

THE ROLE OF MILITARY SERVICE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERBIAN STRATEGIC CULTURE

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The general conscription in Serbia was introduced in the second half of the 19th century, with national standing army. Conscription played an important role in the development of the Serbian strategic culture in the young modern Serbian state, and also in encouraging the Serbian military and political elite to hear „a whisper” of the Serbian social character and understand those structures of national culture that are important and perhaps determining for what is today called strategic culture. Its development in Serbia has been considered through the analysis of the actions of two differently directed, but complementary currents, one being marked as elitist, and the other as structuralist. Regardless of the obvious differences, both currents are important for the development of the Serbian military doctrine, at the dawn of the 20th century, before the historical storm of the Balkan wars and World War I.

Conscription was maintained until the entry into force of the Decision on the suspension of conscription, which was passed by the National Assembly in December 2010. Bearing in mind that the Republic of Serbia has made the decision to be military neutral, the reconsideration of the decision to suspend conscription is a logical consequence of this choice. The decision on military neutrality requires not only that other subjects of international relations respect such a decision of a state, but also its respect within the state itself. This means that a state that aspires to neutrality does not give up on defending its values, nor it hands them over to others at mercy and/or

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protection, but establishes (or preserves) the ability to credibly defend its identity and values. The burden of consequences of such a decision is even harder because it does not count on military alliances. The neutral countries in Europe base their ability of credible defence mainly on the concept of total defence, but it also includes a great number of citizens trained for military and civil protection tasks, which calls for conscription. At the same time, military service is the best way for citizens to understand the difficulty of the decision on military neutrality, and also to accept it as their free choice and a part of collective identity. Thus, conscription becomes/remains an important state fulcrum in the active development of strategic culture.

Key words: *strategic culture, military service, education of soldiers, neutrality, total defence*

Introduction

In the multitude of phenomena that make up our world, there are those that we call values. They have a special meaning and significance for us, they enlighten our life, give meaning to our existence and represent a part of what we are, a part of our identity, if not its very essence. The existence of value induces the question of defending values: what we care about deserves to be defended in case it is threatened or attacked.¹ It always requires personal, and often social effort. There are values that can be defended only by military organization. The military sociology recognizes many forms of military organization.² Abstracting, it can be said that in all these forms the burden or effort of defending social values was tolerated by either all (free) members of society or mercenaries, until the establishment of officer profession and standing national army (in the 19th century).³ In the first ones, most commonly referred to as militias, the basis of military service was duty, while in the latter it was wages; discipline was predominantly conscious in the first ones and mechanical in the latter. There has been a fruitful connection in standing national armies: there are professionals who receive salary and social reputation for their competent contribution to state military capabilities,⁴ even though service is at the same time a duty for them, and conscripts that regard temporary military service as a civic duty.

¹ Jovan Babić, *Ogledi o odbrani*, Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2018, p. 9.

² Mensur Ibrahimpašić explains nine such forms. Mensur Ibrahimpašić, "Armija kao društvena institucija", *Sociologija za vojne akademije*, Vojnoizdavački zavod, Beograd, 1981.

³ Semjuel P. Huntington, *Vojnik i država*, Fakultet političkih nauka, Diplomatska akademija, Beograd, 2004, pp. 21-64.

⁴ They are most often recruited or elevated to lower and middle strata of ruling class, except in cases of military regimes, when at least some of them move vertically upwards, and plutocracy when this process is reverse.

The emergence of general conscription in modern Europe was a consequence of great social transformations brought about by the French Bourgeois Revolution, when a significant and far-reaching change of war and army took place. Namely, as the war between the revolutionary French Republic and monarchist Europe became for the French a question of freedom of *nation (whole)*, and not rights and reputation of *king (individual)* and interests of *feudal lords (deeds)*, the leaders of the revolution introduced general war and labour obligation.⁵ The launch of war into the orbit of vital interests of the entire nation has led to the rejection of the concept of the European limited war⁶ and the creation of conditions for the transition to a total war.⁷ At the same time, the salvation of nation has required that the whole nation is put either under arms or work for those who are under arms, and that it is organized in such a way as to win war. The result was the establishment of national standing army capable of outmanoeuvring mercenary standing armies of feudal states by its strength and characteristics.⁸ "What endless inclinations are dormant, undeveloped in the bosom of a nation", Gneisenau remarked, the Prussian general and military reformer.⁹ Although France, after great successes in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, was defeated at the end of those wars, soon all countries in Europe have reformed their armies according to this model made during the Great Revolution and introduced conscription.

Military service - a duty for citizens, although temporary, requires a (temporary and, possibly, occasional) soldier to spend some time in the army, obeying what is status *militaris* and what is marked in national standing army by national/social ideal. National consciousness has significantly influenced the primacy of conscious discipline in national standing armies, based on the acceptance of such an ideal as supreme value. At the same time, the army has additionally built national identity because military training also had an educational component - citizens have developed national consciousness and a sense of national mission, as a part of the moral education of soldiers. From the aspect of strategic culture, it could be said that the nineteenth-century political and military elite relied on national culture, developing strategy and military doctrine, and also tried to influence it, encouraging or creating those elements that it considered strategically important for accomplishing national goals.

⁵ Srđan Starčević, Ilija Kajtez, "Berkov doprinos proučavanju vojske kao društvene institucije", *Teme*, 3/2018, pp. 780-781. Ilija Kajtez, *Wisdom and Sword, volume II, Philosophers of the New Age on the Riddles of War and Peace*, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken, 2017, pp. 258-261.

⁶ Martin van Kreveld, *Transformacija rata*, Fakultet bezbednosti, Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2010, p. 49.

⁷ Karl fon Klauzevic, *O ratu*, Vojno delo, Beograd, 1951, p. 499.

⁸ Todor Pavlović, *Društveni razvitak i vojska*, Nova štamparija Davidović, Beograd, 1909, p. 32.

⁹ Edvard M. Erl, *Tvorci moderne strategije*, Vojno delo, Beograd, 1952, p. 113.

The establishment of the Serbian national standing army took place in the second half of the 19th century.¹⁰ Similar to France and other European countries, military reform in Serbia was a consequence of strengthening national consciousness and a strong sense of national mission.

During six decades of the 19th century, the Serbian military power grew from insurgent companies to standing national army. In accordance with what national elite considered as national goals - state independence, state-building, national liberation and unification - the establishment of a strong army meant its organization and training modelled on modern European armies. Conscription remained in our country until the end of 2010, when, on December 15, the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia passed the Decision on the suspension of conscription.¹¹

The objective of this paper is to consider the impact of military service on the development of the Serbian strategic culture, and also to consider the need for conscription in Serbia on the threshold of the third decade of the 21st century, from the aspect of military neutrality and the concept of total defence as two important points of the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia.

The foundations of the Serbian military doctrine and their time range

During “the long 19th century”, the European military thought wavered between the French and Prussian (German) theories of strategy, represented firstly in Jomini and Clausewitz, and then in Foch and Schlieffen. The young Serbian military thought was not different from others in its love for theoretical papers and concepts of the mentioned great theorists of strategy. However, during the reconsideration of the causes of the defeat in the war against Bulgaria in 1885, beliefs arose among the Serbian officers that the mere adoption of foreign tactical principles and doctrinal commitments was wrong and that each army should develop its way of conducting an armed struggle, which has to be the result of geographic, economic, cultural and military opportunities and possibilities. Thus, the artillery captain Mihailo Rašić wrote in 1887: “Their opportunities and those on the side of an opponent decide the way of fighting, and therefore we should

¹⁰ After Đak's rebellion in 1825, certainly for the sake of personal security and strengthening of personal power, Prince Miloš Obrenović recruited a little more than a thousand young men in twelve companies of standing army. Thus, Serbia got its standing army in 1826. Nevertheless, its main military strength, until the rule of Milan Obrenović, was relatively poorly trained, undisciplined and poorly armed People's Army. Since the great liberation goals of Serbia demanded a better, more efficient army, general conscription was introduced.

¹¹ Ljupka Petrevski, “Tradicija pravnog uređenja Vojske u Srbiji”, *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 130.

seriously deal with their study, so it will certainly bring greater benefits..."¹² This opinion according to its spirit deserves to be called Montesquieuian. As Montesquieu argued that many different conditions affect the development of good laws, that there is no universal best legal solution that refers to all states, and that law arises from the nature of things, and that laws have to be "appropriate to the people they have been developed for",¹³ some Serbian officers said and wrote that the Serbian Army must have its doctrine, appropriate to the social reality in Serbia and the Serbian cultural pattern. The hesitation between the German doctrine of enveloping attack and the French doctrine of decisive attack has been stopped. Namely, none of them has been chosen (at least not in its original form), and a new, Serbian military doctrine, which had its models and sources,¹⁴ as well as special features, was developed.

According to Slobodan Đukić, Colonel Dimitrije Đurić and General Dimitrije Cincar-Marković are the most responsible for the establishment of the Serbian military doctrine.¹⁵ Considering the position of Serbia at that time, Dimitrije Đurić concluded that Serbia could have Turkey and Austria-Hungary as enemies in future wars. Reflecting further on ways to fight these materially superior enemies, Đurić emphasized the importance of the army morale because in war it is necessary to "beat the enemy's weak side with our strong side."¹⁶ The national compactness of Serbia and the fact that Serbs live in both mentioned empires, which were heterogeneous in terms of national composition, united with a strong sense of national mission, got a prominent place in Đurić's ideas. According to Đurić, in order to fight enemy, it is necessary for the Serbian soldiers to study literacy, national history, geography of the territory where Serbs live and heroic folk songs. Thus, educating soldiers would build conscious morale based on national enthusiasm and gradually eradicate narrow-minded localism, which diminished the Serbian Army's capabilities to fight for national goals because soldiers could not develop conscious morale in ignorance "where and how long a Serb lives, and that a Serb, a Bosniak, a Croat, a Bulgarian, etc. are brothers, whatever their faith is."¹⁷

¹² Quoted from: Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, Vojna akademija Univerziteta odbrane, Medija centar "Odbrana", Beograd, 2019, p. 105.

¹³ Montesquje, *O duhu zakona*, Gradac, Beograd-Čačak, 2001, p. 17. and 21.

¹⁴ More in: Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, cited book, pp. 129-295.

¹⁵ "The main elements of the Serbian military doctrine were set by Colonel Dimitrije Đurić, and General Dimitrije Cincar-Marković revised and completed his teaching". Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, cited book, p. 126.

¹⁶ Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, cited book, p. 124.

¹⁷ Quoted from: Slobodan Đukić, cited book.

Cincar-Marković went a step further. Striving to find out which way of fight corresponds to the Serbian social character, he studied national military history. His research led him to reject the German doctrine of enveloping attack, and also offensive doctrine in general, despite the fact that all European armies of his time accepted offensive doctrines. Cincar-Marković defended such a bold difference in relation to the rest of Europe by claiming that Serbs won all important battles in their history by accepting enemy, i.e. in defence, with a later counter-attack. "To accept on the battlefield and to be a heroic warrior, intertwines all our beautiful poetry of our better past. Indeed, according to mental characteristics of our people, their temperament and national upbringing, and finally according to character traits that they do what they know, understand and carefully evaluate, there is no other way of fighting more suitable for our people than to accept, which says what an opponent is up to and what he wants, what and how he is doing, so that they ruin his work and get the most out of it."¹⁸ That is how the Serbian military doctrine of accept was born. "On the mountainous, rugged land of the Balkan Peninsula, enemy should first be stopped by defence, and then inflict decisive losses on him by counter-attack... The death of General Dimitrije Cincar-Marković in the May Coup in 1903 brought into question the survival of the Serbian military doctrine. However, he was outlived by the idea of accept, the defensive Serbian military doctrine. In the basis of the war plans prepared by the General Staff of the Serbian Army in the event of war with Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria, the idea of accept is permeating."¹⁹

Apart from the fact that these two Serbian officers from the second half of the 19th century can be called the founders of the Serbian military doctrine, they can also be considered representatives of two differently directed, but complementary currents within the same national strategic culture of Serbs.

The first current - the one advocated by Colonel Đurić - seeks to influence the shaping of the Serbian strategic culture with an active, in a sense enlightening approach in two ways: firstly, by education, whose goal is to strengthen national identity, adopt an appropriate value system and spread the belief in fairness of set national goals and, secondly, by institutionalizing the guiding ideas of its time, i.e. by establishing institutions, whose meaning is in the ability to act rationally in accomplishing national goals. It could also be called elitist because it implies the active action of the elite which shapes the mass; the direction of its action is from the elite to the people. The first task in this active approach to the Serbian national culture, therefore, is to bring closer and explain the great ideas related to solving the Serbian national issue, which are maturing in the minds of the national elite, to the people, to instil them into the people's hearts. At the same time, their flame should awake them as citizens, whose actions condition their execution and infuse them with moral strength to accept fight in the upcoming wars and endure the effort of fighting with the number and quantity of weapons of far superior enemy. This is

¹⁸ Cited book, p. 128.

¹⁹ Cited book.

where this task merges with the other one, at least in terms of establishing a strong and ready army. In order to make soldiers adaptable to military environment and accept many risks in a combat situation in war, they first have to accept goals of war.²⁰ In the national literature related to the army morale, and also the psychological literature that deals with the issue of adapting soldiers to military environment, a soldier who does not accept goals of war is considered an unadapted soldier. Simply put, a soldier has to feel that the thing he is fighting for is valuable and just. Martin van Creveld rightly claims that the issue of motivating soldiers in combat is different from the bare (material) interest that can be the real cause of war, and that it is firmly connected to social values.²¹

An active approach in shaping the Serbian strategic culture at the end of the 19th century was aimed to strengthen the morale of the Serbian Army, which was accomplished by educating soldiers. It should be said that Dimitrije Đurić's voice was by no means lonely. An entire movement in the Serbian military literature at the time was intended for soldiers and non-commissioned officers, and was founded by Lieutenant Colonel Jovan Mišković, Major Ljubomir Ostojić and Svetozar Magdalenić, Captain Kosta Jokić and Miloš Vasić and Lieutenant Milosav Živanović. They wrote and compiled manuals for soldiers, and also military primers, songbooks and textbooks. The manuals for soldiers offered also a place for the content in morale, international humanitarian law, hygiene, literacy and religion.²² The military textbooks that soldiers used to study not only their duties, but also the homeland's geography and national history, were particularly important. In that way, lessons for soldiers were unified with the key messages that were conveyed to them during their military service. After leaving the army, soldiers returned to their villages and towns better educated, literate and nationally enlightened. Thus, the ideas, instilled into soldiers during their military service, found their way to the remotest places in Serbia, which greatly contributed to the people understanding and accepting the strategic decisions of the elite, as well as that upon mobilization in its structure the Serbian Army has soldiers of high morale.²³

²⁰ "The loyalty to goals of fight and identification with goals of war ... is a necessary precondition for the manifestation of other fighting qualities." Vidimir Veljković, *Osnovi morala vojske*, Vojna akademija, Beograd, 2006, p. 207. "Of course, this implies that the people and army members know character and goals of war and accept them as an objectively given necessity, and one's own interest cannot be fulfilled without their execution." Neđo Danilović, *Moral vojske u građanskom ratu*, Zadužbina Andrejević i NIC "Vojska", Beograd, 2001, in: Borislav Grozdić, *Vojna etika, hrestomatija*, Vojna akademija, Vojnoizdavački zavod, Beograd, 2009, pp. 333-334.

²¹ Martin van Creveld, *Transformacija rata*, cited book, p. 150. and 156-157.

²² Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, cited book, p. 246-249.

²³ "The beneficial effect of literature for soldiers slowly penetrated the being of the Serbian soldier, strengthening his morale and discipline. The fruits of military education were harvested later, in Kumanovo, Bregalnica, Cer and Kolubara." Slobodan Đukić, cited book, p. 249.

The flow of thought of this current within the Serbian strategic culture starts from the need to build national identity, and to make the people nationally aware, in order to resolve the issue of the Serbian defence. Building an identity and awareness of it begins with understanding and adopting important ideas and concepts. Hegel argued that things first die in concept. This means that they first lose their meaning and significance for man and society, their meaning is erased and their purpose disappears, and only then they inevitably leave socio-historical reality. This thought of the greatest representative of the German classical idealism can vary, completely in the idealistic matrix, in the following way: all (great) things are first born in concept. One of the most important abilities of man and human communities is the ability to think and imagine. In order for a person or a human community to create something new, firstly it has to imagine it, so that Kant's position that social dynamics is based on ideological dynamics is justified.²⁴ The path from imagination to the execution of thought leads through desire, will, decision and ability to act²⁵, but the existence of stages on this path does not diminish the importance of thinking and imagining as the source or origin of work, especially since opinion can be taken as a starting principle in defining man²⁶ and/or his differentiation from the rest of the living world.²⁷ Jovan Babić uses these active powers (to think, wish, want, decide and act) to describe the freedom of person and to distinguish between the identity of things and the identity of person. Namely, only persons have freedom, and their open and imperfect identity is "a place of decision-making and acting, i.e. a place of freedom."²⁸ Babić also gives an interesting definition saying that life is setting goals and trying to fulfil them, where the place of making a decision about goals and trying to reach them is identity (individual or collective), and the fact of identity existence is a form of life.²⁹ This connection of life with the existence of decision-making power in social groups introduces us to the field of politics,³⁰ because politics is a social activity that involves decision-making on important common goals and directing society towards those goals.³¹ Collective identity exists as a form of life as long as it has active powers to decide on goals it would like to achieve and ways to

²⁴ Ante Fiamengo, *Saint-Simon i Auguste Comte*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 1966, p. 143.

²⁵ More in: Jovan Babić, *Ogledi o odbrani*, cited book, pp. 24-25.

²⁶ "Thought makes man great. (...) Man is only a reed, the weakest in nature; but it is a reed that thinks ... All our dignity consists, therefore, of thought." Blez Paskal, *Refleksije u samoći*, Astimbo, Beograd, 2003, p. 208.

²⁷ "We cannot refrain from thinking; that is how we differ from animals...". Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Filozofija povijesti*, Kultura, Zagreb, 1951, p. 27.

²⁸ Jovan Babić, *Ogledi o odbrani*, cited book, p. 25.

²⁹ Jovan Babić, cited book, p. 30.

³⁰ For the writer of "The Concept of the Political", Carl Schmitt, decision is the most important moment of political practice. More in: Srđan Starčević, Ilija Kajtez, Goran Vukadinović, "Rat u središtu političkog – aktuelnost Šmitovog pogleda na rat", *Vojno delo*, 1/2016, pp. 102-121.

³¹ More in: Srđan Starčević, *Revolucija i legitimnost*, Čigoja štampa, Beograd, 2020, pp. 21-25.

accomplish them. It, then, has the right to defend what it considers valuable - the values that are instilled into its identity and that define it.

The other current, whose founder is General Cincar-Marković, has the opposite direction of action - from the people to the decision-making elite. It could be called structuralist because it seeks to reveal and include in its work deep respect for socio-historical, political-anthropological and socio-psychological structures that cannot be changed or whose change is very slow. At the same time, it has a developed Montesquieuan sense of difference between societies: what is good in one society may not be good in the other. Established in different conditions (geographical, climatic, religious, customary, political, economic, etc.), they have different social characters, which is why they have to be governed and managed in different ways, which means that preparation for war as one of the means in political inventory, as well as the manner of warfare, have to be adapted to the specifics of society.

The logic of this current is correct. Making decisions that are not based on reality does not make much sense, provided that what decision refers to is really wanted. The real illustration is Hitler's movement of non-existing armies on map in bunker, while the Red Army conquered Berlin. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that decisions which do not correspond to "the nature of things", to use Montesquieuan expression again, can cause misunderstanding, confusion, unintentional, and even intentional resistance of those who should implement decision. Although decisions, in the sense that the word has in this paper, are made by political power, we should not forget that power itself is a two-way relationship (between the ruling and subordinate) and that its performances incorporate the opinions of those being governed. This is true of every government, not just in democracies because it is an archaic structure of government based on consent and reciprocity, as Claude Levi-Strauss noticed while studying indigenous communities in Latin America.³² This means that there is a connection between public opinion and decisions that are made - it can be added: especially in democracies - with the fact that it is clear that public opinion is formed³³ and that political elite in power (can) have a great impact on such formation, and well-rooted social institutions particularly influence it.

³² "Consent is at the same time the source and limit of power ... The second observation comes from the previous consideration: consent is the psychological basis of power, but it is expressed in everyday life through games of concessions and counterarguments between chief and his comrades, thus introducing reciprocity as the second feature of power. Chief has power, but has to be generous. He has duties, but he can get more women. There is a balance between him and the group between concessions and privileges, services and obligations, which is constantly renewed ... chief exists because in every human group there are people who, unlike others, love reputation for reputation, who are attracted by responsibility and public affairs mean not only a heavy burden, but also a reward for them." Klod Levi-Stros, *Tužni Tropi*, Zepter Book World, Beograd, 2011, pp. 385-387.

³³ Sartori wrote that thought processes take place in three ways: cascading down from the elite, boiling from the base up and identifying with relevant groups. Đovani Sartori, *Demokratija, šta je to?*, CID, Podgorica, 2001, pp. 125-126.

Implementing decision is also not a simple process because every activity implies effort and has to count on resistance. Collective identity, such as nation and state, requires mechanisms of appropriate properties that are the basis for the ability to act (and these are institutions³⁴), and also a narrative that will create a strong sense of justification and correctness in the minds of people, whose united and directed activity it counts on, i.e. the fairness of undertaken activities.

This means that the opinion of society members is important, both for making decisions about goals and for the practice of accomplishing goals. The closer this conclusion is to the truth, the more important is the issue of strategic culture for nurturing and protecting identity,³⁵ adopting a good strategy³⁶ for achieving goals and understanding the special cultural context that strategic decisions of the considered countries are made within.³⁷

It is interesting that the idea of educating soldiers to serve social ideal (which was changing) of Dimitrije Đurić and the idea of Dimitrije Cincar-Marković on the national style of warfare, with certain variations, remained in the spotlight throughout the 20th century and found their place in the Serbian Armed Forces, as well. The idea of conscious discipline that befits the democratic ideal before World War I was theoretically elaborated by Colonel Todor Pavlović.³⁸ Between the two world wars, the practice of educating soldiers with adequate literature continued, but this time with the intention of getting acquainted with a new, greater state, the Kingdom of SCS, i.e. the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the common South Slavic cultural heritage. In the period from World War II to the wars for Yugoslav heritage, the moral and political work in the Yugoslav People's Army had a prominent place, and the practice of publishing literature for soldiers and junior officers continued, with the inevitable ideological content on the front pages of these publications.³⁹ A deviation from the communist ideology was made in FR Yugoslavia and Serbia and Montenegro; the army morale is based on the tradition of liberation wars, but the idea of conscious

³⁴ "The reality of institutions, however, depends on what is accepted as their definition, and what is accepted depends on what is thought of them." Jovan Babić, *Ogledi o odbrani*, cited book, p. 45.

³⁵ Miloš Knežević claims that strategic culture can be described as the politics and geopolitics of identity. Miloš Knežević, "Pojava i pojam strateške kulture – odnos strategije i kulture: čemu strateška kultura?", *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 17.

³⁶ Stanislav Stojanović, referring to Brody, notes that the condition for a good strategy is good anthropology and good sociology. "The issue of social mobilization and homogenization around vital values of a community and loyalty to their protection is the foundation of a good strategy ... When it comes to strategy, the question of how feasible it is is particularly important, which directly depends on the availability of resources, and the readiness of people to carry it out". Stanislav Stojanović, "Posebnost odnosa strateške kulture i strategije", *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 47.

³⁷ Colin S. Grey, "Comparative Strategic Culture", *Parameters*, vol. XIV, No. 4, 1984, 26-32.

³⁸ Todor Pavlović, *O vojnoj disciplini*, Štamparija Dositej Obradović, Beograd, 1903.

³⁹ For example, see: *Uputstvo o ulozima i zadacima vojnih kolektiva u izgrađivanju i učvršćivanju moralno-političkog stanja i borbene gotovosti jedinica*, Politička uprava Saveznog sekretarijata za narodnu odbranu, Vojna štamparija, Split, 1975.

discipline based on the acceptance of values and the need to present them to soldiers during military service has been retained.

It could be concluded that military service, from its introduction until the entry into force of the Decision on the suspension of conscription, was used, among other things, for moral preparation of soldiers for potential later engagement, building awareness and knowledge of the main identity values and strengthening determination for their defence. Furthermore, military service provided the state with a great number of citizens competent for military tasks, who, to some extent, know and accept the goals that are to be achieved by engaging in the army.

Military neutrality and conscription

In her introductory speech at a conference on neutrality, referring to the meaning of the word, Mette Kjuel Nielsen argued that being neutral means not having an opinion, not being engaged, not caring, staying away, being indifferent and undecided, so she humorously concluded that being neutral, in short, sounds boring.⁴⁰ According to *the Dictionary of the Serbian Language* of the Matica srpska, a neutral one is “the one who does not interfere in a dispute, a conflict, that does not agree with either party, undecided; impartial”, and also “who is not under the administration, control of a state, party, free”.⁴¹ We will agree that neutrality defined in such a way does not sound boring.

From military perspective, neutrality is not boring because it does not mean giving up defence, but giving up attack or, more precisely, aggression.⁴² Neutrality really means distancing oneself from war as a desirable and acceptable way of resolving social conflicts, but not giving up on defending one's values and identity. “Independent and credible national defence is a necessary part of the concept of neutrality even (and perhaps above all) as a part of such a specific moral trait implied by neutral states that emphasize a peaceful approach to solving international problems.”⁴³ This inevitably accounts for the world we (try to) know, in which “reliance on power is still the main argument” in international relations.⁴⁴ It could be

⁴⁰ Nj. E. Mete Kjuel Nielsen, “Kako Zapad vidi neutralnost Srbije”, Igor S. Novaković (ed.), *Neutralnost u XXI veku, pouke za Srbiju*, ISAC Fond, Centar za međunarodne i bezbednosne poslove, Beograd, 2013, pp. 17-18.

⁴¹ Milica Vujanić et al., *Rečnik srpskoga jezika*, izmenjeno i popravljeno izdanje, (Miroslav Nikolić, ed.), Matica srpska, Novi Sad, 2011, p. 818.

⁴² Thus, not from attack as the main and decisive type of warfare, but from attack or aggression against other state. It can be noticed that this perfectly corresponds to the main ideas of the Serbian strategic style and the Serbian military doctrine from the pen of Dimitrije Cincar-Marković.

⁴³ Srđan Starčević, Srđan Blagojević, “Odnos srpskog društvenog karaktera i vojne neutralnosti”, *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 265.

⁴⁴ Srđan Blagojević, Ivan Gvozdenović, Slobodan Anđelković, “Značaj usklađivanja političkih i odbrambenih ciljeva za bezbednost države i društva”, *Vojno delo*, 5/2016, p. 149.

said, in the style of Donald Trump, that an alliance requires this ability - to be an ally, you must first have an army.

Although states that are neutral, or have been neutral for some time, have different experiences with neutrality, conditions and reasons for its choice, international (dis)respect for such a choice and unwanted confrontation with war, resulting (in)stability and identity issues, it can be said that in some of them neutrality has taken a prominent place in identity politics. This is the case with Switzerland, Austria and Sweden, whose citizens find the concept of neutrality very popular and considered as an important identity feature. The popularity of neutrality or a positive attitude of public opinion is very important because neutrality implies the readiness of state and its citizens to rely on their forces and be the backbone of their defence. Of course, like any other political orientation, neutrality implies rigidity in principle and flexibility in implementation. This can explain occasional and temporary greater or less deviation from the ideal of neutrality in real politics of neutral states. The implicit assumption is that a neutral state is not expected to have an "invincible" army, but the ability of credible defence that will, above all, deter a potential attacker.

Since it implies that the holder of defence is found within state, in the ability of one's society, and not out of it, in alliance as a community with others or parasitic, at the expense of others, neutrality proves to be very demanding. It really places high demands on state and society, both in terms of preparation/allocation for defence, and in terms of training and motivating citizens to defend key social values and collective identity.

It seems that the end of the 20th and the first two decades of the 21st century have been marked by two main challenges in motivating citizens (to prepare) for defence. The first refers to, both in a globalist and justified manner, pointing out the existence of risks and security threats that no single state can adequately face, no matter how powerful it is. The inability of state to counter global risks has produced the belief that right answers can only be found in collective, supranational association. However, since this association did not lead to Kant's eternal peace and a Kant's order in international relations, but to greater domination over each other, an order closer to Carl Schmitt's ideas rather than Immanuel Kant's ones, the problem of further diminishing the state relative autarchy arose, which can have its (mostly economic) advantages, but shows great weakness in times of crisis (e.g. migrant crisis or crisis caused by the new coronavirus). A part of this problem is the reduction in defence allocations in those countries that do not dominate, as well as pushing the defence issues to the margins of social interest.

The other problem is related to the emergence of "a fluid modern consumer society"⁴⁵ that produces "a crisis of ideals" and causes "a crisis of morale."⁴⁶ In this

⁴⁵ Zigmunt Bauman, *Fluidni život*, Mediterran publishing, Novi Sad, 2009, p. 60.

⁴⁶ Dovani Sartori, *Demokratija, šta je to?*, cited book, pp. 265-266.

society, the feeling that power is in the hands of global powers that not only escape the control of state, but condition, limit or control that very state, causes distrust in state institutions, political parties and political representation, which indicates "a crisis of democracy"⁴⁷. At the same time, consumer society changes the value system: the ideals of sacrificing or postponing the current pleasure in the name of great goals and the common good are being replaced by "the values of current pleasures and individual happiness".⁴⁸ In such conditions, the decline in interest in defence and military service is not only social reality, but also social necessity.

Bauman claimed that in such a society "there is not much chance for the growth of heroic patriotism, but it seems that in the era of small professional armies, state no longer needs heroes. Happy consumers, who are busy with their business, function extraordinarily, thank you very much..."⁴⁹ From the perspective of countries that rely on collective security system, a small professional army may seem like an optimal choice. However, is such an army, suitable for participation in multinational operations and military intervention in *ad hoc* coalitions, good enough to be Zeus' Aegis to the decision on neutrality, if it does not have enough reserve to raise its strength to the level of credible defence?

The motivation of citizens for defence in the 21st century is a special problem, which deserves separate consideration. It requires a serious and diverse long-term state approach. However, the problem of motivation is not only contemporary. However, its solution has always brought significant results. Thus, for example, at the end of the 19th century, no "Serbian citizen who was capable of service could become a civil servant, teacher, priest or monk if he did not perform service in permanent personnel, either full or short service",⁵⁰ but therefore relatively small "permanent personnel in the event of war formed an operational army of 305,500 soldiers ..."⁵¹ This sheds enough light on Bismarck's anecdotal reflection on Serbia as a forest hedgehog that bayonets instead of spines protrude from. Conscription may be unpopular with "a spoiled man" today, to use the expression of Ortega and Gasset, but politics should show creative power: just as a favourable economic environment is created, thus a favourable visionary environment has to be formed, as well, the notion of goals that are to be achieved. However, politicians in the age of interregnum (the expression by Titus Livius that Antonio Gramsci and Zygmunt Bauman launched into modern social sciences) often stop to listen to wishes and measure the popularity of various options. That is why politicians can be expected to advocate options that suit "a spoiled man", while those who give a competent

⁴⁷ Dragoljub Mićunović, *Demokratija, populizam, entropija*, Arhipelag, Beograd, 2018, pp. 150-158.

⁴⁸ Zigmunt Bauman, *Fluidni život*, cited book, p. 61.

⁴⁹ Zigmunt Bauman, *Fluidni život*, cited book, p. 60.

⁵⁰ Slobodan Đukić, *Strani uticaj na razvoj srpske vojne doktrine u XIX i prvoj deceniji XX veka*, cited book, pp. 43-44.

⁵¹ Slobodan Đukić, cited book, p. 56.

opinion must not do so in order not to betray their conscience⁵² and their profession.⁵³ For example, in neutral Austria, in the first year of the professionalized Serbian Armed Forces, in 2011, Chief of General Staff General Edmund Entacher criticized Defence Minister Norbert Darabos' plans to professionalize the Austrian Armed Forces and when it comes to defence rely solely on volunteerism, saying in *Profile* weekly magazine that such a decision is difficult to correct, and the change it brings is full of risk and without future.⁵⁴

In essence, neutral states do not give up on relatively great defence capacities. It is illustrative and instructive that the defence of Finland, which is a neutral country, with a smaller population than Serbia - at the time of the professionalization of the Serbian Armed Forces and when the Republic of Serbia had the National Assembly Resolution on the Protection of Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and Constitutional Order for three years, i.e. declared military neutrality - was based on territorial defence, which provides this country with 250,000 soldiers. Moreover, Finland cooperates with NATO, but its accession to the Alliance is an option supported by less than a quarter of voters, which is why this option is not on "the political menu".⁵⁵

After all, the decision on neutrality has to be accepted firstly within state and society.⁵⁶ Like any other decision, this one offers some advantages in exchange for agreeing to their unpleasant consequences at the same time. Joining collective security systems offers unity and protection of allies in exchange for compromise decision-making and narrowing the space for independent, free or outsourced enemy definition (especially for small countries); neutrality offers some guarantees of peace and freedom, in exchange for building integrity and capacity for self-sustaining protection of identity (albeit supported by international recognition of neutrality). This means that the consequence of choosing neutrality for a society is not only not giving up defensive war, but it also assumes accepting the entire burden of defence

⁵² "Conscience is what connects people with values, that is, connects them with the highest meaning of life." Čedomir Čupić, *Politika i intelektualci*, Čigoja štampa, Beograd, 2019, p. 15.

⁵³ More in: Dragan Stanar, "Profesija i moral", *Kultura polisa*, god. XVI (2019), No. 39, pp. 145-157.

⁵⁴ Minister Darabos relieved General Entacher of his duty on January 24, 2011, but he was reinstated as Chief of General Staff on November 7, 2011, by the decision of the competent state authorities. See: David

Wörgötter, „Darabos Fires Top General“, *Vienna Review*, February 5, 2011, <https://www.theviennareview.at/archives/2011/darabos-fires-top-general>, May 5, 2020, „Pleite für Darabos: General Entacher kehrt zurück“ (Red.), *Die Presse*, November 7, 2011, <https://www.diepresse.com/706578/pleite-fur-darabos-general-entacher-kehrt-zuruck>, May 5, 2020.

⁵⁵ Čarli Salonijus-Pasternak, "Finska – od tampon zone do članice EU", Igor S, Novaković (ed.), *Neutralnost u XXI veku, pouke za Srbiju*, cited book, pp. 53-56.

⁵⁶ Veljko Blagojević, „Potencijal politike neutralnosti Republike Srbije u savremenim međunarodnim odnosima“, in: Srđan Korać (ed.) *Uticaj vojne neutralnosti Srbije na bezbednost i stabilnost u Evropi*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, 2016, pp. 240-258.

on its forces. If the conclusion is correct, then there is no better instrument for training the required number of citizens and raising awareness of duties that neutrality entails from conscription.

The decision of the Republic of Serbia to be militarily neutral led, quite logically, to the adoption of the concept of total defence.⁵⁷ This concept implies, on the one hand, the existence of developed and mutually harmonized (connected into a system, integrated) defence capabilities of state, and, on the other hand, the existence of social awareness of the need and importance of state defence.

The armed forces have an important place in the concept of total defence, but they are by no means alone in defence affairs. On the contrary, the fact that defence is *total* means that it refers to the whole society, and not only to those who voluntarily choose military profession as their vocation and join the professional or active army. However, the place of the army remains special because it is a deterrent and the only one with a developed ability for an armed struggle. Therefore, the issue of the composition, size and equipment of the army is determined by numerous factors⁵⁸, of great importance in neutral countries, as well.

Achieving neutrality is, therefore, largely based on social acceptance of consequences of the choice (decision) to be neutral, situated in building the capacity for credible defence. The concept of total defence places hopes in a relatively great number of relatively well-trained soldiers. The question is how to get a sufficient number of such soldiers and how to motivate citizens to actively participate in potential military tasks, civil protection tasks and other tasks that give credibility to the defence capabilities of a neutral state. The principle of volunteering provides a good response to the challenge of motivating volunteers, but it certainly does not guarantee sufficient number, because, after all, no one has to show good will, especially in a fluid modern consumer society. Even those who have completed voluntary military service, after some time, can become conscientious objectors and thus excluded from the reserve. The principle of conscription, which can be objected to, primarily in terms of motivating citizens, gives better results in terms of number. It

⁵⁷ "Namely, today absolutely all European countries that develop their strategic culture on the basis of military neutrality, such as Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Sweden and Ireland, base their defence policy on the concept of total defence. The reason for that is the fact that the concept of military neutrality is based on voluntary non-alignment of states into the existing military alliances ... Therefore, military neutral states are forced to develop defence strategies and doctrines on their national defence capacities." Milinko Vračar, Goran Stanojević, "Strateška kultura Srbije i koncept totalne odbrane", *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 308; more in: Veljko Blagojević, "The Impact of Neutrality on National Doctrine Development", *Alliance Planning and Coalition Warfare: Historical and Contemporary Approaches*, Heeresgeschichtliches Museum, Wien,

Institut za strategijska istraživanja, Beograd, 2019, pp. 280-300.

⁵⁸ "The composition, size and equipment of the armed forces are conditioned, above all, by the country's political system, the level of overall development, the country's geostrategic position, demographic capabilities, military and defence doctrine." Srđan Blagojević, Ivan Gvozdenović, Slobodan Anđelković, "Značaj usklađivanja političkih i odbrambenih ciljeva za bezbednost države i društva", cited book, p. 139.

is quite certain that conscription ensures that a relatively great number of people are trained to perform various military tasks, which, in turn, contributes to the efficiency of the army in case of the need to mobilize and man the army until its war formation. Conscription should not be an economic problem either.⁵⁹ When it comes to the problem of motivation, it can be resolved by fairness - conscription must include all those capable of military service, without corrupt exceptions. However, what ultimately resolves the issue of motivation for defence is the willingness of citizens to accept defence as a duty, not as a choice. At that point, in the duty to defend collective identity, conscription touches the neuralgic point of the contemporary Serbian strategic culture - how the country communicates with the citizens regarding the *duty* to defend the country from an attack. If strategic culture is understood as "a sum of dominant attitudes and forms of behaviour"⁶⁰ in a given global social group, how does state (ruling elite) influence attitudes and shape desirable (or at least socially acceptable) forms of behaviour in the field of defence? Besides conscription, all other solutions, including school classes, seem insufficient. In addition, state has a duty to its citizens to prepare them for the tasks that await them according to its strategic and doctrinal commitments and documents. The old Confucian wisdom says: "Sending untrained people to war means betraying them."⁶¹ Therefore, military training of citizens can be considered as a duty of state.

Conclusion

Miloš Milenković rightly points out that strategic culture is learned behaviour and its development is a long-term, but manageable process.⁶² The claim is true because cultural patterns are not inherited, but learned, and state, although challenged by the hits of globalism, even in polyarchy,⁶³ has a great impact on the conditions that social ideal is built on within its borders. In the young modern Serbian state, there were two currents within the same strategic culture. The first, active and elitist one, tried to establish state institutions tailored to the national mission and an active, in a sense enlightening approach influences the shaping of the Serbian strategic culture. This meant, in the case of the army, to strengthen it, both in terms of the number of soldiers, the quality of weapons and the professionalism of officers,

⁵⁹ Čarli Salonijus-Pasternak, "Finska – od tampon zone do članice EU", Igor S. Novaković (ed.), *Neutralnost u XXI veku, pouke za Srbiju*, cited book, pp. 53-56. Dejan Stojković, Miroslav Glišić, "Serbia's Military Neutrality: Is It Economically Beneficial? ", *Defence and Peace Economics*, 2018, pp. 1-17.

⁶⁰ Veljko Blagojević, "Strateška kultura i nacionalna bezbednost", Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke, LXX, No. 170 (2/2019), p. 176.

⁶¹ Vladimir Maljavin, *Konfucije*, NNK Internacional, Beograd, 2014, p. 338.

⁶² Miloš Milenković, "Prilog određenju političkih činilaca strateške kulture", *Vojno delo*, 8/2019, p. 68.

⁶³ Robert Dal, *Poliarhija*, Filip Višnjić, Beograd, 1997, pp. 11-26.

and adequate morale, so the army became a forge of national spirit - soldiers who completed training took specific knowledge from national history, geography of areas inhabited by Serbs and folk poetry to the remotest parts of Serbia. The second, structuralist current included in the process of the development of the Serbian strategic culture the need to base decisions on the nature of things and to respect the specifics of the Serbian social character. Getting to know the Serbian social character was based on studying history, and also on the knowledge that the Serbian officers gained working with soldiers - that the motivation of soldiers to achieve national goals is limited by provincial entanglement and local narrow-mindedness, so they tried to remove them by educating soldiers. Thus, conscription in the beginning of the Serbian modern statehood played an important role in shaping and developing strategic culture, which continued in the Yugoslav period.

Freedom means the ability to make decisions and accept responsibility for consequences of such decisions. The decision on military neutrality also has its consequences, and one of them is overtaking the defence burden on one's shoulders. Any seriously founded and imagined neutrality is armed neutrality. It assumes the ability of credible defence because the defence of one's identity and values is not left to the will (or mercy) of others, especially since it does not count on an alliance.

The decision of the Republic of Serbia on military neutrality, therefore, logically led to the adoption of the concept of total defence. This concept implies the state duty to train and motivate a great number of citizens for military and civil defence tasks. This means that a small professional army is not enough. If it is supported by the reserve that is engaged on a voluntary basis, it is important to know that the voluntary principle, as a rule, implies high motivation, but not a great number of executors; especially in a fluid modern consumer society. It is cheaper for a relatively small country to introduce conscription than to maintain a great professional army. The issue of motivation is resolved by the willingness of citizens to accept defence as a duty. Since there has to be the communication between state and citizens about socially desirable forms of behaviour when it comes to defending the homeland, the question arises: where do citizens get acquainted with these forms of behaviour? Besides conscription, all other solutions seem insufficient.

Since conscription was not abolished, but suspended by the Decision on the suspension of conscription, passed by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on December 15, 2010, it is the time to think about renewing it. Conscription is the best way for citizens to understand the whole decision on military neutrality, and also to accept it as their free choice and a part of collective identity. Thus, conscription becomes/remains an important state fulcrum in the active development of strategic culture.

The decision on military neutrality requires a broad social consensus, which has to necessarily be preceded by a political consensus. Without trying to reach a broad consensus on neutrality as a national interest, the decision on military neutrality will only be used in internal political competition to accomplish short-term partial goals, thus compromising it.

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Улога служења војног рока у развоју српске стратешке културе

Општа обавеза служења војног рока у Србији уведена је у другој половини 19. века, са националном стајаћом војском. Аутори показују да је ова обавеза имала важну улогу у развоју српске стратешке културе у младој ново-вековној српској држави, али и у подстицању српске војне и политичке елите да чује „шапат“ српског друштвеног карактера и разуме оне структуре националне културе које су значајне, а можда и детерминишуће, за оно се што данас означава појмом стратешка култура. Развој српске стратешке културе разматран је кроз анализу деловања два различито усмерена, али комплементарна струјања, од којих је једно означено као елитистичко, а друго као структуралистичко. Без обзира на очигледне разлике, оба струјања су значајна за формирање српске војне доктрине, у освит 20. века, пред историјску буру балканских ратова и Првог светског рата.

Обавеза служења војног рока задржана је до ступања на снагу Одлуке о обустави обавезе служења војног рока, коју је донела Народна скупштина у децембру 2010. године. Имајући у виду да је Република Србија донела одлуку да буде војно неутрална, аутори сугеришу да је преиспитивање одлуке о обустави обавезе служења војног рока логична последица овог избора. Одлука о војној неутралности не захтева само да други (међународна заједница) поштују такву одлуку једне државе, него и њено поштовање унутар саме државе. То значи да држава која претендује на неутралност не одустаје од одбране сопствених вредности, нити их предаје другима на милост и/или чување, већ заснива (или одржава) способност кредибилне одбране свог идентитета и вредности. Терет последица такве одлуке је тим тежи што се не рачуна на војне савезе. Неутралне земље у Европи своју способност кредибилне одбране углавном заснивају на концепту тоталне одбране, али он подразумева и велики број грађана обучених за војне задатке и задатке цивилне заштите, што призива обавезу служења војног рока. Истовремено, служење војног рока је и најбољи начин да грађани разумеју утицај одлуке о војној неутралности, али и да је прихвате као властити слободан избор и део колективног идентитета. Тиме обавеза служења војног рока (п)остаје важна упоришна тачка државе у активном обликовању стратешке културе.

Кључне речи: *стратешка култура, служење војног рока, васпитање војника, неутралност, тотална одбрана*