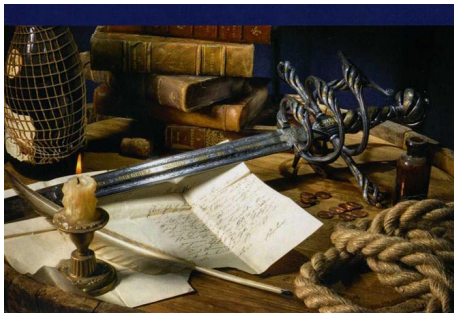


BOOK REVIEW „WISDOM AND SWORD, VOLUME III“ BY ILIJA KAJTEZ

Srdjan Starčević

University of Defence in Belgrade, Military Academy



Wisdom and Sword, Volume III; Ilija Kajtez;
Lambert Academic Publishing, Beau Bassin,
2018, 226 pages

In the romantic antiquity of France there is a local Burgundian saying: whenever a son is born in the noble family d'Avout with martial ancestry stretching back to the Crusades, a sword leaps from its scabbard – precisely the one intended to be the sword of a newborn military leader. As an introduction to the presentation of the book „Wisdom and Sword“, by Ilija Kajtez, one could make a bold parallel with this French legend: when a talented, questionable and worthy man, destined to be a scientist, is born, the first page of a new significant book opens. Like the sword that waits for the future courageous and talented military leader to take it, a good book awaits its writer.

In the opinion of the author of these lines, the book "Wisdom and Sword" is, at least for now, the central work of Ilija Kajtez, a retired colonel and full professor of sociology at the University of Defense in Belgrade, and professor at the Faculty of International Relations and Security of the University "Union – Nikola Tesla" in Belgrade. In this book, the author, who taught philosophy and sociology for a quarter of a century at the Military Academy, systematizes the most valuable knowledge of humanity and the deepest thoughts of sages, philosophers, sociologists and politicians, artists and military theorists on the phenomena of war and peace, with inevitable personal reflections on these issues. Decades of devoted intellectual work have been invested in this book and in its contents one can find hundreds of other books and a whole man – the author himself. Hegel said that nothing great in the world could happen without passion. Hence, it is not surprising that this book is a product of author's great passions – from the passion for collecting the pearls of wisdom to the passion for writing and creating. It could be said that the best advertisement for this book is the fact that after only five years since the

Media Center "Odbrana" published the book "Wisdom and Sword" in the Serbian language, this comprehensive, theoretical, philosophical and sociological book has found its way to the publisher of international renown and, divided into three volumes, to the world's audience.

In 2018, Lambert Academic Publishing completed the publication of the entire book, announcing the third volume of "Wisdom and Sword" in the extraordinary translation of the young Serbian philosopher Dragan Stanar. This volume contains three major chapters: "Russian philosophers and sages on the secrets of war and peace", "Contemporary notion of peace and globalization of war", and "Final thoughts on war and peace – where the ship called 'Earth' is sailing to?"

In the first chapter, the author presents three most important approaches of the Russian thought of war: the one that emerged from the Russian religious philosophy (Solovoy, Berdyaev, Leontiev and in addition Dostoyevsky), the one from the pen of Leo Tolstoy and the one derived from the thought and action of the leader of the October Revolution, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin to the readers. The relation of spirituality and war, Christianity and war, history and war, man and war, revolution and war, are just some of the great questions that the author deals with, analyzing and critically observing the works of the Russian intellectual giants.

The second chapter is dedicated to peace and war in the era of globalization. The author considers the relations between world peace and the globalization of war and asks the provocative question whether peace (the greatest value for many theologians and philosophers) and non-violence (as the opposite of the destructive power of violence) can triumph over war and violence. The author offers a mosaic response, composed of brief analyses, philosophical miniatures about the giants of the modern human thought such as George Orwell, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Erich Fromm, Albert Camus, Bertrand Russell and Herbert Marcuse.

Kajtez offers his thoughts on peace and war to the readers in the third, final chapter of "Wisdom and Sword", which is at the same time a kind of synthesis of his decades-long engagement with these social phenomena. Instead of inaccurate and dangerous simplification, in this chapter Kajtez brings peace and war to the eyes of readers in their complexity, stratification and secrecy. In his opinion, war is not simply entry of evil to a historical stage, but a complex phenomenon, whose secrets cannot be discovered even when our approach combines different positions: when we examine its origin, development, structure, form, functions, significance and meaning. "War, the most exclusive clash of life and death, encompasses everything: myth and religion, history and heritage, mass psychology and mindlessness of crowds, soldier's discipline and a hero's courage, a general's genius and traitor's cowardice, (mis)use of truth, deceits and war trickery, various interests, human heroism and shameful downfalls. War is all that, and more than that, not even the wisest and most eloquent mages of written word and oral traditions can fully intellectually understand, verbally formulate or ingeniously describe it", noted the author (pages 217 and 218). Therefore, Kajtez will never fall into the trap to cancel the status of excellence to war, as well as peace, because war and peace both lie in the ontological level of human existence. "War and peace are a never-ending and perpetual story of human existence, they are in constant competition and eternal and inextricable connection and necessary complementarity, because neither peace can be fully under-

stood without war nor can war last without sublime dreams of peace; one cannot exist without another, nor can they exist separately for they are One, they are whole One, they are two-parted-One." (pages 208 and 209).

The book should be specifically recommended to students of the Military Academy, as well as students from other faculties of the "security sector" as wider literature that will give them superior approach to understanding peace and war; officers in their professional development throughout life, and also to all others, interested in philosophical, sociological, anthropological and political aspects of peace and war.