 2005)

Editor(s) or translator(s) in place of the author(s)

Surname, Name, Name and Surname, ed. Year of publication. *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Kaltwasser, Cristobal Rovira, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostigoy [Kaltwasser *et al.*], eds. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

(Kaltwasser *et al.* 2017)

Chapter in an edited book

Surname, Name. Year of publication. "Title of the chapter." In *Title*, ed. Name Surname, pages range. Place of publication: Publisher.

Lošonc, Alpar. 2019. "Discursive dependence of politics with the confrontation between republicanism and neoliberalism." In *Discourse and Politics*, eds. Dejana M. Vukasović and Petar Matić, 23?46. Belgrade: Institute for Political Studies.

(Lošonc 2019)

Journal Articles

Regular issue

Surname, Name. Year of publication. "Title of the article." *Journal* Volume, if available (issue): page range. DOI.

Ellwood, David W. 2018. "Will Brexit Make or Break Great Britain?" *Serbian Political Thought* 18 (2): 5?14. DOI: 10.22182/spt.18212018.1.

(Ellwood 2018)

Newspapers and magazines

Signed articles

Surname, Name. Year of publication. "Title of the article." *Newspaper/Magazine* Date: page range.

Clark, Phil. 2018. "Rwanda's Recovery: When Remembrance is Official Policy." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2018: 35–41.

(Clark 2018)

Unsigned articles

Title of the newspaper/magazine. Year of publication. "Title of the article." Date: page range.

New York Times. 2002. "In Texas, Ad Heats Up Race for Governor." July 30, 2002.

(*New York Times* 2002)

Corporate Author

Name of the corporate author ?acronym if needed?. Year of publication. *Title of the publication.* Place of publication: Publisher.

International Organization for Standardization ?ISO?. 2019. *Moving from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015.* Geneva: International Organization for Standardization.

(International Organization for Standardization ?ISO? 2019) – *The first in-text citation*

(ISO 2019) – *Second and all subsequent citations*

Legal and Public Documents

Sections, articles, or paragraphs can be cited in the parentheses. They should be appropriately abbreviated.

Constitutions and laws

The title of the legislative act [acronym if needed], "Official Gazette of the state" and the number of the official gazette, or the webpage and the date of last access.

The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 98/06.

(The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, Art. 33)

The Law on Foreign Affairs [LFA], "Official Gazette of the Republic of

Serbia”, No. 116/2007, 126/2007, and 41/2009.

(LFA 2009, Art. 17)

Succession Act [SA], “Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia”, No. 48/03, 163/03, 35/05, 127/13, and 33/15 and 14/19.

(SA 2019, Art. 3)

An Act to make provision for and in connection with offences relating to offensive weapons [Offensive Weapons Act], 16th May 2019, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/17/pdfs/ukpga_20190017_en.pdf, last accessed 20 December 2019.

(Offensive Weapons Act 2019)

Legislative acts of the European Union

The title of the legislative act, the number of the official gazette, the publication date, and the number of the page in the same format as on the *EUR-lex* website: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>.

Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission’s exercise of implementing powers, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13–18.

(Regulation 182/2011, Art. 3)

Web sources

Surname, Name, or name of the corporate author [acronym]. Year of publication or n.d. – if the year of publication cannot be determined. “The name of the web page.” *The name of the website*. Date of creation, modification, or the last access to the web page, if the date cannot be determined from the source. URL.

Bilefsky, Dan, and Ian Austen. 2019. “Trudeau Re-election Reveals Intensified Divisions in Canada.” *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/world/canada/trudeau-re-elected.html>.

(Bilefsky and Austen 2019)

Institute for Political Studies [IPS]. n.d. “The 5th International Economic Forum on Reform, Transition and Growth.” *Institute for Political Studies*. Last accessed 7 December 2019. <http://www.ips.ac.rs/en/news/the-5th-international-economic-forum-on-reform-transition-and-growth/>.

(Institute for Political Studies [IPS] n.d.) – *First in-text citation*

(IPS n.d.) – *Second and every subsequent citation*

Associated Press [AP]. 2019. “AP to present VoteCast results at AAPOR pooling conference.” May 14, 2019. <https://www.ap.org/press-releases/2019/ap-to-present-votecast-results-at-aapor-polling-conference>.

(AP 2019)

Special cases of referencing

Citing editions other than the first

Surname, Name. Year of publication. *Title*, edition number. Place of publication: Publisher.

Bull, Hedley. 2012. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th edition. New York: Columbia University Press.

(Bull 2012)

Multiple sources of the same author

1) *Multiple sources by the same author* should be arranged chronologically by year of publication in ascending order.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2010. “The Gathering Storm: China’s Challenge to US Power in Asia.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (4): 381–396. DOI: 10.1093/cjip/poq016.

2) *Multiple sources by the same author from the same year* should be alphabetized by title, with lowercase letters attached to the year. Those letters should be used in parenthetical citations as well.

Walt, Stephen M. 2018a. *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

(Walt 2018a)

Walt, Stephen M. 2018b. “Rising Powers and the Risk of War: A Realist View of Sino-American Relations.” In *Will China’s Rise be Peaceful: Security, Stability and Legitimacy*, ed. Asle Toje. 13–32. New York: Oxford University Press.

(Walt 2018b)

3) *Single-authored sources precede multiauthored sources beginning with the same surname* or written by the same person.

Pollitt, Christopher. 2001. "Clarifying convergence. Striking similarities and durable differences in public management reform." *Public Management Review* 3 (4): 471–492. DOI: 10.1080/14616670110071847.

Pollitt, Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

4) *Multiauthored sources with the same name and surname* as the first author should continue to be alphabetized by the second author's surname.

Pollitt Christopher, Johnston Birchall, and Keith Putman. 1998. *Decentralising Public Service Management*. London: Macmillan Press.

Pollitt Christopher, Colin Talbot, Janice Caulfield, and Amanda Smullen. 2005. *Agencies: How Governments do Things Through Semi-Autonomous Organizations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Special cases of parenthetical citation

Exceptions to the rule of placing the parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence

1) If the *author is mentioned in the text*, even if used in a possessive form, the year must follow in parenthesis, and page numbers should be put in the brackets at the end of the sentence.

For the assessment, see Kaltwasser *et al.* (2017) ... (112).

According to Ellwood (2018) ... (7).

2) When *quoting directly*, if the name of the author precedes the quotation, the year and page numbers must follow in parenthesis.

Mearsheimer (2001, 28) claims that: "...".

3) When *using the same source multiple times in one paragraph*, the parenthetical citation should be placed either after the last reference (or at the end of the paragraph, preceding the final period) if the same page (or page range) is cited more than once, or at the first reference, whereas the subsequent citations should only include page numbers.

Do not use *ibid* or *op. cit.* with repeated citations.

Using brief phrases such as “see”, “compare” etc.

Those phrases should be enclosed within the parenthesis.

(see: Ellwood 2018)

Using secondary source

When using a secondary source, the original source should be cited in parenthesis, followed by “quoted/cited in” and the secondary source. The reference list should only include the secondary source.

“Its authority was greatly expanded by the constitutional revision of 1988, and the Court of Arbitration can now be regarded as a ‘genuine constitutional court’” (De Winter and Dumont 2009, 109 cited in: Lijphart 2012, 39–40).

Lijphart, Arend. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, 2nd edition. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Multiple sources within the same parentheses

1) When *multiple sources* are cited, they should be separated by semicolons.

(Mearsheimer 2001, 34; Ellwood 2018, 7)

2) When *multiple sources by the same author*, but published in different years are cited, the name of the author is cited only the first time. The different years are separated by commas or by semicolons where page numbers are cited.

(Mearsheimer 2001, 2010) or (Mearsheimer 2001, 15–17; 2010, 390)

3) When *different authors share the same surname*, include the first initial in the parenthesis.

(M. Chiti 2004, 40), (E. Chiti 2004, 223)

Chiti, Edoardo. 2004. “Administrative Proceedings Involving European Agencies.” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 68 (1): 219–236.

Chiti, Mario. 2004. “Forms of European Administrative Action.” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 68 (1): 37–57.

TEXT FORMATTING

General guidelines for writing the manuscript

The manuscript should be written in Word, in the following manner:

- Paper size: A4;
- Margins: Normal 2.54 cm;
- Use Times New Roman font (plain letters) to write the text, unless specified otherwise;
- Line spacing: 1.5;
- Footnote line spacing: 1;
- Title font size: 14 pt;
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- Footnote font size: 10 pt;
- Tables, charts and figures font size: 10 pt;
- Use Paragraph/Special/First line at 1.27 cm;
- Text alignment: Justify;
- Font color: Automatic;
- Page numbering: Arabian numerals in lower right corner;
- Do not break the words manually by inserting hyphens to continue the word in the next line;
- Save the manuscript in the .doc format.

Research article manuscript preparation

The manuscript should be prepared in the following manner:

Name and surname of the first author*

* Footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended. ORCID:

Affiliation

Name and surname of the second author**

** Footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended. ORCID:

Affiliation

TITLE OF THE PAPER***

*** Footnote: if necessary, specify one of the following (or similar) data: 1) the name and number of the project; 2) the proceeding where the manuscript was presented under the same or similar title; 3) statements of gratitude.

Abstract

Abstract, within 100–250 words range, contains the subject, aim, theoretical and methodological approach, results and conclusions of the paper.

Keywords: Below the abstract, five to ten **key words** should be written. Key words should be written in roman font and separated by commas.

The manuscript can have maximally three levels of subtitles. **Subtitles** should not be numbered. They should be used in the following manner:

FIRST LEVEL SUBTITLE

Second level subtitle

Third level subtitle

Tables, charts, and figures should be inserted in the following manner:

- Above the table/chart/figure, center the name of the Table, Chart or Figure, an Arabic numeral, and the title in Times New Roman font;
- Below the table/chart/figure, the source should be cited in the following manner: 1) if the table/chart/figure is taken from another source, write down *Source:* and include the parenthetical citation information of the source; or 2) if the table/chart/figure is not taken from another source, write down *Source: Author.*

Use in-text references according to *Citing and referencing*.

Use the footnotes solely to provide remarks or broader explanations.

REFERENCES

References should be listed after the text of the paper, before the Resume in the following manner:

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- all the references should be listed together, without separating legal acts of archives;
- the references should not be numbered;
- list only the references used in the text.

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* Фуснота: Имејл-адреса аутора: Препоручује се навођење институционалне имејл-адресе аутора. ORCID:

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Resume (Резиме) up to 1/10 length of the paper contains the results and conclusions of the paper which are presented in greater scope than in the abstract.

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A review should be prepared in the same manner as the research article, but leaving out the abstract, keywords, resume, or book cover.

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When writing book reviews, split the text into **two columns**. Book reviews should be prepared in the following manner:

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<p>[*] In the footnote: E-mail address: The institutional e-mail address is strongly recommended. ORCID:</p>	<p>Below the image of the front cover list the book details according to the following rule:</p>
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<p>^{***} Footnote: if necessary, specify one of the following (or similar) data: 1) the name and number of the project; 2) the proceeding where the manuscript was presented under the same or similar title; 3) statements of gratitude.</p>	

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351.862/.863(497.11)

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National Security / главни и одговорни уредник Марија Ђорић.
– Год. 5, бр. 5 (2013)- . - Београд : Институт за политичке
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ISSN 2334-959X = Политика националне безбедности

COBISS.SR-ID 203583500



02
2025

THE POLICY
OF NATIONAL
SECURITY

ISSN 2334-959X UDC: 351.862/.863(497.11) Year XVI vol. 29 No. 2/2025.

ISSN 2334959X



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