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Leadership in Extreme Situations

Advanced Sciences and Technologies for Security Applications

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Michael Holenweger · Michael Karl Jager
Franz Kernic
Editors

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Editors
Michael Holenweger
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
Military Academy at ETH Zurich
Birmensdorf, Zurich
Switzerland

Franz Kernic
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
Military Academy at ETH Zurich
Birmensdorf, Zurich
Switzerland

Michael Karl Jager
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
Military Academy at ETH Zurich
Birmensdorf, Zurich
Switzerland

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Preface and Acknowledgements

To date, many studies have been published that deal with the topic of leadership in crisis situations, but only few works exist in the field of leadership in extreme situations. Since a distinction between crisis and extreme contexts, however, is crucial, further research in this area is needed. An understanding of the nature of leadership in an extreme setting can provide further insights for military and civil leaders in a regular context within their profession. Furthermore, the growing number of leadership scholars around the world who work and do research on this subject shows the importance and global recognition of this topic.

Armed forces personnel are frequently exposed to intense combat and potential mitigating effects which can affect the military performance in terms of cohesion, morale, and leadership. Issues such as why people act as they do in stressful and extreme situations or what constitutes the nexus between leadership/followership, organizations, and culture are addressed in this book. It covers general observations about leadership in extreme situations and specific case studies while also providing "lessons learned" approaches to be used for teaching military leadership in classes.

The idea for this book arose in 2015 when the Military Academy at ETH Zurich organized a congress on leadership in extreme situations which was attended by leadership scholars and high-ranking representatives of military, economic, and civil organizations in Switzerland. The idea of publishing a volume with international contributions was then further developed by the working group "Morale, Cohesion and Leadership"—chaired and coordinated by the Department of Leadership and Communication Studies, MILAK at ETH Zurich—at the ERGOMAS (European Research Group on Military and Society) Conference in Ra'anana, Israel (2015). For this book project, a number of international authors were won at this conference.

The aim of this book is to address key issues of leadership, morale, and cohesion and to conduct cross-national studies of social and organizational aspects of leadership in a military context. A variety of issues is included and the book chapters approach these topics from theoretical, doctrinal, or practical points of view.

While the majority of the chapters and their authors have a military background, the book is aimed at a wider target audience. The conclusions that can be drawn

from leadership in a military context can also be applied to other fields and are therefore useful for political, civil, and economic leaders. The intention of the editors is to provide a diverse framework of leadership that can be used by leaders in various professional fields. Furthermore, this book can be used as teaching material for students of leadership.

The editors would like to thank Cathryn Backhaus for the linguistic editing of this book. They also thank Andrea Wüst for additional editing and important inputs regarding the structure; without her efforts, this book would not have been possible. Furthermore, the editors would like to thank the Military Academy at ETH Zurich, and the Federal Department for Defence, Civil Protection and Sport for providing substantial support. Finally, we the editors and contributors would like to express our gratitude to the Chief of the Swiss Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Philippe Rebord, who approved of our project and made this book possible.

On behalf of the editors,
Michael Karl Jager

Birmensdorf, Zurich, Switzerland
January 2017

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About the Editors

Michael Holenweger has a Ph.D. in political science. At the Military Academy at ETH Zurich, he is the project leader of a research project that is concerned with strategic communication. He studied political science, communication studies and ethnology at the University of Zurich and teaches courses on, among others, the topics of leadership and communication. In addition, he acts as a consultant in politics, particularly in the area of security and foreign policy and as a consultant for crisis management in international companies.

Michael Karl Jager received his master's degree in political science, film studies and German linguistics from the University of Zurich in 2012. Since 2013, he has been working as a project assistant at the Military Academy at ETH Zurich. His main research fields are political leadership, film and leadership and civil-military leadership. His project work is focused on the different representations of military leadership in movies.

Franz Kernic is head of leadership and communication studies at the Military Academy at ETH Zurich. He is also professor of sociology at the Swedish Defense University in Stockholm (on leave) and a senior research fellow at the Austrian National Defense Academy in Vienna (on leave). He received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Vienna, his habilitation (post-doctoral qualification) in political science from the University of Innsbruck and in sociology from the University of the German Armed Forces in Munich. His main fields of interest include leadership and communication, security policy, military sociology as well as peace and conflict research.

Abbreviations

BC	Battalion Commander
BCT	Battle Combat Team
BRIMOB	*Brigade Mobil* (Paramilitary police)
CC	Company Commander
CCIP	Cadets' Corps Introduction Period
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CM	Crisis Management
CMM	Coordinated Management of Meaning
CNN	Cable News Network
COA	Course of Action
COHA	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
COHI	Circle of Health International
CRISMART	Crisis Management Research and Training
DBC	Deputy Battalion Commander
DCC	Deputy Company Commander
DISBINTALAD	*Dinas Pembinaan Mental Angkatan Darat* (Mental Guidance Service of the Indonesian Army)
DISPSIAD	*Dinas Psikologi Angkatan Darat* (Psychological Service of the Indonesian Army)
DLIMS	Defense Lessons Information Management System
DOTMLPF-I	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facility—Interoperability
ERGOMAS	European Research Group on Military and Society
ETA	*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna*
ETH	*Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule* (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOB	Forward Operating Base
GAM	*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (Free Aceh Movement)
GLM	General Linear Model

H1N1	Influenza A Virus Subtype H1N1
HRM	Human Resource Management
HTS	Human Terrain System
HTT	Human Terrain Team
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INFOOPS	Information Operations
JALLC	Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre
JFC	Joint Force Commander
KOPASSUS	*Komando Pasukan Khusus* (Indonesian Army's Special Forces)
LEC	Leadership in Extreme Conditions
LI/LL	Lessons Identified/Lessons Learned
LZ	Landing Zone
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MILAK	*Militärakademie* (Military Academy at ETH Zurich)
MIP	Military Introduction Period
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
MRE	Meal, Ready-to-Eat (Military field ration)
MSB	*Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap* (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency)
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OE	Organizational Embeddedness
OODA	Observe, Orient, Decide, Act
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PC	Platoon Commander
PR	Public Relations
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
RNLMA	Royal Netherlands Military Academy
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
SEAL	Sea, Air, and Land Team (U.S. Navy)
SLII	Situational Leadership model II
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
TNI	*Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Armed Forces)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USS	United States Ship
US	United States
Y2K	Year Two Kilo (Year 2000 Problem or Millennium Bug)

Part I
General Part

Introduction

Michael Holenweger

Abstract It seems that more and more people are affected by or working in volatile and dynamic extreme situations. These different forms of extreme situations require appropriate forms of leadership. Therefore, effective leaders must be able to adapt their leadership depending on the situation they are confronted with. The performance of leaders and teams in extreme situations is a matter of life and death and thus, the encouragement of research on leadership in extreme situations has a deeprooted impact on all leadership processes in the most dangerous and extreme situations. This article tries to facilitate a better understanding of leadership aspects in extreme situations and further research is required to understand the skills, abilities, and capacities leaders need in order to be effective in extreme situations. The studies in this book extend the knowledge on civil and military leadership processes and their conditions in extreme situations. Furthermore, they deepen our understanding of the skills, abilities and capacities which are required for leading well in extreme situations.

Keywords Leadership · Extreme situations · Extreme contexts · Learning from experience · Leadership development · Military science · Communication · Crisis management

Besides conflicts and wars, it seems that new extreme events arise in the 21st century, for example the explosion of the oil platform Deepwater Horizon, the Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster, superstorm Sandy, hurricane Katrina, terrorist attacks in Europe, the H1N1 virus, cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure and unique environmental catastrophes like drought and flood in places where they hardly occur. It would seem that more and more people are affected by or working in congenitally more volatile and dynamic extreme situations. These extreme situations often reflect a situation whereby something happens to us while we had actually planned something very different: Sudden, unexpected critical events,

M. Holenweger (✉)
Military Academy at ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland
e-mail: michael.holenweger@milak.ethz.ch

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massive changes, suddenly erupting violence or continuing violence that can occur in both the professional and private sphere. These extreme situations are often accompanied by feelings of powerlessness or paralysis as well as seemingly missing coping strategies. Such situations undermine people's sense of security and push organizations and their leaders, but also individuals to their limits.

To this day, there has been little research in the area of leadership in extreme situations. The expression "extreme situation" was used by Bettelheim (1980, p. 20) in order to describe the experiences he made during his stay in a concentration camp:

> We are confronted with an extreme situation when we find ourselves in situations in which our old adjustment mechanisms and moral values no longer help; some of them even put our life at risk instead of protecting us, as they used to. In this situation, we are deprived of our entire defense system and depending on the situation, we experience a set-back to such an extent, that we have to develop new attitudes, lifestyles and moral values. (Author's own translation)

Thus, in an extreme situation, a person is at the mercy of an event, an event that cannot be avoided and that could last for an indefinite amount of time, even until death. At the same time, people's own survival is permanently threatened and they do not have the necessary means to protect their lives and to avert the threat.

Most of the leadership studies that address research in extreme situations or extreme contexts were conducted in combat and military situations. Besides the military, there are various organizations e.g. police, emergency services, intelligence services, airlines and expedition teams within which teams engage in extreme environments (Boe et al. 2011; Kolditz 2007). In addition, most of the data analyzed in these military leadership studies was collected in simulated training settings rather than in real extreme or dangerous situations (Bass et al. 2003; Dvir et al. 2002; Schraubroeck et al. 2012; Shamir et al. 1998). These leadership studies focused on different leadership styles on predicting unit performance. A new qualitative research study for extreme events with a focus on shared leadership in military teams was introduced by Ramthun and Matkin (2014).

There is little consensus in the literature about the leadership style that is most effective in order to positively influence the performance of team members in a dynamic and unpredictable environment in extreme situations or in a dangerous context (Antonakis et al. 2003; Baran and Scott 2010; Bass and Riggio 2006; Campbell et al. 2010; Fisher et al. 2010; Hannah et al. 2009, 2010; Hollander and Offermann 1990; Weick 1993; Yammarino et al. 2010; Yukl and Fleet 1982).

In order to consider leadership in extreme situations from a scientific perspective, the expression 'extreme situation' firstly needs to be defined. Before it is approached in a systematic way, however, a couple of examples are to be mentioned that can be understood as extreme situations:

1. Natural disasters: Hurricane Katrina, which hit New Orleans in 2005, is often taken into account in case studies that research various subject areas, including the topic of leadership and (the management of) crises (Boin et al. 2010, among others). In 2004, a disastrous tsunami hit Southwestern Asia. Alvinius et al.

(2012) question people from aid agencies on the topic of organizational and individual leadership challenges.

2. Accidents involving people: Without providing an exact definition of this expression, it can be understood as an overall term, for example, for aviation accidents, accidents at sea or in the mountains. Leadership can be analyzed before, during or after the event. Terrorism also falls into this category, e.g. 9/11 or the attacks on the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo. Bligh et al. (2004) analyze leadership communication on the basis of the rhetoric and media coverage of President Bush before and after September 11th, 2001. Scandura and Sharif (2013) analyze a further example of an extreme situation, namely the mining accident in Chile in 2010. In their article, they focus on the aspect of team leadership.
3. Military situations: Most individuals perceive military or combat situations as extreme situations. In the academic literature, leadership in military situations is often discussed in the context of dangerous situations, as for example in Campbell et al.'s (2010) "Leadership in military and other dangerous contexts" or Yammarino et al.'s (2010) "Leadership and team dynamics for dangerous military contexts."

The literature shows that there are many similarities between leadership in extreme situations and leadership in dangerous situations or leadership in crisis situations. Massey and Larsen (2006), for example, define a crisis as a "major, unpredictable event that threatens to harm the organization and its stakeholders." The characteristics that distinguish crisis from an extreme event are the following: First, in extreme situations, the threat "must reach the threshold of intolerable magnitude", whereas in crisis, the threat is a high priority goal (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 899). Second, in extreme situations, the leaders may have a long preparation time, but they can still be extemporaneous when the situation arises. Third, low probability is a characteristic of an extreme situation. The final characteristic which separates crisis from extreme situations is the ambiguity of cause, effect and means resolution.

Considering the above-mentioned examples of extreme situations, it is interesting to note that people's lives are constantly at risk or that people have already been hurt (or even killed). This criterion is also mirrored in Campbell et al.'s (2010, p. 3) definition of a dangerous situation:

> We defined dangerous environments as those in which leaders or their followers are personally faced with highly dynamic and unpredictable situations and where the outcomes of leadership may result in severe physical or psychological injury (or death) to unit members.

In their definition, Hannah et al. (2009) mention three essential but not absolutely necessary conditions that constitute an extreme context. As a first condition, they mention the occurrence of events that have the potential for massive physical, psychological, or material consequences which take place in close physical, psychological or material proximity to the members of an organization. Second, these consequences must not be bearable for the members of the organization and third, they probably exceed the organization's capacity to prevent these extreme situations.

Based on these conditions, the following definition of extreme situations can be derived:

> We define an extreme context as an environment where one or more extreme events are occurring or are likely to occur that may exceed the organization's capacity to prevent and result in an extensive and intolerable magnitude of physical, psychological, or material consequences to – or in close physical or psycho-social proximity to – organization members. (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 898)

Furthermore, Hannah et al. (2009) define five dimensions that may, to a varying degree, occur in extreme situations. Each of these dimensions develops specific causes and contingencies which have an influence on leadership and should therefore be considered carefully when doing research on leadership in extreme contexts.

The first dimension of extreme contexts mentioned by Hannah et al. (2009) is location in time/temporal ordering. With reference to Bruning (1964) and Leonard and Howitt (2007) they suggest that what constitutes effective leadership may change over the stages of preparation, response and recovery from an extreme event. These stages are interdependent in such a way that what a leader does in one phase will influence other phases. For example, it is important how a leader interacts with the team's or the organization's physical, emotional and psychological recovery, because it will influence the team's or the organization's preparation for the next extreme situation. For a leadership theory, the impact of leadership on these transitions is crucial.

The second dimension is the potential magnitude of consequences from the threat that may occur. Research from Arndt et al. (1997), Foa and Kozak (1986), Lazarus and Alfert (1964) and Lazarus et al. (1962) shows that extreme situations with more intense threats can produce reflexes such as emotional responses, fear, high levels of stress, terror and mortality salience. The moral intensity and the moral issues of leadership will increase, when the extent of the potential consequences is perceived in a certain situation (Butterfield et al. 2000; Hunt and Witell 1986; Jones 1991).

The level of probability of the consequences that may occur and which can change in their extremity is the third dimension (Laporte 2007; Leonard and Howitt 2007). Occurring threats which will be perceived by the team members will also have an impact on the team's willingness of operating in extreme situations. If the threat is on a low level, Hannah et al. (2009) expect organizations to probably be more self-satisfied, while they expect leaders and team members to overcome some of the laggardness and to prepare for these extreme situations and danger if the magnitude and probability of threat increases (Pauchant and Mitroff 1992; Pearson and Mitroff 1993). Consequently, the probability and magnitude of extreme situations will affect the leadership process.

In terms of defining extreme contexts, Hannah et al. (2009) propose proximity as the fourth dimension. Proximity can be categorized in different ways including physical, psychological or social proximity. Physical proximity refers to team members' closeness to danger. Psychological or social proximity means how close leaders and followers appeared to the extreme situation and those members who are involved. The distance between leaders and followers has an impact on how to

prepare for and perform in extreme situations and could influence the leadership process (Howell et al. 2005; Little 1964; Mack and Konetzni 1982; Shamir 1995; Yagil 1998).

The fifth dimension is the form of the threat itself. Hannah et al. (2009, p. 908) specified that the potential consequences of extreme contexts could "be classified as physical (e.g. death, injury, exhaustion), psychological (e.g. post-traumatic stress, shell-shock), or material (e.g. hurricane or fire damage to a city)." Each of these threats may be multidimensional and can occur in combination and therefore requires a different leadership response.

Hannah and colleagues suggest several factors in extreme situations that would degrade any negative effects that help leaders to perform more effectively, as well as factors that might worsen performance problems. Hannah et al. call these "attenuators" which include psychological (e.g. optimism, positive emotions, self-efficacy, resilience), social (e.g. physical response networks, cohesion, morale, supportive social networks), and organization resources (e.g. technology, financial resources, adaptability, perceived support) which improve the performance in extreme situations. On the other hand, intensifiers such as time (urgency, frequency, duration) and complexity increase the pressure on leaders and decrease performance in extreme situations.

The model proposed by Hannah and his co-authors raises a whole set of important questions: What exactly is leadership in extreme situations? Which organizational and external factors influence leadership in extreme situations? Does political or social pressure have an impact on leadership abilities or decision-making? How do leaders behave when facing extreme situations? Which skills and abilities do leaders need to have in order to be successful in extreme situations? What are the stress responses of leaders who are not able to influence the teams' requirements in extreme situations? Was there ever a point when the leader felt that the situation was out of control and he/she either hesitated in his decision-making or was not able to make a decision? Which (ethical) education, character traits and attitude are necessary for leaders to head teams effectively in extreme situations? Which influence do lessons learned have on leadership in extreme situations?

Hannah et al.'s definition of the dimensions present in extreme contexts constitutes a conceptual framework and explains the uncertainty regarding the most effective leadership style. Osborn et al. (2002, p. 797) bring forward the argument that "leadership and its effectiveness, to a large part, are dependent upon the context. Change the context and leadership changes." This uncertainty could be proven in various studies that were conducted under specific conditions of extreme situations. This distinguishes the significance of a contemplation of internal (e.g. team, organization) and external (e.g. environment) contexts. The goal of the model is to serve as a toolbox for further research in the field of leadership in extreme situations. The unique dimensions are not present in normal contexts and influence the drive of leadership. The model can be understood as the most important attempt in the literature to represent extreme situations and leadership in an abstract construct, detached from specific examples or case studies. Bass et al. (2003) and Hannah et al. (2009) demonstrate in their research that adaptive leaders lead more

effectively in a fast-changing environment because they are able to give a more adequate response to the challenge of an extreme situation. Gladstein and Reilly (1985) identified the fact that when a threat becomes overwhelming, team members expect their leaders to centralize their authority and determine measures. In their research, Bass (2008) and Ziegart et al. (2002) have shown that leaders dealing with extended stress are more effective when their leadership style provides structure, priorities, clarity of roles, effective communication, coordination, competence, supports team spirit, focus, a sense of humor and sufficient preparation. This leads to the conclusion that different forms of extreme situations require different forms of leadership. Therefore, effective leaders must be able to adapt their leadership depending on the situation he or she is faced with. Sweeney's (2010) research findings imply that a lack of competence leads to a lower reevaluation of trust and thus to less effective leadership.

The performance of leaders and teams in extreme situations is a matter of life and death and therefore, the encouragement of research on leadership in extreme situations has a deep-rooted impact on all leadership processes in the most dangerous and extreme situations. Leading in extreme situations is heavily influenced by individual attributes, because in any life-threatening situation, the leader is expected to take on personal responsibility for his team members and for the performance of the team. The deficit of reliable measures for extreme contexts poses a major challenge for researching leadership in extreme situations. This special situation serves as the initial point for this book which tries to facilitate a better understanding of leadership aspects in extreme situations. Since more and more organizations may potentially be confronted with extreme situations, further research is required to understand the skills, abilities, and capacities leaders need in order to be effective in extreme situations.

The book is organized into three parts. The main focus in all three parts is on leadership in a military context. It covers articles from different research disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, ethnology, political science and management which focus on different leadership aspects. The extreme situations, leaders and teams described in this book include both present-day and historic cases that happened in civil and military settings. Part I serves to introduce the reader to the concept of leadership in extreme situations and has a focus on different leadership aspects like group behavior, team issues, morale, cohesion and leading under severe stress. Part II expands the discussion by focusing on leadership in extreme situations and military settings. The authors highlight views on leadership norms, the cultural dimension of violence, military duty, social navigation and individual capabilities essential to effectively lead organizations and teams in times of extreme situations. Part III identifies lessons learned and educational aspects. It includes suggestions as to how leaders can improve, considerations about lessons learned, studies that consider officer socialization as a starting point for in extremis leadership and historical case studies from battles in Guadalcanal and Iquique.

The goal of the articles included in this book is to offer a fresh perspective on leadership in extremis and to stimulate research on topics of civil and military leadership in extreme contexts. The studies should extend the knowledge on civil

and military leadership processes and their conditions in extreme situations. This original book includes chapters by various scholars from across the globe with long-lasting experience in the field of leadership, specifically in the field of military leadership. This book is aimed at a variety of audiences, including scholars, students, military professionals, managers, executives, business leaders and others who are curious to understand the basic essentials of leadership as they occur in extreme situations. In sum, I believe that this book extends the research field of leadership in extreme situations and offers findings on the behavior and appearance of leaders and teams who are faced with extreme situations and how to survive in these settings.

Franz Kernic explores the impact of sudden death on leadership dynamics and group behavior. In a military context, death is ubiquitous. On the basis of observations made among a military unit in a peacekeeping operation when death occurred without warning, social mechanisms are explained by means of applying Levinas' theory. The sudden death of a group member calls one's own invulnerability into question. Before a dangerous mission starts, death is often trivialized in order to protect oneself psychologically. Since one's own death seems to be unlikely and the idea of is rather abstract, people are usually not concerned with the topic of mortality. As a result of denying their own mortality and the illusion that a healthy body makes them invulnerable, soldiers unconsciously put themselves in danger. Sociology considers death as a social process and mortuary rituals vary among cultures. Furthermore, rituals facilitate the management of death. Levinas' approach emphasizes the importance of the ethical dimension of such situations. Franz Kernic provides recommendations for the training of leaders that help prepare them for leading in extreme situations. He suggests that leaders also consider ethical aspects in order to reestablish social bonds within the group and to successfully evade negative effects when death occurs. Leaders have to understand the cultural and social dimensions and, resulting from these, the reactions to death in order to do a good job.

Erik K. Stern shows that the literature on leadership in crisis situations makes a relevant contribution to leadership in extreme situations and that it enables additional research in this field. Core competencies from the field of crisis management, such as preparing, sense-making, decision-making, meaning-making, terminating and learning, can be applied to leadership in extreme situations. Stern is convinced that current research on leadership in extreme conditions should rely more broadly and profoundly upon the existing literature on crisis management and highlight synergies. Since people's perception of what is considered to be risky and dangerous differs fundamentally depending on the context, the differentiation between crisis and extreme situations is, according to him, subjective and in the eye of the beholder. In his view, conceptual and empirical developments in the field of leadership in crisis situations create additional potential for compatibility and complementarity to leadership in extreme conditions. Hannah et al.'s leadership in extreme conditions framework should, according to Stern, also consider political leaders who make life and death decisions as well as mass media organizations operating in extreme contexts, e.g. war and conflict zones, or areas affected by natural disasters.

Joseph Soeters and Tom Bijlsma show that every state can be confronted with situations that become extremely dangerous for the citizens involved. As the

example of the Dutch city Enschede illustrates—in 2000, a disastrous fireworks explosion caused 23 deaths and 950 casualties—industrial nations are no exception. Such disasters cause extreme conditions that are characterized by insecurity, time pressure and risk of death for the victims as well as for the emergency workers. Effective crisis management should therefore be concerned with three challenges: crisis prevention, crisis management, and post-crisis management. Leadership skills are based on military leadership theory and include, among others, resilience, the will to act and professional expertise. Soeters and Bijlsma question the universality of these skills and claim that they only work under certain conditions and therefore, have to be adjusted to current threats. They argue that leaders must no longer have all of these skills themselves but that the team as a unit needs to develop certain essential skills, e.g. to keep an overview of a dynamic context, to be able to maintain effective communication within the team or to pass on the role of the leader at the right moment. A good leader is able to recognize that a fellow team member is better qualified to take over the role of the leader in a specific situation. Hubris should be avoided at all times.

Eraldo Olivetta argues that in a military unit, cohesion has a bearing on its operational efficiency. Leadership affects morale, team spirit as well as cohesion. Over the past decades, the armed forces of the Western world have changed with respect to their organization and culture. Therefore, finding an answer to the question "to what extent has the function of leadership in maintaining cohesion changed?" is the aim of the article. Olivetta hypothesizes that leadership changes radically in a military context and he analyzes the skills leaders need to have in order to be able to cope with these changes. The evaluation of interviews conducted with Italian officers who have gained experience in asymmetric warfare shows that the troop's morale has a considerable effect on operational efficiency. The troop's morale is influenced by seven endogenous and exogenous elements. The separation from the troop and the loss of people who are close have, among others, a particularly strong influence on the morale. Olivetta concludes that the understanding of leadership needs to be adapted. The focus is on leaders whose central ability is emotional intelligence which is needed to strengthen the cohesion and the morale of the troop and to decisively influence the efficiency of operations.

António Palma Rosinha, Luís José Sameiro Matias and Marcos Aguiar de Souza explain to what extent leadership as a skill plays a central role in military mission accomplishment and they focus on chains of command and the control thereof. Military personnel accomplish missions under extreme conditions that are characterized by unpredictability and lack of information. A central element is a fast analysis of the situation, as it influences the decisions made by the leader as well as the safety of the troop.

Rosinha, Matias and de Souza analyze the specific characteristics of military leadership and how they change in extreme conditions. The example of the Spanish police and military who were threatened by the Basque terrorist organization ETA in the 1980s forms the basis of the case study. The results of the analysis show that in order to maintain cohesion within the troop if confronted with uncertainty, danger and doubt, an authoritarian leadership style is essential. In extreme

situations, the dominance of the leader propagates determination, resilience, trust and courage. A central conclusion is that preparedness for battle is no longer solely dependent on traditional factors such as firepower or defense, but that it is also determined by human factors.

Using the example of the most devastating earthquake of the 21st century in Haiti, *Emily Welty and Matthew Bolton* show how the state was dependent on the help of NGOs, as neither international organizations such as the UN nor the state itself was, due to the level of destruction, able to organize help. Responses to natural disasters are influenced by political, social and economic shifts and depend on the help of volunteers often working through small, informal and non-governmental channels. The operation of the volunteers was not coordinated and, due to their lack of experience, the volunteers, had little knowledge about the country they were deployed to. Welty and Bolton talk about "voluntourism" and define voluntourists as those "who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society and environment." This voluntourism forces volunteers to engage in long-term solidarity with people in need. Based on their observations, Welty and Bolton claim that the efforts of running short-term volunteer programs constitute an attempt to solidarize with marginalized communities. Drawing on the experiences from short-term volunteer programs in Haiti, they identified ten practices for leading volunteers in areas facing humanitarian crises, which are grouped into three categories: humanizing the encounter, careful planning and implementation, and accountability and integration of learning. The ten practices are: (1) Learn and listen rather than do and tell. (2) Counter exoticism and resist pity. (3) Weigh local versus global travel. (4) Pay attention to timing and duration. (5) Appoint mature, contextually aware leaders. (6) Send experts rather than untrained volunteers. (7) Plan strategies for advocacy. (8) Cultivate appreciation of complexity. (9) Debrief and critically reflect. (10) Build long term relationships with host communities.

Using the example of Russia, *Nadia Douglas* shows to what extent military leadership serves as a form of internal control of the armed forces. Military leadership norms of the armed forces are rarely associated with civilian leadership principles and societal norms. This needs to be changed as the military is increasingly becoming more professional and, at the same time, also more impermeable.

In the West and in Russia, military leadership is based on a strong hierarchy and a linear system of 'command and obey'. Military ethics is concerned with the question of what is right and what is wrong. Consequently, military actions are not only based on technical knowledge but also on judgement regarding the handling of complex and unpredictable situations. Judgment requires a certain degree of self-knowledge which, in turn, is an important aspect of internal control in the armed forces. Self-control and accountability mechanisms are therefore important elements of democratic civilian control of armed forces.

The Russian Army consists of a heterogeneous mixture of different ethnic cultures. Due to leadership problems, violence, brutality and human rights violations often occur. The commonly known *dedovshchina* and another type of hazing, the

so-called *zemlyachestvo*, are examples of practices that are well-established in the Russian military. Civil organizations are trying to improve the situation as well as the relationship between the Russian society and the military. The democratic society should, in order to have control over the armed forces and therefore, also over its own safety, ensure the armed forces' rights and liberties.

Maren Tomforde shows that the use of military violence results in enormous emotional stress—this applies to both, soldiers and victims. The ISAF operation in Afghanistan marks a turning point for the Bundeswehr. For the first time after World War II, German soldiers had to participate in combat actions. This meant that leaders had to take the responsibility for making decisions about life and death. The aim of her research is to find out how different superiors and subordinates have dealt with combat situations and whether the use of military violence has an impact on the culture of the Bundeswehr.

The survey shows that leaders find it difficult to talk about their emotions and their responsibility as they are expected to be strong and reliable. The situation is different with regard to the soldiers: After their combat missions, they have an intensive debriefing with their group leader in which they not only talk about tactical aspects but also about personal emotions. Not talking about emotions over a long period of time is very stressful for leaders.

The missions in Afghanistan have changed the soldiers as they had to fight in order to survive in extreme situations. In addition, the experiences they gained in combat missions have also influenced the Bundeswehr and will have an impact on its development over the next few decades.

Lisa Ekman digs deeply into the question of how Western armed forces understand their obligations toward foreign populations. Until recently, the duty of a Western army was to defend the borders of the country and to protect the civilian population. New types of conflicts and emerging threats have, however, extended the objectives of the armed forces. At the moment, Western armies mainly support foreign states and civilians affected by armed conflicts or humanitarian crises. Whether viable and lasting peace can be achieved in a certain area highly depends on its civil population. However, after the unsuccessful missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the usefulness of Western armed forces to protect civilian populations abroad is rather questionable, as being in contact with the foreign army can put the local population at risk.

The case study clearly shows that the developments in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to discrepancies between the political and military understanding of duty. Politics insists on a more expansive interpretation of military duty that also includes the protection of foreign populations. Military leadership, in contrast, sees its sole duty in the effectiveness of its troops and thus, showing solidarity with the civilian population is only required if it also increases military effectiveness. This view is mirrored in the ethical motto of 'Duty, Honor and Country'.

The conflicting understandings of duty within the U.S. military compromise the cohesion as well as the fighting power of the armed forces: military personnel with high exposure to combat are less empathic toward the needs of the local population.

This supports Lisa Ekman's claim that the understanding of military duty is rather dynamic.

Ophir Weinshall Shachar, Henrietta Cons Ponte and Eyal Ben-Ari examine military leadership principles from a processual perspective. The development of leadership is understood as a process that is composed of trial and error situations between superiors and subordinates, but also between military personnel and civil society. The study shows how the way military superiors lead their subordinates in combat situations is influenced by social motivations. The interviewed Israeli commanders who actively participated in the Second Lebanon War acknowledged the importance of having conversations with the soldiers. They regularly informed their troops about the combat operation and their unit's next action steps. This kind of communication established a shared mental model which helped to coordinate the troop. A central leadership task was also the invention of new military concepts, roles and structures which were adjusted to the specific circumstances of the war situation. Additionally, the restructuring of new units for special missions or the possible involvement of the soldier's parents also had an impact on the leadership style of the officers. Shachar, Ponte and Ben-Ari illustrate that leadership mainly results from interactions between different actors in a dynamic context which, in turn, is shaped by social and cultural restrictions.

In their case study, *Eri Radityawara Hidayat and Rachmad Puji Susetyo* describe how a Non Commissioned Officer of the Indonesian Army's Special Forces who took over the role of an extraordinary leader and organized the necessary first aid for the survivors of the massive earthquake (9.1 on the Richter scale) that occurred in the Indian Ocean 2004 and which had its epicenter northwest of the Island Sumatra. It was the third strongest earthquake since the beginning of the seismic measurements and caused a series of devastating tsunamis along the coast of Aceh. At the same time, a civil war was taking place in this province as the local population started to rebel against Jakarta's central government. In Indonesia, approx. 105,000 people died as a result of the natural disaster; civil and military leaders mainly fell victim to the tsunami. The NCO led the survivors to higher ground in the mountain where he immediately established contact with the people who lived there. He was able to convince them of the fact that the survivors from the coastal area immediately needed help as the whole area was cut off from the outside world and could not rely on help from the state.

Hidayat and Susetyo conclude that the process of selection, the training as well as the values that are taught by the military are crucial factors for being a successful leader in an extreme situation. Future military training should include leadership in extreme situations and take both military and—as the present case shows in an exemplary way—civil aspects into account.

Carmit Padan explains in her article how leadership can, in a complex and dynamic context, be defined as a process in which a common interpretation of reality is communicated to the subordinates. For this reason, by means of organizing and processing the collected information, the superior first needs to create their own reality. In this process, situations are automatically organized and defined on the basis of past experience. The interviewed Israeli officers used three criteria

for defining a crisis event: function, control and organizational order. 'Function' refers to the unit's ability to accomplish a mission and to carry out orders. The responsible officers are in 'control' if they continue giving orders and also supervise their implementation. 'Organizational order' means that the unit is able to maintain a procedure that has been trained.

Padan observed that people's perception of the same event differs depending on their rank and function. Whereas platoon commanders and company commanders defined certain events as crisis events, battalion and brigade commanders defined the same events as skirmishes. Padan concludes that the way officers define a situation depends on the intensity of their organizational embeddedness in the armed forces. The findings suggest that the contested nature of organizational meanings exist in both, civil and military organizations.

Based on interviews with army officers and some non-commissioned officers who had deployments in support of Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, *Deirdre Dixon and Michael Weeks* analyze how leaders communicate with their team and make sense of the situation. In doing so, they try to close a research gap as hardly any research has been done on the topic of *in extremis* leadership and the existing literature is more of a theoretical nature. In order to accomplish a mission, the analysis and structuring of information as well as the military decision making process are essential. Central in this is how leaders decipher information through filters so they can develop an appropriate manner to act. On the basis of their model, Dixon and Weeks illustrate that the three variables 'situational awareness', 'self-efficacy' and 'emotional intelligence' could influence the way how information is interpreted. In extremis leadership is characterized by the fact that leaders and their team are in danger and communication is affected by external factors; thus, clear and comprehensible communication with the team is crucial for leaders in order to accomplish their mission.

The study shows that officers who have mental flexibility, a sense of duty and self-confidence were best prepared for dangerous situations. Mental flexibility was of particular importance in order to develop solutions that do not lie within the usual thought patterns. Since too much thinking outside the box could, however, block decision-making processes, clear priorities had to be set, which could only be accomplished by means of mental flexibility and a strong sense of duty.

Based on the example of Takur Ghar where joint U.S. military forces fought in a military conflict against Al-Qaeda-backed fighters in Afghanistan, *Christopher Kayes, Nate Allen and Nate Self* show that with respect to leadership in extreme situations, learning is quite a challenge, as performance under stress constantly decreases. Additional challenges leaders have to face in extreme situations are unreliable information, situational novelty, unclear and shifting goals and ill-structured situations.

Kayes, Allen and Self introduce three concepts in order to overcome the challenges related to leadership in extreme situations: thrownness, depaysement and collateral learning. The first concept, thrownness, means that leaders have to deal with events over which they have limited control. Depaysement refers to the feeling of loneliness and the placement out of one's comfort zone. Experiences made in the past may no

longer be completely relevant in the present. In order to better deal with new situations, leaders should develop new approaches and ideas. An important aspect of the third concept—collateral learning—is, apart from the content, also the process of learning, as it prepares leaders to operate in extreme situations. The focus of collateral learning is on the experiences and insights made during the learning process. This learning process, in turn, provides the basis for how a leader will react, learn, perform, or otherwise act during an extreme situation. Kayes, Allen and Self conclude that in the context of extreme situations, it is not enough to only trust their training but that soldiers also need to trust in their judgment.

Therese Heltberg and Thomas Jellesmark explain that after an extreme mission or a mission with a tragic outcome, intensive debriefings take place, the so-called lessons identified (LI) and lessons learned (LL). Questions to be answered are: What did we learn from past missions? What learning potential did we miss out on? Heltberg and Jellesmark focus on the Danish Army's concept of experience-based learning and observe that this concept is not always applicable as every situation is new and unique. Moreover, they examine what further advantages the concept of LI/LL has in addition to the obvious ones: Does the concept of LI/LL have an effect on the way leaders lead and give orders? In order to answer this question, they use the method of second-order perspective, i.e. they observe how observers use the concept of LI/LL when dealing with their subordinates.

Within this concept, the most important part is the abstraction of the experienced event, which includes understanding, summarizing and generalizing the events. In the debriefings, potentials and pitfalls related to the delimitation of incidents as well as the categorization are discussed. Heltberg and Jellesmark suggest that the categorization should be limited to three activities: First, narrative selection of punctuations concerning incidents (specific episodes, actions, and interpretations within specific stories); second, fragmentation of experiences; and third, translation of personal experience (physical and emotional) into knowledge management artifacts (e.g. guidelines, handbooks, etc.). The three categories are based on assumptions that the article critically calls into question, thus encouraging further research to discover new ways on how subjective and lived experiences can be used by individuals in organizations. Heltberg and Jellesmark conclude that intensive personal experiences can be lost if they are classified into categories that are too rigid.

Sander Dalenberg examines the effects different activities in the officer education at the Royal Netherlands Military Academy have on leadership behavior. The research examines whether the perception of how aspirants think they are expected to lead after their training changes as a result of the activities in the first weeks of military education. The focus is on situational leadership which allows leaders to adjust their leadership behavior to the capabilities and motivation of their subordinates.

Situational leadership development at the Royal Netherlands Military Academy does not, however, achieve the effect it aims for. Although aspirants learn about different leadership behaviors, the activities do not foster the use of this variety of leadership styles and, as a consequence, they restrict themselves to using only one. Thus, after their training, aspirants are only able to choose between different

leadership styles to a limited extent. The results show that the trained leadership skills are important with respect to leadership in extreme conditions. Central skills that are learned are analytical and critical thinking.

Using the example of the turning point of World War II, the battle on Guadalcanal, *Hitoshi Kawano* examines the characteristics of combat leadership exercised by Japanese and American officers. In order to find out whether there are cultural differences in *in extremis* leadership, he compares the different leadership styles.

Differences with respect to leadership can be ascribed to the *gyokusai* code, based on which in so-called “banzai charges”, the Japanese charged with bayonets against American machine guns until all Japanese officers were either dead or unable to fight. The soldiers would rather die an honorable death than surrender and thus bring disgrace upon their families. The interviews conducted by Kawano reveal that the soldiers fought for their families, their honor and the Japanese society.

Officers of the Japanese Army did not share information on combat operations with their soldiers. Because of their discipline and mentality—the soldiers would rather die in an honorable manner than survive in a dishonorable way—the soldiers sometimes obeyed the orders given by their officers blindly.

The Americans, on the other hand, were not fighting for idealistic reasons, they simply wanted to accomplish and end the mission. With respect to their combat motivation, cohesion played an important role. In contrast to Japanese officers, American officers maintained open communication and considered sharing information with their men to be an important leadership principle.

Kawano shows that despite the cultural differences, both the American and Japanese officers shared more or less the same principles of *in extremis* combat leadership (e.g. ‘protect your men’, ‘lead by example’, and ‘take good care of your men’) in the combat on Guadalcanal. These principles have remained (almost) the same to the present day and are thus still relevant within the armed forces.

Finally, *Alfredo Gorrochotegui Martell* is concerned with the life of Arturo Prat, a Chilean frigate captain and naval hero who, in the war of Chile and Peru against Spain, took part in the naval combat against the Spanish fleet. In 1879, during the war of the Pacific, he took the command of the *Esmeralda* corvette shortly before the ‘Naval Battle of Iquique’ started and led the blockade of the Peruvian port of Iquique. In the course of the four-hour-long battle, the Peruvian monitor *Huáscar*, commanded by Miguel Grau, rammed and finally managed to sink the *Esmeralda*.

The battle of Iquique as well as the death of Arturo Prat are considered to be the turning point of the war and have therefore laid the foundations for the subsequent victory of Chile. His opponents praised Prat for his courage and valor. On the basis of Prat’s impressive leadership qualities, Gorrochotegui Martell draws conclusions about practical suggestions that can be applied to the present. These leadership qualities were the result of training, self-development and the influence of the social environment. With respect to leadership in extreme situations, leadership qualities such as determination, caution, generosity, acting according to higher convictions, confidence and humility are essential and should serve as a basis of today’s military leadership training.

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Author Biography

Michael Holenweger has a PhD in political science. At the Military Academy at ETH Zurich, he is the project leader of a research project that is concerned with strategic communication. He studied political science, communication studies and ethnology at the University of Zurich and teaches courses on, among others, the topics of leadership and communication. In addition, he acts as a consultant in politics, particularly in the area of security and foreign policy and as a consultant for crisis management in international companies.

Facing Death: The Dynamics of Leadership and Group Behavior in Extreme Situations When Death Strikes Without Warning

Franz Kernic

Abstract Death plays an important role in defining extreme situations. This chapter focuses on the impact of sudden death on group behavior and leadership dynamics. It presents and discusses observations made among a military unit in a peacekeeping operation when death occurred without warning. It also examines sociological research related to this topic, particularly studying the disruptive potential of death, practices and strategies to socially absorb shock, mortality salience and mortality rituals. Then it studies responses to death and representations of death through the lenses of social phenomenology and Levinas' social theory. It argues that this perspective provides us with deeper insights into the human relationship with death and group and leadership dynamics when death strikes. This approach also allows us to acknowledge the importance of the ethical dimension in such situations. Finally, the chapter provides some recommendations for leadership training in order to meet the specific challenges of leading and acting in perilous environments.

Keywords Leadership · Morality · Death · Sociology of death · High-risk environment · Extreme contexts · Military leadership

1 Introduction

Empirical studies and social science theories on leadership and group behavior in extreme contexts and under demanding conditions are still rare in the vast fields of modern leadership literature. Considering both the widely spread desire among people to take their own leadership stories to the extreme and the common assumption that 'real' leadership needs to be proven in extreme contexts and difficult situations, this general lack of serious in-depth analysis may surprise. Of course, the unstable and dynamic world of extreme and perilous conditions makes it

F. Kernic (✉)
ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland
e-mail: fkernic@ethz.ch

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difficult for researchers to grasp such leadership dynamics and to build a solid theoretical framework. Extreme situations and conditions are per se outside the normal course of business and leadership. They are rare and somehow different, frequently regarded as an exception to the rule, thus emphasizing the uniqueness of a specific case.

In recent decades, leadership research has started to pay more attention to leadership processes in extreme contexts and under demanding conditions, regardless of all controversies about a commonly accepted definition of 'extreme conditions' (Campbell et al. 2010; Dixon 2014; Giannantonio and Hurley-Hanson 2013; Haas et al. 2012; Nilsson 2011; Yammarion et al. 2010). Whereas one group of scholars has tried to distinguish between ordinary and extreme conditions by looking at the leader's individual stress level, thus defining leadership under extreme conditions as 'leadership under stress' (Larsson 2010; Sjöberg 2012; Hancock and Szalma 2008), others have sought to explore the various 'typologies of extreme contexts' and study the different factors that influence such leadership processes (Hannah et al. 2009, 2010; Mileti et al. 1975). In addition, an increasing number of researchers have attempted to study 'in-extremis leadership' by systematically analyzing the individual stories of leaders, primarily military and police officers as well as firefighters, after experiencing combat, combat-like or life-threatening situations (Kolditz 2006, 2007; Fisher et al. 2010; Sweeney et al. 2011; Dixon 2014).

This chapter focuses exclusively on one specific key aspect of extreme situations: the phenomenon of death and dying. It aims to examine the impact of death on leadership processes and group behavior from a social-phenomenological perspective. The chapter is a sociological sketch with the goal to draw a general picture of the dynamics and challenges of leadership and group behavior in life-threatening situations and under perilous conditions. It also discusses the status of today's sociological research with respect to the phenomenon of death in extreme leadership contexts and introduces a new theoretical approach to this field of study. This approach will be grounded in phenomenological social theory. In sum, the general goal of this article is to contribute to a better understanding of leadership dynamics both leaders and followers are part of. The central question will be the following: How does the sudden death of a group member or of other people nearby affect leadership dynamics and group behavior?

The article is structured in the following way: First, I will present and discuss observations concerning leadership and group behavior in a military context when the sudden death of a comrade occurs. These observations were made in the context of the Austrian Peacekeeping Study conducted among an Austrian UN peacekeeping unit deployed at the Golan Heights in the late 1990s (Haas and Kernic 1998; Kernic and Haas 1999). Second, I will examine the existing sociological literature on death and dying and explore how sociological research on this topic contributes to a better understanding of leadership and group behavior in extreme situations. Third, I will introduce a new theoretical approach to the study of death. I will argue that a phenomenological perspective provides us with new insights into the dynamics of leadership and social interaction under extreme conditions and in

perilous contexts. Finally, I will draw some general conclusions and give a few recommendations for preparing leaders to successfully meet the specific leadership challenges under such circumstances.

2 General Observations

First of all, it is interesting to note that in our everyday language people refer to death in two opposite situations: when it appears to them that (a) there is too much or (b) too little action. On the one hand, people speak about feeling "bored to death" when there is little excitement and no or almost no action. On the other hand, people talk about "facing death" or "escaping death" when they refer to near-death experiences, particularly when human beings manage to escape a life-threatening situation where the course of action apparently reaches its climax and seems to be at its highest and most intense phase. This custom indicates that whenever we speak about death, we already touch upon what is considered the most important extremes and limits of human being: the dichotomy of life and death, activity and passivity, action and non-action, finality and infinity.

The starting point for this analysis is the specific leadership dynamics and social interaction of the studied Austrian military unit in a traditional peacekeeping operation where both above-mentioned aspects seemed intertwined in the ordinary everyday life. In general, facing death meant to the members of the military group, above all, becoming aware of the life-threatening environment to which they were exposed. But at the same time they also distanced themselves from this undesired extreme, which was seen as an unknown and unwanted 'otherness.' It was not fear that guided the social interaction of these soldiers but rather a specific sense of vulnerability that was expressed in everyday communication and social life.

In terms of methodology, the chapter builds upon the observations made among this Austrian military peacekeeping unit, but it is important to note that other studies in this field show similarities regarding human behavior and communication when they study social issues of sudden death in a military context (Van den Berg and Soeters 2009; Bartone 2006; Beckmann 2004; Kümmel and Leonhard 2004; Soeters et al. 2007; Vinitzky-Seroussi and Ben-Ari 2000; Carroll et al. 1996; Gibson and Sipes 2008; Harrington-LaMorie 2011; Yen and Lin 2012; Zentrum Innere Führung 1996). This is also true for human behavior in the context of traumatic events related to the confrontation with a high number of casualties in natural disasters or, for example, airline tragedies or terrorist attacks (Katz and Bartone 1998; Benedek et al. 2007; Proulx et al. 2004).

The following section outlines the observations in chronological order. It starts with a short description of the ordinary everyday life of the unit and examines the general perception of and attitudes toward death among soldiers in a risky environment (pre-mortem stage). Then it studies the changes in leadership and group behavior that occurred immediately after the sudden death of a comrade (immediate reaction stage). Finally, it looks at the most important steps on the way back to what

is seen as 'normal life' or normal leadership and group behavior (post-mortem stage).

Observations and interviews with soldiers during the pre-mortem stage clearly showed a general awareness of the risky environment and, in principle, also a certain acceptance of the fact that one could be wounded or even die in the course of this military operation. But the dominant attitude among soldiers toward death and dying was a rather fatalistic stand as well as a general radical denial of this possibility. Such an attitude was heavily reinforced by leadership. One could observe that, in order to avoid agony, depression or any negative impact, the issue of death and dying was largely put aside. When addressed in everyday communication, it frequently took on a personally 'detached' character, something that did not belong to the reality one felt part of. It was rather perceived as an 'otherness', far away from oneself and something that needed to be kept at a certain distance, outside the inner circle of one's own group. Soldiers frequently expressed that they did not volunteer for this military mission in order to die. On the contrary, a certain readiness to kill became visible, so that death would strike the enemy instead of oneself. To most soldiers, life appeared risky in theory but, in practice, death seemed highly unlikely. Consequently, during the interviews many soldiers admitted that they had largely neglected any need to take specific precautions for the 'worst case', i.e. getting killed (e.g., no last will, no emergency plan for families and friends, etc.).

Narratives constructed around the military unit itself drew the picture of a healthy and vivid body, frequently even portrayed as a role-model of youth, activity and eternity. The unit's own invulnerability was emphasized permanently and leadership played a decisive role in this respect. Fitness and body-building seemed to be proper strategies to achieve such a healthy status. Undoubtedly, it appeared an important leadership task to constantly reinforce this picture of a healthy and invulnerable (individual and collective) body and to demonstrate strength as well as the willingness to keep death outside the unit's social boundaries. Interviews and observations also indicate that the established everyday routine was seen as a guarantee that tomorrow would not be very different from today. In fact, most soldiers rarely experienced the precariousness of their mission and everyday life in the pre-mortem stage. A certain feeling of invulnerability appeared to be dominant even in the perilous environment or in dangerous situations. The frequent use of the expression "everything under control" points to an obviously strong desire of the military to act and remain inside the boundaries of controllability and predictability.

Furthermore, the study of group behavior and group language regarding death and dying during the pre-mortem stage brought the following additional aspects up for consideration: (1) The general feeling of boredom frequently resulted in a risky behavior of individuals, particularly on the small group level, due to the fact that courage was highly esteemed and group dynamics came into play. Sometimes, in order to get the desired 'kick', soldiers even put their lives at risk without doubting their own invulnerability. (2) A huge number of soldiers appeared to be highly attracted by violent and horrific deaths in movies. War and horror movies showing heroic (military) behavior with people dying in action were very popular among

soldiers. Of course, such action was always seen as a different reality, something clearly outside their own world. (3) The ordinary everyday language was filled with direct and indirect references to death. In this respect, social conversation employed a number of euphemisms. Frequently used terms were *kill*, *destroy*, *finish*, *terminate*, whereas the word *dead* in its fatal sense was generally avoided or given a different meaning (e.g., the expression 'dead soldier' meant an empty bottle or a drunken person). Death itself appeared to be female (note that the German word 'Tod' is masculine) expressing both danger and eroticism at the same time. In sum, there was a general trend toward using euphemisms when the phenomenon of death was addressed.

Summing up the general observations during the pre-mortem period, one can say that death and mortality played a central role in soldiers' everyday language as well as in their social life and interaction. The phenomenon of death was present and absent at the same time (Kernic 1997). The awareness of life-threatening circumstances was highly compensated by a socially constructed assumption of invulnerability based on the concept of a healthy body and a strong, masculine collective identity. This picture of oneself was strongly reinforced through leadership.

The unexpected and sudden death of a comrade changed this situation dramatically. Leadership was immediately challenged, particularly due to the fact that the illusion of invulnerability was brutally destroyed. An immediate shock-wave among all group members occurred. Leadership was practically 'speechless' and at least for a short moment one could have the impression that it was the deceased person who was taking over control and the key leadership role. This particular situation can be described best as follows: Regardless of military rank and chain of command, group behavior suddenly seemed to follow an inner voice or secret code of conduct as if the deceased himself[1] had spoken and given certain orders. In this unique situation and under the described circumstances, leadership dynamics and group behavior altered in the following significant ways:

(1) After a short moment of silence and speechlessness, an intense discourse about death and dying was launched. Everyone seemed to be eager to participate in this discourse which was initiated bottom-up, thus confronting leaders with a number of urgent questions, particularly the so-called why question. Many soldiers raised the question why things did get "out of control", directly and indirectly blaming leadership and/or outside (hidden) forces for the death of their comrade. In this discourse, the "we" started to play a significant role in the sense that the sudden death was viewed as something that had struck and affected the entire unit. Interestingly, there was the impression that death had struck all of them, i.e. the entire unit, and not only silenced the deceased person. Indeed, the shock wave seemed to paralyze most of the group members.

[1]These observations refer to the sudden death of an Austrian soldier on 19 April 1997. A few weeks later, on 30 May 2017, two other soldiers were killed in the line of duty. I am grateful to Harald Haas, co-author of this study, who was observing the troops during the entire study period, conducting interviews and collecting material in the mission area.

This was in fact a disruptive element significantly altering the course of action in leadership and group behavior.

(2) Group behavior in the immediate aftermath appeared highly influenced by social and cultural norms and traditions. Without waiting for orders, soldiers started, for example, to pray, light candles etc., showing behavior that followed the cultural and social standards of their respective society (cultural habits and socially learned responses). By doing so, they appeared to go through a moment of catharsis, gradually allowing them to re-establish order. Leadership and chain of command were also re-established, particularly due to the fact that the commanding officers followed the same cultural and social standards and gradually took on a new important leadership task: the management of death.

(3) Despite the fact that the flow of normal everyday group activities was disrupted and significantly altered, a desire to return as fast as possible to what were seen as normal conditions emerged quickly. To achieve such a return, the sudden death needed to be socially organized and managed. In this respect, leadership was first of all preoccupied with the medical and legal management of sudden death. But it was also confronted with a number of new social and ethical issues, particularly linked to individual psychological reactions such as grief, mourning, fear, rage or a general sense of losing personal worthiness. In this context, the issue of a proper (or generally acceptable) justification and interpretation of what exactly had happened gained importance.

(4) At this stage, group behavior was also characterized by a high curiosity of the survivors. One may even speak of an obsession with details of the events, particularly how and where death struck. One could observe a strong desire to know the concrete circumstances and every step of how death occurred. In particular, soldiers wanted to see the place where death struck.

(5) Everyday language with respect to the particular circumstances of this death, one could observe a desire among soldiers to make the 'bad death' of their comrade a good death (compare Bloch and Parry 1982; Howarth 2007, p. 134). Soldiers started to gradually speak no longer about a bad, unjust and violent death but rather about a "fatal accident" or "fateful moment."

The third and final stage (post-mortem) can be seen as an attempt at re-settlement and of gradual return to normal group behavior and leadership dynamics, including a reconstruction of pre-mortem narratives. The following group behavior could be observed during this period: (1) The group started to clearly express its urgent need to re-organize social life and re-establish order and normality. To this purpose, everyone got involved in the process of managing death. Though the death of the soldier had led to an initial crisis of leadership, reactions quickly changed their pace and started to reaffirm collective solidarity. (2) Elements of death-accepting and death-defying appeared intertwined in everyday conversation. Specific strategies for buffering the shock were developed, particularly through rituals. No funeral was held at the military camp, but soldiers paid their last respects ('last farewell'). The commanding officer emphasized the importance of their contributions to the success of the mission. It was even argued that their death was not the end of their personal

mission. They were laid to "rest," "sent home," "dismissed," sent on their "final journey"—in other words, the image was created that they had still a mission to accomplish. At this point, some soldiers expressed their conviction that, according to a popular military saying, "old soldiers never die—they just fade away."

3 The Sudden Death in a High-Risk Environment—An Interpretation in the Light of Sociology

In this chapter I will review sociological approaches to the study of leadership and group behavior in the face of death in extreme contexts. Of course, issues of death and mortality play an important role in many disciplines. Psychology, in particular, extensively studies individual responses to mortality. In this context, it is not only the issue of stress related to the death of a partner, friend or close person (which ranks among the top stressors or life changing events according to the Holmes and Rahe stress scale; Social Readjustment Rating Scale, SRRS) which is of interest for this analysis, but also phenomena such as grief, mourning, bereavement, death anxiety, and fear (see, for example, Stillion and Attig 2015; Gray 1987; Schulz 1978; Lewis et al. 2000; Loo and Shea 1996). But since the focus of this article is on leadership, the social relationship and interaction among individuals as well as leadership and group dynamics are put at the center of this essay. Therefore, sociological aspects of dying and death as well as respective research in the fields of military sociology and leadership in extreme contexts will be at its heart.

In general, sociology's contribution to the analysis of death and dying as social phenomenon is related to the following three different fields (Howarth 2007, pp. 2–6): (1) Sociology perceives dying and death as social issues (Aiken 2001; Kastenbaum 2002, 2012; Doka 2007). Therefore, its main focus is not the isolated individual in the first place (as is the case with many psychological studies) but rather the social context, the group, society, i.e. the social framework in which individuals interact. (2) Sociology—frequently in close cooperation with anthropology and cultural studies—observes and analyses how different social entities (societies and cultures) deal with mortality. It tends to see social responses to death not as something pre-given by nature but rather as 'socially constructed' responses and reactions. (3) By analyzing the social construction and social management of death in society, sociology also provides a privileged access to a better understanding of the leadership dynamics and social interaction of everyday life. In other words: Human social interaction 'in the face of death' also reflects key elements of our everyday social interaction in society.

I will take up these three different perspectives and try to put them together as a coherent sociological picture. My main focus will be on the group (military unit) as an entity composed of a certain number of individuals but also being part of a society and culture. On the basis of the observations outlined in the previous chapter, this approach studies a specific sub-culture of society, i.e. the military

culture of a unit exposed to a high-risk environment. Consequently, I will look at: (1) Sociological research that particularly reflects on how death affects social systems and individuals alike. I will show that the respective literature mostly focuses on the *disruptive potential of death*, demonstrating that, as Kearl (1989, p. 69) points out, "such disruptions not only have socially dysfunctional but also functional consequences" and that "social systems have developed social mechanisms for dampening death's forces of chaos and even transforming them into enhanced social solidarities." (2) Concrete *shock absorbers* (particularly toward acting under stress) that societies and sub-systems develop in order to deal with death. In this respect, I will examine which specific strategies military units pursue in order to limit the dysfunctional consequences of death. (3) *Mortality salience* and different kinds of *mortuary rituals*. In this context, I will ask how sociological theories help us to understand human behavior in the face of death, particularly regarding in-extremis leadership.

This all can be seen as an attempt to shed light on group behavior and leadership in the event and aftermath of fatal accidents and deaths in extreme contexts.

3.1 The Disruptive Potential of Death

Numerous sociological studies see death as an 'event' (something we do not have control over) that "removes social actors from their position of responsibility and interdependency" (Kearl 1989, p. 69) within a social system. One could also say that death puts an end to the 'actorness' of an actor and therefore needs to be seen, in general terms, as an important disruptive element or moment that affects an operating social system. Regarding the ability of death to disrupt—and even to destroy—social groups, two important sociological observations have been made: (1) As Kearl (1989, p. 84) points out, "the smaller the group and the more unique the contributions of individuals, the greater the ramifications of a single death." The disruptive potential of death for any social group depends, at least in part, on its actual size. "Entire social systems can be destroyed or fundamentally altered if there are too many deaths of socially critical individuals" (ibid., p. 83). (2) Leaders play a crucial role regarding group coherence and social order. Therefore, the disruptive effects of death on the social order of a group is higher when a group leader dies (ibid., p. 70). This explains why military leaders have been main targets in wars and why snipers usually target commanding officers. "The political disruptiveness of the power vacuum caused by a leader's death is further amplified by the potential crises of succession" (ibid., p. 70) (e.g., unclear chain of command).

Sociological research has highlighted that for a social system confronted with death, the disruptive potential of death creates a need to absorb shock and to limit the destructive effects of the respective death, particularly when death strikes suddenly and unexpectedly. In order to survive, social order needs to be restored as soon as possible. This clearly indicates an urgent need for collective responses to death, i.e. an agenda to limit and finally erase the disruptive potential of death.

From this perspective, leadership and group behavior in the face of death can be seen primarily as a collective social response to death that is entirely directed towards guarantying the survival and functioning of the social system.

3.2 The Social Shock Absorbers of Death

Kearl (1989, p. 93) emphasized the importance of 'shock absorbers' and strategies "to minimize death's disruptiveness—even possibly taking advantage of its functionality." Organizations designed to perform well in high-risk environments usually pay much attention to establishing clear rules and procedures for succession in the case death strikes. They also emphasize the importance of operational functioning and consequently ascribe a higher status to functions and social roles than their incumbents. Strong task-orientation seems to be a common way of socially disengaging in favor of mission success and, to a certain extent, depersonalizing those members of the organization who are at highest risk.

These strategies make it possible to take one important step further in the analysis and to reconsider the situation of the observed military unit and its group behavior through the lenses of specific choices that needed to be made in order to absorb the diagnosed shock: The military group itself seemed to apply a mixture of such strategies. Of course, leaders clearly stressed task-orientation and operational functioning but they did not depersonalize the deceased as quickly as one might expect. Interestingly, there was room for the deceased as individuals and their unique personalities. However, their individual stories were gradually replaced by (collective) stories of their survivors. In this respect, organizational behavior showed many similarities with the one that can be observed in smaller communities and tribes, particularly when it comes to the importance attached to collectivist ideas such as 'brotherhood' or 'comradeship.' The uniqueness of a military organization operating in a high-risk environment obviously consists in its capability of seeing the sudden death of its individual members not through the lenses of an 'individual drama,' but rather something that strikes all of them ('collective drama'), thus requiring new collective efforts to turn death's disruptiveness into something positive and functional by everyone in the unit.

In addition, there are other practices and strategies that serve as social shock absorbers of death: Funerals ('mortuary rituals') are very important due to the fact that they contribute significantly to the reinforcement of social bonds. Of course, such rituals vary among cultures and are of dynamic nature. Nevertheless, they always help to reinforce social structures and personal meaning systems. Mortuary rituals are not only important for the construction, transformation and reinforcement of collective identities but also for individuals' self-identities. In this respect, it has been argued that sudden death has a strong, sometimes damaging impact on the self-identity of survivors (Howarth 2007, p. 169). According to Howarth (ibid., p. 169), "a sense of self is constructed in relation to the identity of others";

the "death of a significant other results in the loss of a substantial element of the self." The urgent need to remove (or at least cover up) any 'damaged body' from the scene seems to be linked to damaged self-identity. Only healthy/vivid bodies seem capable of representing a well-functioning social system; and only healthy bodies seem to function well as markers for both collective and self-identity.

3.3 Mortality Salience and Mortuary Rituals—Sociological Aspects

Our basic knowledge about death is based on the experience of dying and death of other people. Human beings know about their own mortality only due to the death of someone else. This marks the baseline for all philosophical, theological, anthropological, psychological and sociological inquiries into the phenomenon of death. In the context of leadership in extreme situations, this issue has been highlighted in particular by modern terror management theory, emphasizing the importance of death salience for group behavior, death anxiety and self-esteem (Solomon et al. 1991). The basic assumption of the concept of 'mortality salience' is that the human constitution is characterized by both an intellectual knowledge about one's own mortality, i.e. the inevitability of death, and a desire to avoid precisely this fate. Therefore, practices of death denial are so prominent in our societies. According to terror management theory, a general feeling of vulnerability and fear of death has a strong impact on the course of human action and behavior, particularly when humans are reminded of their own mortality. In-extremis leadership theory takes up this concept of mortality salience, defining it primarily as an increased awareness of the life-threatening situation people find themselves in high-risk environments. This awareness seems to have specific consequences with respect to leadership performance (Matthews 2008, p. 166ff.). Some studies indicate that mortality salience in high-risk environments may result in higher risk-taking attitudes and behavior among military personnel in dangerous contexts (see the bibliography in Sookermany et al. 2015).

Terror management theory has stimulated a number of research studies which are relevant for this analysis as well. In particular, the studied linkage between self-esteem and mortality salience has significant leadership implications. Harmon-Jones et al. (1997) emphasize the positive effect of high self-esteem on buffering anxiety, arguing that individuals with increased self-esteem are capable of better coping with the effects of mortality salience. In the field of military sociology, one study found that mortality salience could cause in increase in support for military action (Pyszczynski et al. 2006). Conducting empirical studies among the Dutch Stabilization Force in Iraq in 2004, Van den Berg and Soeters (2009, p. 16) showed that "actual death threat has a significant effect on accessibility of death-related thoughts as well as on the self-perception of the soldier's

performance, motivation, and identification with the armed forces." Yen and Lin (2012, p. 51) showed that people reminded of their own mortality "were more likely to escalate their level of commitment by maintaining their current course of action."

Studying mortuary rituals practiced by the military, one discovers a close bond between the nation-state and the military. There are numerous psychological gains that result from a subordination under the modern nation-state. Kearl (1989, p. 301) highlighted its potential of "bestowing immortality" on its citizens, thus allowing a transcendence of death. Consequently, modern nation-states have greatly influenced mortuary rituals and the final rite of passage in both non-military and military contexts. In the military, this linkage between nations-nation states and the military profession becomes visible in symbolic action such as flag draping the coffin or the use of state symbols. From this perspective, soldiers are viewed as representatives of their respective nation-state, thus allowing military leaders to talk about duty, honor and offering one's life in the service of the country (sacrifice). Risk-taking attitudes and behavior inside the framework of the armed forces appears justifiable and reasonable. Here, leadership shows a political and religious dimension that allows leaders to speak and act on higher (metaphysical) grounds.

Summing up, human behavior in the face of death and individuals' attitudes toward death and dying are embedded in a broader cultural framework. They are both reflections of culture and acts or efforts toward transforming and reconstructing social life. Existentialism and psychological thought, recently in particular terror management theory, have tended to see a general fear of death among humans as a central source for individual and social behavior, and this not only in extreme or life-threatening situations (Solomon et al. 1991, p. 101ff.).

Leadership plays a significant role in this context, particularly by reinforcing and strengthening a certain social and political order that serves as a crucial basis for sense-making and social identity. Nevertheless, facing death always radically calls into question our self-image and basic views of the world and social life. Thus, Kearl (1989, p. 473f.) is right when he points out that "when a significant other dies, a portion of oneself likewise dies, never again to be reactivated. And, to a large extent, it is this loss of self that is mourned, which is possibly why ambivalence toward the deceased is so often experienced."

4 Interpretation in the Light of Phenomenology

Western culture has a long tradition of philosophical thinking about finality. Everything seems to have a beginning and an end (alpha and omega; birth and death; creation of the universe and final judgment/final days; etc.). The importance of the concept of ending or finality is also reflected in traditional Western religious systems and beliefs (e.g., eschatology) and social and political discourses (e.g., end of history; finis terrae). In this tradition, concepts of death and finality seem to

complement each other, so that we ask a question such as: When precisely does life start and end?

Despite this powerful position of the idea of finality in Western civilization, for many centuries, the phenomenon of death itself did not enjoy any kind of privileged position in philosophical thinking until the 20th century. But the early 20th century philosophy brought death to the center stage of philosophy (and about the same time to the center of attention even in other social sciences). The most famous philosopher in this context is Heidegger (1962) with his influential phenomenological-ontological conception of death, elaborated in *Being and Time*, where he also introduced the notion of 'being-toward-death'.

This part of my essay borrows recent phenomenological studies on the phenomenon of death, in particular Emmanuel Levinas' philosophical interpretation (Morgan 2011; Critchley and Bernasconi 2002; Peperzak et al. 1996; Hand 1989; Lingis 1987; Robbins 2001). In sharp contrast to Heidegger, Levinas proposes a radically different account of the nature and significance of human mortality (Cohen 2006; Kernic 2002). His conception of mortality is important for my analysis due to the following two reasons: (1) Levinas gives a phenomenological and ethical account of the meaning and role of death for the embodied human subject and its relations to other persons. In contrast to Martin Heidegger, Levinas sees human mortality as 'being-against-death' (against the supposed end). He then moves from this point onward toward developing a social theory which allows us to analyze human behavior in the face of death (Levinas 1969, 1978, 1985, 1987, 1998, 1999, 2000a, b). (2) While for Heidegger, death is 'non-relational' (Heidegger 1962; compare his statement on death as possibility-of-being: "all its relations to any other Dasein have been undone", ibid., p. 294), Levinas argues for a continuity of the social relationship even when death strikes (Kernic 2002). Levinas' thoughts focus on the death of the other person, precisely the situation when "care for the other's death takes precedence over care for one's own—all the way to the extreme point of 'dying for' the other" (Cohen 2006, p. 25).

Levinas' social philosophy has become influential, partly due to its contribution to the study of the ethical dimension of human face-to-face encounters, emotions and group behavior. His work aims toward the creation of a new ethical practice, a new relationship between the self and the other built upon an ethical impulse, which marks the bottom line for any social relationship among human beings (Levinas 1969, 1985, 1998, 2000a, b). This new ethical practice is a responsive one that finds its justification in the fact that human beings can never know themselves completely, that the self always needs the other in order to discover and know the common grounds and the world of social interaction (Wyschogrod 2000; Peperzak 1997; Keenan 1999; Bauman 1993; Bernasconi and Wood 1988; Bernasconi and Critchley 1991; Cohen 1986; Hand 1996).

Levinas also draws a picture of general vulnerability, which becomes visible particularly when death strikes (Levinas 1969, 2000a, b; Bidriūnaitė 2007). According to him, human relationship with death is a relationship with mystery (Levinas 1969, p. 235). Confusion and uncertainty become evident and dominant in the face of death, particularly due to the fact that we never know when death strikes.

But he also argues that in this very moment, reminded of the inevitability of death, human beings are granted a glimpse at infinity, the otherness, God. Therefore, death also opens a window in which the death of a single individual is at the same time the birth of something new that becomes possible. The dying or deceased person's obvious 'passivity' (loss of control or loss of agency) results in the birth of a new ethical impulse that reaches out to the world of the living.

Finally, Levinas argues that an ethic impulse is at the center of human interaction and that it develops its specific force particularly when human beings experience the death of the other in a face-to-face encounter. According to him, the other is not powerless, not helpless; on the contrary: the person's ending and their loss of actorness, their helplessness gives rise to the ethical impulse. This impulse helps us to interpret the social rebirth of the group or society, it helps to turn ourselves toward the other, i.e. the self transcends its selfness in the face of the dying or deceased other. This turn marks a 'rupture' (of time), enabling rejuvenation and a new start.

The ethical impulse in the face of death also reveals the structure of the basis of human behavior, i.e. the relationship between the same and the other. Human behavior can be seen as a response to the empirical unique situation ('responsibility'), and therefore human beings can never predict the respective human responses. Furthermore, ethical impulses are 'orders' we may or may not obey, obligations which are not binding, not causal in a deterministic way.

This is exactly where leadership comes into play. Levinas' social theory suggests seeing leadership primarily as 'responsibility.' Leadership refers to the existence of an 'avant-garde,' those who respond first, speak up first, take the initiative. In this sense, leadership in an extreme situation when death strikes without warning, can be defined as the practical-political response of human beings to the ethical impulse deriving from their encounter with death, but also taking into account the situation of the others, the survivors (those who also search for an answer to what has happened).

This perspective provides us with an important key for gaining a deeper understanding of social life. It is a key that gives us privileged access to understand the status and composition of our group, our society, our culture. The way we respond to the self-other-relationship in the face of death, i.e. how we take up the ethical impulse, is, at the same time, how we create and transform our social life, our group, our society.

Why, at the end, then do we not just turn away from the dead comrade and ignore death? Levinas would answer that this is hardly possible because of the strong demand of the ethical impulse, particularly when the social bond between the deceased person and the survivors was strong. Of course, the traditional military answer (in line with our dominant traditional Western culture) is frequently very different to this approach: it rather favors denial and sometimes even reacts to sudden death by hiding the death trajectory as well as dying and grieving processes.

5 Conclusions and Leadership Recommendations

Levinas' social theory radically calls into question all prevailing assumptions in traditional leadership theory that there is an autonomous and free subject that we call 'leader' and that decides and determines the course of action of a group of people following his/her will and orders. His approach rather tends to see leadership as a two-way street, a dynamic interchange between leaders and followers that combines informal as well as formal hierarchies and structures, ways of communication and attempts to influence others in terms of thinking, feeling and acting. Common leadership definitions like, for example, the one provided by Yukl (2006, p. 8) who defines leadership "as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives" are well in line with Levinas' social theory.

It is precisely the phenomenon of death through the exposure of the self to the dying and death of others, to dead bodies in our 'life-world,' that makes us aware of our own mortality and limitations of exercising leadership in the sense of influencing the behavior of others. It is the death of the other that clearly shows us that we are more likely to react and respond than act and independently send out messages created by an autonomous self. We notice that we sometimes even continue to speak to the deceased other as if they were still present and could give us their advice. However, this new emerging awareness in the face of death opens also a window of opportunity for a totally new course of action, for readjustments in thinking and acting of both leaders and followers. In this sense, mortality salience allows leaders to recognize limitations and opportunities, finality and infinity, disruption and continuity. The death of another person is the moment where something new can be born or traditional commitment maintained. Therefore, mortality salience needs to be seen as a potential trigger for change, particularly with respect to group behavior and leadership dynamics.

The main difficulty for organizations designed to operate in high-risk environments lies precisely in this moment of uncertainty and its potential for change and readjustment. Times of (real or potential) changes in group structure and leadership dynamics are generally perceived as stages of instability that weaken group performance. Consequently, it is understandable that a general denial of death appears as a proper escape route, apparently guarantying operational functioning. But the denial of death may turn out to be an 'intellectual drama' for those involved, leaders and followers alike. This drama may even be intensified by a denial of proper individual and collective responses to death and a suppression of natural human reactions. If emotions as well as grieving and mourning processes are suppressed, people will most likely suffer from these experiences later in their lives. Numerous psychological studies have investigated the impact of traumatic events involving death on the development of social and personal life and individual health in the aftermath of such experiences. War veterans have frequently shown delayed stress syndromes or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) associated with suppressed or

delayed grief (Widdison and Salisbury 1989–1990; Harrington-LaMorie and McDevitt-Murphy 2011). Particularly the exposure to dead bodies and body parts ('body handling') needs to be seen as a significant psychological stressor (Ursano and McCarroll 1990; Ursano et al. 2003).

With his finger on the 'ethical impulse' emerging out of the face-to-face encounter with death and representations of death, Levinas has significantly contributed to uncover the importance of the ethical dimension present in everyday leadership dynamics, particularly in extreme and perilous contexts where life is at stake. In recent years, stress-focused psychologists have tried to take at least part of this dimension into account. The concept of 'moral distress' refers to moral decisions made by human beings "knowing the ethically correct action", but feeling "powerless to take that action" (Epstein and Delgado 2010, p. 1; Jameton 1993; Rushton 2006; Rushton et al. 2016). Based on this concept, some leadership researchers have tried to take a closer look at moral dilemmas and measure them on a scale indicating individual stress levels (Nilssson et al. 2011; Nilsson 2012). But Levinas' social theory goes much deeper, as he interprets the ethical situation as something existential that is even prior to ontology (Peperzak 1997). Thus, 'leadership responsibility' is put at the forefront of all leadership practices forcing together ethical and political dimensions of leadership behavior. According to him, it is precisely when human beings face death that they are reminded of the urgent need to socially connect and overcome their individual ego-centric perspective.

Following this pace, the phenomenological perspective advances an understanding of leadership that first and foremost emphasizes the need of leaders to properly respond to the unique and specific situation they find themselves and others in. This implies that they are expected to ethically and morally act in accordance with this specific situation, taking into account the needs of others as well. Leadership in that sense is much more about the others than about oneself. Many concepts of authentic leadership and adaptive leadership in today's leadership theory include similar thoughts that are highly relevant for leadership practices and performance in high-risk environments. Taking into consideration the two main dimensions of leadership according to traditional research strands on 'leadership styles', 'orientation toward tasks' and 'orientation toward people,' Levinas' social theory can be interpreted as stressing the urgent need for both practices combined in the face of death: It seems as if sudden death reminds us of our social obligations toward the other and, by doing so, human beings become capable of renewing social bonds, creating and establishing new forms of social interaction, thus enabling 'operationality' in order to achieve certain goals. Leaders with pure task-orientation and an exclusive focus on the accomplishment of a certain task or mission neglect the ethical-political dimension of leadership and endanger mental and physical health of those following them.

What kind of recommendations can be made out of this analysis with respect to preparing leaders to successfully meet the challenges of extreme situations when death strikes without warning? The following three suggestions can be highlighted.

First, strategies and practices toward a denial of death and ignorance of the impact of circumstances where death strikes without warning on both individual and group need to be avoided in leadership training and practice. On the contrary,

death awareness helps to increase the potential of human beings to properly respond to death and acknowledge the wide array of leadership practices to successfully absorb shock related to sudden death and cope with the social and individual implications of such an experience. It appears rather strange that sometimes, military and police academies almost entirely exclude the one crucial issue that is deeply woven into the fabric of their organizational tasks, i.e. to prepare their members to risk their lives to save others, to deal with casualties and wounded comrades, and—in worst case—to die.

Second, leadership training has to take into account crucial ethical aspects of leadership in extreme situations, primarily raising awareness and consciousness among potential leaders about their 'responsibilities' toward the others and the unique situation they find themselves in, particularly acknowledging the need to actively contribute to the reinforcement of social bonds and the reestablishment of social order in order to successfully cope with death's disruptiveness and negative impacts on individual and social life. In this context, they also have to be aware of the possibilities of 'shared leadership,' which would allow them to see the potential of a dynamic interplay between more than just one person in charge.

Third, potential leaders have to be trained in the management of death. They have to understand the cultural and social dimension of collective responses to death. They have to know that extreme situations and extreme life experiences demand justifiable and commonly acceptable narratives. In this respect, the key leadership task in and after crucial events and when death strikes without warning is to contribute to collective sense-making (Baran and Scott 2010) and the formation of a new social identity.

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Author Biography

Franz Kernic is head of leadership and communication studies at the Military Academy at ETH Zurich. He is also professor of sociology at the Swedish Defense University in Stockholm (on leave) and a senior research fellow at the Austrian National Defense Academy in Vienna (on leave). He received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Vienna, his habilitation (post-doctoral qualification) in political science from the University of Innsbruck and in sociology from the University of the German Armed Forces in Munich. His main fields of interest include leadership and communication, security policy, military sociology as well as peace and conflict research.

Crisis, Leadership, and Extreme Contexts

Eric K. Stern

Abstract Hannah et al. (Leaders Quart 20(6):897–919, 2009) survey and integrate a substantial multi-disciplinary and multi-discourse body of literature—one strand of which is literature on crisis and crisis management—to address the challenge of understanding (and potentially improving) leadership in extreme contexts. This article attempts to build on the foundations set out by Hannah et al. (Leaders Quart 20(6):897–919, 2009) by doing two things. First of all, it seeks to take a somewhat broader and deeper look at the evolving literature on crisis, crisis leadership, and crisis management in order to explore other aspects of possible relevance to the challenges identified by Hannah and his co-authors. Thus, the first objective is to examine the following question: *To what extent is the literature on crisis, crisis leadership and crisis management (CM) relevant to improving understanding of the challenges of leadership in extreme conditions (LEC)*? The second objective of the paper is to present some observations and reflections that might be helpful in further developing the LEC framework and research program. Core tasks of crisis leadership identified in the crisis literature (Boin et al. in The politics of crisis management: public leadership under pressure. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, 2017) such as preparing, sense-making, decision-making, meaning-making, and learning coincide to a considerable extent with, and draw on common or similar literature to, key themes in LEC. Furthermore, a number of other significant conceptual and empirical developments in the field of crisis studies

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E.K. Stern (✉)
University at Albany (State University of New York), Albany, USA
e-mail: ekstern@albany.edu

E.K. Stern
Swedish Defense University, Stockholm, Sweden

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are noted, suggesting additional potential avenues for enriching understanding—and broadening the applicability—of LEC.

Keywords Crisis · Leadership · Crisis management · Extreme conditions · Political · Operational

1 Introduction

Though true leadership is rarely if ever easy—some situations and contexts are more challenging and demanding than others (cf. Hart 2014). Among the most demanding are contexts and situations in which leaders, followers, and the constituencies they are tasked to protect face acute or potentially acute forms of risks, threats, hazards, and other associated forms of physical, psychological, or material damage or trauma (Hannah et al. 2009). Though many scholars and reflective practitioners of leadership are certainly aware of this—and there are a number of specialized (and often fragmented) social, behavioral, and administrative sciences discourses examining aspects of this problem set—a more comprehensive and programmatic research framework focusing on this particular sub-set of thematically and functionally related leadership issues has until recently been lacking.

In a pioneering effort to address this gap, Hannah et al. (2009) surveyed a substantial multi-disciplinary and multi-discourse body of literature addressing a cluster of related issues and concepts from (among others) social and organizational psychology, management science, sociology, and public administration. On the basis of this extensive—though perhaps not quite comprehensive—review, they make a significant and largely successful attempt to differentiate and integrate a number of diverse concepts and strands of literature relevant to understanding and potentially improving leadership in extreme contexts. For example, they differentiate between extreme contexts (in which danger or exposure to trauma is chronic rather than acute) and extreme episodes, as well as among types of organizations which may be called upon to provide leadership under extreme conditions (trauma, critical action, high reliability, and "naïve" organizations). In addition, they provide an integrative framework laying out dimensions upon which extreme contexts (including extreme episodes) may vary, aspects which may intensify or ameliorate (attenuate) the challenges faced by leaders (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 899). Perhaps most importantly, they recognize that adaptive forms of leadership are likely to vary greatly across situations and contexts. As such, they are proposing a *contingent* approach to leadership under extreme conditions (Hannah et al. 2009; cf. Vroom and Jago 2007; Yukl 2006).

This chapter will attempt to build on the foundations set out by Hannah et al. (2009) by doing two things. First of all, the chapter seeks to take a somewhat broader and deeper look at the evolving literature on crisis, crisis leadership, and crisis management in order to explore other aspects of potential relevance to the challenges identified by Hannah and his co-authors. Thus, the first objective of the chapter is to

examine the following question: *To what extent is the literature on crisis, crisis leadership and crisis management (CM) relevant to improving understanding the challenges of leadership in extreme conditions (LEC)*? The second objective of the paper is to present some observations and reflections and that might be helpful in further developing the LEC framework and research program.

2 Crisis and Crisis Leadership

The path-breaking article by Hannah et al. (2009) recognizes the potential relevance of the crisis literature to the problem of developing knowledge about LEC (pp. 899–900). However, it could be argued that the relatively compressed and selective treatment of what has become a large and complex multi-disciplinary literature on crisis/crisis management results in some oversights, missed opportunities and neglect of potential synergies between these clearly closely related lines of inquiry. In fact, Hannah et al. (2009) draw upon a relatively narrow segment of the crisis management literature, with a certain emphasis on seminal work such as Hermann (1963), a body of crisis-related work in social and organizational psychology, as well the corporate crisis management tradition (e.g. Pearson and Clair 1998). Though a substantial number of works ascribed to the crisis research tradition are cited in their study, it is fair to say that some significant areas of conceptual innovation and convergence have been missed or given rather short shrift, which is perfectly understandable in a relatively short text that seeks to cover a lot of ground (and multiple literatures).

With regard to the crisis literature, Hannah et al. (2009) make two seemingly contradictory observations in differentiating the study of leadership in extreme contexts from crisis studies. First, it is suggested—with some justification—that the crisis literature is *narrower* in focus than the preferred notion of extreme contexts, suggesting not implausibly that the crisis literature has traditionally tended to focus on episodes, while the notion of extreme contexts has a broader reach. This is because LEC addresses not only the challenge of dealing with acute episodes, but also situations where leaders and other personnel are regularly or chronically exposed to various forms of physical, psychological, or material danger and/or trauma. Second, it is noted that the crisis concept is in another sense *too broad* because not all of the threats emphasized in the crisis literature are—in the opinions of the authors—on the same order of magnitude and dignity (level of extremity) as those emphasized in LEC. For example, they suggest that there is a difference in the level of trust in placing one's life—as opposed to one's livelihood—in the hands of a leader (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 899).[1] The issue of the distinctiveness of extremity

[1]Note that this distinction might not seem as clear in contexts of economic distress without social welfare safety nets, where loss of employment—and poor prospects for re-employment—could quickly lead to dire physical and psychological consequences for an individual and his or her dependents.

as defined by Hannah et al. will be discussed further below. To be fair, these claims are in fact not contradictory—crisis can be conceptualized along different dimensions making it both narrower and broader than the territory staked out by Hannah and his colleagues.

2.1 Evolving Definitions of Crisis

Let us explore some developments and conceptual innovations in the crisis field that may be helpful. First of all, many crisis researchers have found the notion of goals (with its teleological connotation suggesting a striving to achieve specified ends) to be problematic (Brecher 1993; Rosenthal et al. 1989). Though crisis-related threats certainly may be seen as having implications for goal achievement, it can be argued they tend to impact more directly on core *values* (Stern 2005). And in fact, much of this literature emphasizes (though not exclusively) the kinds of threats associated with extreme contexts: war, terrorism, acute infectious diseases, natural and man-made hazards capable of killing human beings and inflicting massive material damage etc. It should be noted that the notion can indeed also be applied to circumstances probably not envisioned by Hannah et al. (2009) as extreme events (acute political or economic crises involving threats to civil liberties, rule of law, individual and national prosperity etc.). To the extent that one accepts Hannah et al.'s argument regarding the distinctive character of these kinds of threats at face value (see below for a contrary view), this is potentially problematic as it could introduce distracting conceptual notions and misleading empirical findings into the LEC knowledge base.

Another dimension emphasized in the literature is *uncertainty*. In fact, Hannah et al. (2009) discuss a related notion in the corporate crisis management literature drawing on Pearson and Clair (1998), namely 'ambiguity of cause, effect and means of resolution'. Uncertainty, as it has been explicated and operationalized in the crisis literature, encompasses these kinds of ambiguities but also includes a number of other forms of uncertainty common to extreme contexts. Even where relevant potential hazards and threats have been identified, uncertainty may remain as to whether, when, where and at what level of intensity they are likely to manifest. In addition, crises may well be generated by other forms of threat not yet identified or which had been discounted in prior risk analyses, planning, and preparation. Similarly, uncertainties may extend to things like roles, mandates, resource availabilities, situational factors (e.g. limits to or breakdowns of situational awareness). Finally, uncertainty often includes how key actors and stakeholders (including one's own personnel or those higher up on the chain of command) will react to threats, interventions, counter-measures, public or private messaging etc. Questions such as how military adversaries, hostage takers, the public, the media, and various key domestic or foreign political actors will respond to the (re)disposition of forces or application of armed force would certainly be examples of the kinds of uncertainties that can help raise the "temperature" of a situation to crisis levels. Similar

questions emerge with respect to how actors and stakeholders will respond to civil protection and public health measures such as quarantines, social distancing instructions, as well orders to evacuate or shelter-in-place.

Similarly, much of the literature has moved away from C.F. Hermann's (1963) notion of "little or no response time" emphasized by Hannah et al. (2009, p. 899). Many researchers following Rosenthal et al. (1989) have chosen the somewhat broader notions of 'urgency'. Urgency is a relative concept which distinguishes crises from 'steady state' operations due to a heightened sense of time pressure. Urgency is rather more flexible in the sense that it can cover both acute operational situations in which decisions must be taken in seconds, minutes, or hours as well as more strategic and political processes in which crucial decisions may be taken in hours, days, weeks, or even months in some cases. For example, the H1N1 pandemic generated a prolonged challenge (likely to qualify also as an extreme context) lasting for over a year. The same was true of the recent Ebola outbreak, which generated crisis levels of stress not only in the most affected parts of West Africa, but also in developed countries such as the U.S. which faced not only the risk of outbreaks but also widespread fear and stigmatization of patients and health care workers. Obviously, as one expands the time frame and recognizes that it is possible for contingencies to sustain a level of urgency beyond that of normal operations over a prolonged period (subject of course to intra-crisis variations in level of intensity), the notion of crisis widens somewhat to encompass both the most acute "episodes" and a more enduring context of heightened risk and public scrutiny.

With regard to the challenge of leadership in extreme contexts, it should also be noted that this revised tripartite crisis definition represents not only a fruitful point of departure for academic classification and inquiry, but also a practically useful sense-making tool (Stern 2009). Confronted with a threatening situation, it may be helpful to turn the components of this crisis definition into diagnostic questions.

2.1.1 What Are the Core Values at Stake (and for Whom) in This Situation?

This question helps crisis managers to identify key constituencies, threats and opportunities embedded in the contingency at hand and encourages them to craft solutions that attend to them in a consciously balanced and measured way (cf. Keeney 1992). A common source of difficulty in crises is when initial or early ways of framing problems do not identify the full range of salient values at stake in the situation. Sometimes policymakers rush to develop options for action without taking the time to think hard and deliberate vigorously on the nature of the problem facing them. Unbalanced response strategies can easily be the result. So called 'value-focused thinking' techniques can be useful to help focus the attention of policymakers on this key dimension of crisis sense-making. Crises commonly demand hard choices; dilemmas and value conflict arise frequently (George 1980; Keeney 1992; Farnham 1997). Generally speaking, the capacity of decision makers to formulate strategies well adapted to the situation and which protect the values

they cherish most dearly will be increased if they engage in this kind of value-probing.

2.1.2 What Are the Key Uncertainties Associated with the Situation and How Can They Be Reduced?

This question enables decision makers to identify key variables and parameters and better prioritize "intelligence" and analytical resources. A simple but effective means of coping with uncertainty is to make the identification of multiple scenarios a standard practice of crisis sense-making (Stern 2009). Development of best, worst, and middle case scenarios can be very helpful. First of all, such an approach forces sense-makers to extrapolate from current information and formulate prognoses. This type of thinking can help crisis sense-makers break out of a reactive mode and be more proactive in their response to the crisis. Second, comparison of the scenarios can help policymakers identify critical variables which can be monitored closely for indications of how and in which direction the crisis is developing. Thirdly, recognition of and preparation for the worst case is almost always good politics. The general public and journalists alike tend to be more critical of complacency or negligence in the face of a previously uncertain threat which subsequently occurs than of vigilant over-reaction (which is generally forgiven if perceived to have been in good faith). Among the illustrations of the latter are the 'Y2K bug'[2]—which proved ultimately to be rather expensive but not particularly controversial—and many post 9/11 terror alarms in the United States. *Better safe than sorry* is relatively easy to defend in today's 'risk' society.

2.1.3 How Much Time Is Available (or Can Be 'Bought') to Deal with This Situation?

It is increasingly recognized that strategic leaders must make *meta-decisions*. This includes deciding how to decide and what kind of sense-making and decision-making process is appropriate to the situation and the context. Effective and legitimate crisis sense—and decision-making processes may look very different indeed depending upon whether the time frame is measured in minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months. As the time frame widens, there is increasing room for analytical, deliberative, consultative and coalition building processes (e.g., George 1980). Effective systems for early warning accompanied by vigilant, proactive response to warning create larger temporal windows for prevention, mitigation, and preparation of policy and operational responses.

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[2]The 'Y2K bug' crisis centered around fears among some experts and many lay persons that the turn of the millennium would disrupt computer systems and lead to various forms of digital and physical disruptions and safety hazards (Quiggen 2005).

Let us now turn our attention to some other developments in the crisis literature potentially relevant to exploring the nexus between CM and LEC.

2.2 Some Other Strands of and Developments in the Crisis Literature

As noted above, Hannah et al. (2009) suggest—with some justification—that the crisis literature has tended to be episodic in focus and that as such it only captures a part of the territory delineated in the LEC framework. Like the intersecting field of leadership studies, crisis studies has grown and diversified considerably in recent decades. In fact, much recent work in the CM field also embeds crisis episodes in longer term contexts of risk (Regester and Larkin 1998; Stern and Sundelius 2002; Drennan and McConnell 2007), security, and institutionalization. For example, innovative work on "institutional crisis" by a group of leading Dutch scholars (Alink et al. 2001) suggests that policy sectors may experience turbulence and declines of institutional legitimacy over longer periods of time (decades in some cases). A good recent example—clearly involving an extreme context in the Hannah et al. (2009) sense—is the rash of controversial police shootings in the United States in recent years. These are not only isolated 'episodes' of individual police officers and teams making and attempting to justify life and death decisions with profound implications for themselves, bystanders, and perpetrators, but also take place in an evolving organizational, political, technological and social context in which public perceptions and trust in the police is affected not only by the circumstances of the individual episode but also by collective frames of reference based on other previous and contemporary cases (cf. Bonilla and Rosa 2015). There is good reason to believe that contexts characterized by institutional crisis increase the level of stress faced by both leaders and other personnel. As such, they could be seen as "intensifiers" adding to the level of extremity faced by leaders who know that not only must they and their professional reputation (and viability) survive the operational challenges, but also the potentially hostile scrutiny of their actions afterwards (Smith 2006).

Similarly, many researchers regard crisis (and cognate concepts such as disaster and emergency) as multi-dimensional *processes or sequences of phases* rather than as single discrete episodes. For example, a number of researchers have proposed phase models identifying trajectories of escalation and de-escalation covering not just the most acute episodes but also the *before* (crisis development, warning and notification, prevention/failure to prevent) and *after* (accountability, learning, reform).[3] Similarly, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, for example, uses an emergency management cycle model consisting of preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation (Haddow et al. 2014).

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[3]Smith (2006), Brecher (1993), Birkland (2006) and Boin et al. (2017).

3 Core Leadership Tasks

Several decades of intensive empirical research on crisis management shows that leaders face recurring challenges when confronted with (the prospect of) community (or organizational/national/international) crises (Boin et al. 2017; Stern 2013). These are preparing, sense-making, decision-making, meaning-making, terminating, and learning. These tasks are as germane to military leaders as they are to their civilian counterparts and are central not only to effective crisis leadership in a particular incident but also to creating better pre-conditions for future incidents and resilient adaptation to extreme conditions over the longer term. Drawing upon Leonard and Howitt (2007), Hannah et al. (2009, p. 902) suggest that different forms of leadership may be needed in different phases of a disaster or crisis. The following conceptualization identifies crisis leadership tasks likely to arise in a variety of extreme events.

Preparing refers to the task of creating pre-conditions and dispositions which facilitate collaborative effort as well as effective and legitimate intervention when crises occur (Stern 2013; Boin et al. 2017). Elements of preparing include activities such as organizing, planning, training and exercising. This generally entails attempting to identify key players and roles likely to be required for effective response (and recovery) and making sure that each role-player is capable of enacting that role skillfully and in a fashion conducive to not just particularistic but also collective community success. Leadership with regard to this task has a key motivational component—preparedness requires investments in time and resources which compete with other priorities. When a crisis is imminent, such as when meteorological experts predict that a hurricane is on its way, motivation tends to be high. However, when the time to prepare is short, difficult dispositions must be made under conditions of uncertainty and often under conditions of resource scarcity.

Sensemaking in crisis refers to the challenging task of developing an adequate interpretation of what are often complex, dynamic, and ambiguous situations (cf. Weick 1988; Stern 2015). This entails developing not only a picture of what is happening but also an understanding of the implications of the situation from one's own vantage point and that of other salient stakeholders. As Alberts and Hayes (2003, p. 102) put it: "Sense-making is much more than sharing information and identifying patterns. It goes beyond what is happening and what may happen to what can be done about it."

Decision-making refers to the fact that crises tend to be experienced by leaders (and those who follow them) as a series of "what do we do now" problems triggered by the flow of events. These decision occasions emerge simultaneously or in succession over the course of the crisis (Stern 1999; Stern et al. 2014). Protecting communities tends to require an interdependent series of crucial decisions to be taken in a timely fashion under very difficult conditions. A classic problem of crisis decision-making in the face of pervasive threat—the shelter in place versus evacuate dilemma—will be discussed below.

Meaning-making refers to the fact that leaders—civilian and military alike—must attend not only to the operational challenges associated with a contingency, but also to the ways in which various stakeholders and constituencies perceive and understand it. Because of the emotional charge associated with disruptive events, followers look to leaders to help them understand the meaning of what has happened and place it in a broader perspective. By their words and deeds, leaders can convey images of competence, control, stability, sincerity, decisiveness, and vision—or their opposites. Such communications may have profound effects on the motivation, morale, and resilience of followers in crises and other forms of extreme contexts.

Ending and Accounting refers to the non-trivial task of finding the appropriate timing and means to end the crisis, manage accountability processes, and return to normalcy. Furthermore, attempting to end a crisis prematurely can endanger or alienate constituencies who may still be in harm's way, traumatized, or otherwise emotionally invested in the crisis. Crises may be particularly difficult to terminate if the operational challenges lead to a so-called *crisis after the crisis* in which serious recriminations—resulting in losses of trust and legitimacy—are launched against those who failed to prevent, respond to, or recover effectively from a negative event.

Effective *learning* requires an active, critical process which recreates, analyzes, and evaluates key processes, tactics, techniques, and procedures in order to enhance performance, safety, capability etc. The learning process has just begun when a so-called lessons learned document has been produced. In order to bring the learning process to fruition, change management/implementation must take place in a fashion that leaves the organization with improved prospects for future success (Boin et al. 2017; Stern 1997; Deverell and Olsson 2009).

4 Relevance of Crisis Leadership Tasks to LEC

Having introduced of these core crisis leadership tasks above, let us revisit each of them to examine the extent of their relevance to the challenge of leadership under extreme conditions as conceptualized by Hannah et al. (2009).

Preparing: The notion of preparing as a core leadership task in crisis is very compatible with the LEC framework developed by Hannah et al. (2009). Preparation is emphasized in the framework, as well as figuring prominently in several of the literatures which undergird LEC. "Preparation" is seen by Hannah et al. (2009) as a "dimension of extreme contexts" and a key responsibility of leaders before, during, and after extreme episodes. Preparedness activities tend to be heavily emphasized by high performing critical action organizations such as military combat units, police SWAT teams, "trauma" organizations, and high reliability organizations. High reliability organizations operate potentially highly dangerous systems effectively over long periods of time (La Porte and Consolini 1991). Examples studied by researchers include organizations such as well-run

nuclear power plants, aircraft carriers etc. All of these organizations tend to be characterized by a commitment to vigilance requiring continuous cycles of organizing, planning, training, exercising and proactive reforming in response to warning signals detected through simulations, exercises, safety audits, as well as real incidents or accidents. Similarly, there is an emphasis on contextual awareness to promote heedful inter-relating. It is not sufficient to merely be able to perform one's own task well, but in a fashion that enables rather than hinders others in the performance of their own tasks. More importantly, it could be argued that the notion of preparedness is at the heart of LEC in the sense that preparedness is a kind of umbrella "attenuator" moderating the impacts of "extremity" by cultivating vigilance, resilience, and the ability to effectively draw upon available psychological, social, organizational, (and technological) resources.

Sense-making: Proposing that this core task of crisis leadership as conceptualized by Boin et al. (2017) is relevant to the LEC domain, is clearly kicking in an already open door. In fact, the importance of sense-making with regard to both extreme events and contexts is heavily emphasized in the LEC framework. Hannah et al. (2009) explicitly discuss sense-making and reference the seminal work by Karl Weick and his various collaborators and disciples. Here, the literature on crisis leadership and leadership in extreme contexts is clearly resting on a common intellectual foundation. Note also that sense-making is very challenging in both steady state and crisis conditions—in both extreme events and contexts—though for somewhat different reasons. Prior to the emergence of an extreme event, threat signals are often weak (or conflicting) and difficult to detect amongst the noise and "chatter" in the background. Similarly, it may be difficult to capture the attention of decision-makers who may be preoccupied with other matters. Once an extreme event has been detected, sense-making is often complicated by a paradoxical combination of heightened attentiveness and intensified information gathering and lack of reliable information about certain key parameters.

Decision-making: Like sense-making, it does not seem particularly controversial to argue that decision-making is also a core task of leadership in all of the various forms of extreme contexts identified by Hannah et al. (2009). Leaders seeking to fulfill missions and maintain vigilance and preparedness (see above) in potentially dangerous or traumatic environments will need to make (or interpret and "operationalize") decisions about a wide range of salient issues related to policy, personnel selection, personnel development and discipline, force postures, resource allocations, rules of engagement, training and exercise regimes, managing relationships with other stakeholders etc. Obviously, decision-making in extreme or other forms of critical situations poses challenges due to manifest dangers, trauma, and other potential "intensifiers" of the kind identified by Hannah et al. (2009). Like leadership in extreme situations writ large, effective decision-making processes are likely to vary greatly as parameters (time, complexity, uncertainty, magnitude of consequences etc.) shift.

Meaning-making: The leadership literature (both in general and with regard to crises and other forms of extreme situations) increasingly emphasizes the role of communication and the transformative power of narratives. Not surprisingly, issues

related to leadership communication permeate the entire LEC problem set. This begins with, but is much broader than, for example, the notion of sense-giving by leaders identified by Hannah et al. (2009, p. 904). Adaptive leadership in both military and civilian contexts (cf. Heifetz and Laurie 1997; cf. Alberts and Hayes 2003) is thought to be heavily dependent upon empowerment of subordinates and facilitation of information sharing (key to decision-making as well), creativity and dialogue—as appropriate to the nature of the problem, situation, and context. Similarly, story-telling is seen as a crucial leadership skill and tool. Furthermore, effective leadership communication is essential for maintaining morale and motivation over the longer term as in critical junctures characterized by threat, danger, trauma and loss.

Ending and Accounting: As currently formulated, this leadership task is not emphasized in the LEC framework, though again it is implicit in some of the formulations and literature cited. For example, the notion of threshold effects whereby as the intensity of extremity increases and decreases, so also changes the nature of the leadership challenge (and the form or forms which adaptive leadership may take). This suggests that leaders must identify and in some cases actively take measures to heighten or relax readiness postures and levels of alert. Furthermore, leaders do not necessarily only respond to situational escalations and de-escalations—they may actively play a role in driving situations (and situational perceptions) in either direction.[4] Through their words, deeds, body language etc., they can either douse or pour gasoline on the metaphorical "fire" and thus contribute to ameliorating or exacerbating the extremity of a potentially volatile situation. As noted above, accountability pressures before, during, and after an event may influence decision-making processes and outcomes (cf. Tetlock 1985; Farnham 1997). More explicit attention to these factors would arguably enrich the LEC framework.

Learning: The importance and significance of learning as a leadership responsibility and potential key to high performance and success is clearly recognized by Hannah et al. (2009) at various points in their article. They note that some organizations repeatedly experience a given type of challenge or threat and therefore have the advantage of being able to learn and adapt on the basis of this ongoing experience (Hannah et al. 2009, pp. 899–900). So called *Trauma Organizations* (such as hospital emergency rooms or other emergency medical teams) are given as an example (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 900). *Critical Action Organizations* (such as police tactical units, combat military units, specialized critical rescue services units etc.), it is suggested (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 901), tend to have fewer opportunities to practice and thus are in greater need of complementing *experience-based learning* with *virtual learning* based on the results of exercises and simulations (cf. Stern 1997, 2015). Learning is not emphasized in their discussion of *High Reliability Organizations*, but is heavily emphasized as critical to effective long term performance by central scholars working in that tradition (e.g. La Porte and

[4]Fischbacher-Smith (2006), Brecher (1993), Birkland (2006) and Boin et al. (2017).

Consolini 1991). Clearly, there is a convergence rather than a divergence between the crisis leadership and LEC literature on this point as well.

Summing up this discussion, five of the six core leadership tasks derived from the crisis leadership literature coincide with key themes in LEC. The other leadership task—ending and accounting—is not as central to the initial formulation of LEC but is clearly complementary and could provide a point of departure for further elaboration and empirical research.

5 Questions and Observations

In this section, a number of questions and reflections regarding the further development of the LEC framework and research program will be presented.

Who are the leaders? As a political scientist and student of executive leadership, a key question which arises is who qualifies as a leader in an extreme context. For example, do political (or corporate) leaders qualify if they make choices that may result in potentially extreme consequences? Was President Obama leading in an extreme context/event when he made the decision to authorize a raid on Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden's compound in Pakistan in 2011 (Allison 2012)? Should the National Security Council Principals (e.g. the Cabinet Secretaries) participating in the decision be seen as co-leaders in extreme circumstances? What about top military leaders such as Admiral McRaven (who was in command of U.S. Joint Special Operations at the time) or Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen—who followed the raid from the White House Situation room and was captured in the iconic photo of Obama and his team (Lockie 2016)? In other words, how far up can one be placed in the politico-military chain of command and still be considered to be leading in an extreme context?

Similarly, Hannah et al. (2009, p. 913) mention the Coast Guard as an example of an adaptable organization during Hurricane Katrina, suggesting that Coast Guard leaders were operating in an extreme context. But it is not clear from the article whether New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin—who was also responsible for decisions about whether and when to evacuate the city—should also be regarded as leading under extreme conditions? What about FEMA Chief Administrator Michael Brown or the Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff (Parker et al. 2009)? When James Burke (the CEO) of Johnson and Johnson, was dealing with deadly cyanide tampering of a key product (Tylenol) and making decisions with not only financial but also life and death implications (Gini and Green 2013), was he leading in an extreme event/context? Most of the situations and examples discussed in the article tend to focus on more operational contexts (rather than political, corporate or other strategic contexts), though the conceptual framework seems to be potentially applicable to those as well.

5.1 *Proximity-Distance and Responsibility: Presidents and Mayors Can Be Extreme Leaders Too!*

In the examples above, many of the senior leaders mentioned were not necessarily facing imminent physical danger and some were at considerable geographic and social distance from the "danger zone". Many—if not most of them—probably did not personally know many of those at greatest personal, psychological or material risk. However, it is clear that these leaders were making extremely consequential decisions with life and death consequences for other people and carrying a weight of responsibility arguably far greater than that of a surgical team, even when dealing with a number of critically injured persons. Consider John F. Kennedy and his team during the Cuban Missile Crisis; the president was making choices that significantly raised the risk of a conventional and/or nuclear war with the Soviet Union which could have caused hundreds of thousands or even millions of casualties. Accounts of the decision-making processes suggest that those involved were very much aware of the magnitude of what was at stake. It has also been suggested that some members of Kennedy's team had difficulties with coping with this level of stress and thus, performed poorly (Allison and Zelikow 1999; George 1991).

President Harry Truman was famous for keeping a sign on his desk saying "The Buck Stops Here".[5] This was a reminder to himself and others that the ultimate authority and responsibility for national leadership rests with the president. Given the nature of the decisions that are made in the Oval Office, it does not seem like much of a stretch to argue that the White House and other key executive offices at state/provincial or local level should, with respect to leadership, also be seen as potentially extreme contexts.

5.2 *Do Media Organizations Operate in Extreme Contexts?*

Another common type of organization which is not emphasized by Hannah et al. (2009) but may be useful to consider, is mass media organizations (Olsson 2008). Such organizations do not fit neatly into the existing LEC categories. Media organizations engage in quasi-critical action, experience trauma, and are certainly not "naïve" in the sense that extremity comes rarely or unexpectedly. Media organizations—print, broadcast, internet-based, as well as emerging hybrid media organizations—regularly send staff in harm's way. Journalists working in war, disaster zones, or otherwise hostile environments not only face significant personal danger but are confronted with first-hand experience of the impact of violence and other forms of human tragedy and suffering, posing ethical and psychological as well as physical risks to journalists. Both headquarters level leaders (e.g. publishers

[5]For a picture of Truman's desk sign, see the website of the Truman Presidential Library (Truman library, 2017).

and editors) and leaders of journalistic field crews must make critical decisions about placing and taking staff out of harm's way as well other psychologically difficult and ethically loaded decisions about publication of potentially controversial material and how to treat vulnerable sources on a regular basis.

5.3 Hierarchical and Non-hierarchical Contexts

In Hannah et al.'s (2009) framework, much of the underlying research and the paradigmatic case for the LEC seems to focus on intra-organizational contexts, with a certain emphasis on the kind of relatively hierarchical (such as military or paramilitary) command structures typical of critical action, trauma, and high reliability organizations as well as many traditional corporations and some non-profit organizations. However, as they briefly mention in their discussion about the complexity variable (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 911), many of the organizational settings relevant to extreme contexts are to a lesser or greater extent inter-organizational. This not only complicates the challenge of cooperation and coordination but often means that clear and potent authority structures may be lacking. In this sense, though posing other difficulties common to inter-organizational settings, joint-military operations (with forces participating from multiple services) may be a relatively simple case in the sense that an integrated chain of command is likely to exist. Other settings may require leadership to be exercised in the absence of an integrated chain of command binding all or even most of a very diverse set of actors. As noted by Hannah et al. (2009, p. 911), this is often the case with regard to disaster management in the United States which involves players across various sectors (public, private, non-profit) and levels of government (federal, state, local). This is also likely to be the case with regard to complex humanitarian emergencies in which a wide range of actors and stakeholders—military and civilian, public and private sector, host nations and intervening/help-providing nations, as well as international governmental and nongovernmental organizations—may be involved. Effective operations in such settings often require unity (or at least harmony) of effort without the benefit of unity of command. Considering the additional challenges and methods necessary to lead in extreme *inter-organizational* settings would further enrich the LEC framework (Brehmer 2011; Marcus et al. 2012).

5.4 Is Extremity in the Eye of the Beholder?

Hannah et al.'s (2009) framework proceeds from an assumption of the distinctiveness of leading in extreme contexts defined in terms of "severe physical, psychological, or material contexts (e.g. physical harm, devastation or destruction)" (p. 897). Other forms of crisis which do not primarily involve these types of risks or occurrences are seen as less extreme and, by implication, belong to an alternative

form of leadership context. This suggestion (and the resulting delimitation of research) is certainly both defensible and plausible to a considerable degree.

However, it should be noted that the crisis studies literature—like much of the contemporary literature on risk (Boin et al. 2017; Drennan and McConnell 2007)—emphasizes the subjective and socially constructed character of threat perceptions and evaluations. These are thought to be both individually and culturally/sub-culturally grounded. Risks and threats are subjectively perceived and socially constructed in very different ways by different people with different frames of reference within and across societies (Douglas and Wildavsky 1983; Bernhardsdottir 2015). Though this is not emphasized or addressed in detail by Hannah et al., they do recognize the phenomenon of "normalization" (2009, p. 900) in which categories of persons (or by extension communities or geographic settings) frequently exposed to "extremity" (ibid., p. 911) may become desensitized for better and for worse (this is thought to potentially enhance resilience but at a possible risk of decreased vigilance) and develop coping mechanisms which may help to attenuate extremity.

Again, while the assumption that leaders and followers alike are particularly averse to experiencing and inflicting "harm, devastation, and destruction" seems to have a lot of face validity in contemporary liberal democratic societies, there can be no doubt that there are categories of persons who are markedly less averse to such behaviors. In fact, there are those who are attracted to and even motivated to cause harm, devastation and destruction for a variety of reasons. A mild form of this phenomenon—those who see a professional challenge in extreme contexts—is noted by Hannah et al. (2009). Clearly there are people—including at least some leaders—who are suicidal, extremely sadistic, destructive, nihilistic, or motivated by a variety of "extreme" (from a typical Western, secular, liberal democratic perspective) secular or religious worldviews and considerations. Terrorists, like soldiers and other critical action professionals willing to face danger in pursuit of a mission, clearly demonstrate that they value other things more highly than their own safety and are able to overcome various forms of cultural, religious, or ethical prohibitions against inflicting harm.

The observations made above could be interpreted as at least partially eroding the distinction between these types of extreme events and crises involving other personal, political, economic, or societal values. A question to be asked is whether extremity should (from a behavioral perspective) be seen as arising from threats to the values most cherished by an individual, group or society?

The, for many observers, unexpectedly strong reactions to symbolic religious provocations such as the Muhammed Caricatures are suggestive. The initial publication of sketches—perceived as blasphemous by many Muslims and Muslim governments—by a Danish newspaper not only sparked off riots in a number of Muslim countries but also led to large-scale protests, the attack of a combined Nordic (including Danish) embassy by means of fire bombs and painful (and financially significant) boycotts of Danish exports in large parts of the Muslim world. The trigger of this crisis was entirely symbolic, though it also generated substantial social conflict, significant levels of public disorder and violence, as well

as several—fortunately relatively unsuccessful—attempted acts of terror in Northern Europe (Olsson et al. 2015).

Could it be the case that for some people, the threat of dishonor, communal shunning, blasphemy or threats to the viability of organizations with which one closely identifies are equally or even more frightening, stress-inducing, and provoking of extreme emotions for leaders and followers alike than the types of threats emphasized in the article by Hannah et al. (2009)? To round off this point, while Hannah et al. (2009) make a good case for the distinctiveness of extremity as they define it, there is also a strong alternative case to be made for a more subjectivist/social constructivist approach along the lines common in the "all hazards" crisis management literature.

6 Conclusion

Clearly, Hannah et al.'s (2009) framework represents a significant contribution and point of departure for innovative, integrative research in the field of leadership in extreme contexts. That being said, it is possible to make a number of constructively critical observations and suggestions.

Though crisis research was clearly recognized by Hannah et al. (2009) as a source of inspiration (and as an integral part of the LEC framework), the 2009 article—for very understandable and justifiable reasons—only partially considers and builds on relevant research from the field of crisis studies. A number of significant conceptual and empirical developments in crisis studies create additional potential for compatibility and complementarity to LEC. These include the conceptual embedding of the notion of crisis in longer term contexts, phase and process models, and not least a growing body of research on crisis leadership.

It was demonstrated above that many of the core tasks of crisis leadership identified in the crisis literature (Boin et al. 2005, 2017; Stern 2013) such as preparing, sense-making, decision-making, meaning-making, and learning coincide to a considerable extent with, and draw on common or similar literature to, key themes in LEC. The core crisis leadership task *ending and accounting* is less prominent in the LEC framework, but clearly complementary. This may be seen as an opportunity both to enrich the LEC framework in future iterations and for future empirical research drawing upon a growing body of political psychological research on accountability.

In addition, the LEC framework is potentially more broadly applicable. It should more explicitly consider other types of leaders such as political leaders (presidents, governors, mayors etc.) who make life and death decisions for their constituencies and those who serve to protect them. Similarly, the LEC framework should also more explicitly consider additional types of organizations—such as mass media organizations—operating in extreme contexts. Furthermore, the challenges and "tool box" of leadership skills and strategies necessary to lead in non-hierarchical inter-organizational contexts (cf. Marcus et al. 2012) deserve to be examined and researched more closely.

Finally, perspectives common in crisis studies and the risk literature emphasizing the subjective and/or socially constructed character of risk and threat (perceptions) pose a challenge to the privileging of certain types of threats and dangers in the LEC framework. Extremity can also be seen as something that depends on the eye of the beholder.

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Author Biography

Eric K. Stern is Professor of Political Science at the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cyber-Security at the University at Albany (State University of New York). Dr. Stern holds a Ph.D. from Stockholm University and a B.A. from Dartmouth College. He has published extensively in the fields of crisis and emergency management, resilience and security studies, executive leadership, foreign policy analysis and political psychology. He is also affiliated with the Center for Crisis Management Research and Training (CRISMART) at the Swedish Defense University and the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware.

Team Leadership in Extremis: Enschede, Uruzgan, Kathmandu and Beyond

Joseph Soeters and Tom Bijlsma

Abstract In this contribution we provide an overview of the existing knowledge on (multinational) teams operating in situations where extreme dangers create, or have created, havoc and disaster. After deciphering the characteristics of extreme conditions, we describe the traditional leadership requirements that are needed to ensure that teams in multiteam-systems operate adequately. Even though the set of leadership traits that are needed in such situations is clear-cut, straightforward and familiar, there is more to say to this. Contemporary insights demonstrate that such leadership characteristics work out positively only within a certain bracket, not in all conditions. The relations between leadership traits and effective team performance are U-shaped rather than linear. Furthermore, recent studies have shown that framing, heedful interrelating and improvising are important characteristics for teams and their members to perform adequately. In this connection, the importance of the development of situational awareness, proper communication and distributed leadership can hardly be exaggerated. The latter may even imply that the actual leader steps back for another team member who has the competencies needed to lead in that particular situation. To make all this happen, training and proper preparation cannot be practiced enough. Overconfidence should be avoided at all costs.

Keywords Team leadership · Extreme conditions · Multiteam-systems · Traditional leadership skills · U-shaped relations · Situational awareness · Distributed leadership

J. Soeters (✉) · T. Bijlsma
Netherlands Defense Academy, Breda, The Netherlands
e-mail: JMML.Soeters@mindef.nl

J. Soeters
Tilburg University, Tilburg, The Netherlands

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1 Introduction

Now and then, every country will be confronted with circumstances that are extremely dangerous to the people involved. Often such circumstances occur in far-flung areas, but Western societies are not immune to large-scale aircraft crashes, explosions and fires in industrial and urban areas or terrorist attacks. In the Netherlands the large firework explosion in 2000 in a community area in the city of Enschede caused the death of 23 people, injuring another staggering number of 950 citizens. It was a smaller version of the disaster within a chemical plant that took place in the Chinese port of Tianjin in August 2015. There have been more and there will be more crises of a comparable nature in the industrialized world.

However, such crises more often occur in so-called developing nations. Often Western people are involved as well. For the Netherlands for instance, during the ISAF mission, on average 2000 military men and women experienced the dangers of the Afghan province of Uruzgan (2006–2010), and in April 2015 some 60 Dutch professionals of the Urban Search and Rescue team (USAR) went to Kathmandu to assist in the search and rescue of victims of the earth-quakes that hit the area severely, twice in a couple of days.

Extreme conditions are exceptional by definition: they create uncertainty and fuzziness, time pressure plays a major role, and most of all there is danger to life and the wellbeing of the people who are in the midst of the havoc: the victims and the ones who are there to help. Those helpers may be trained specialists and professionals, but they may also be collaborators of organizations that suddenly find themselves in crisis or under attack (a hotel for instance, or a company); those are the employees of—in this context—so-called naïve organizations (Hannah et al. 2009). A final characteristic is that the efforts of the various teams that come to the rescue often take place in an international environment, which requires proper cooperation between teams and organizations of other nations and actors (under the aegis of the UN, the EU, Red Cross etc.).

It is without question that in such conditions assistance will be provided, quickly, generously, with the efforts of all specialists one can think of, from wherever one can imagine. Yet, it is not always clear how effective all this is being done. There is not too much research available with respect to the general effectiveness of such instant multinational operations. Is there something to gain, perhaps by improving the general leadership of, and the coordination between, such teams?

2 Extreme Conditions and Challenges

First, it seems important to define more precisely the characteristics of extreme conditions. Hannah et al. (2009) have provided more insight in this regard; in the model they have developed they point to the time factor: extreme conditions are

characterized by immediate danger, but the consequences of the crisis can also evolve much later (such as in nuclear leakages). Additionally, the size and probabilities of the consequences are important, as are the geographical and psychological distance: crises happening in one's own or a neighboring country are deemed more dramatic and important and attract much more attention than crises occurring in faraway regions.[1] In addition, the very nature of the disaster or threat is important: does the crisis imply danger to people's lives (if so, to how many?), to their happiness or welfare, to the environment, or to infrastructure and material resources only? Most often the consequences are combinations of such dangers.

Another point that needs to be made upfront is that managing such crises deals with three sorts of challenges:

(a) the prevention of crisis and disaster (for instance the fireworks explosion in Enschede should not have happened at all because fireworks should not be stored in a community area, and if stored at some place, only under strict conditions and continuous inspection),
(b) the action when the crisis unfolds (such as for the military under fire, or when an engine of an airplane starts to malfunction, or during a hostage situation),
(c) the action when the crisis has occurred, in order to cope with the consequences of the event (explosion, earthquake, airplane crash), which is taking care of the wounded and the deceased, communication, repairing infrastructure etc.

Of course these three challenges are different, but to some degree they are alike as well; they require comparable and differing skills and organizational measures. All situations can be trained, yet the action when the crisis is taking place (situation b), is the most unpredictable. However, this can be trained as well, at least to a certain degree.

A final point that is important is the fact that 'crisis management' usually takes place in a multiteam-system. When teams are dispatched to provide assistance in crises and disasters, it often is not very clear where specifically and how they need to respond. Such teams do not operate in isolation; they come from all over and after arrival they need to align their activities with those of the host-national authorities and workers who have already started their actions. For this reason, providing assistance is working in a multiteam-system. The tasks of leadership in such conditions are to act strategically (goal setting, motivating) and to coordinate the activities within, between and across the teams (DeChurch et al. 2011).

It is important to distinguish between these task elements because one single team cannot achieve a lot and is not likely to be effective, if it acts without aligning and coordinating with others. In Kathmandu, for instance, the coordination of all teams' efforts was so complex that the UN was urged to ask the Dutch USAR-team to fulfil this role, even if only on a temporary basis.

[1]An example can be seen in the Europe-wide protests that occurred when the terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13, 2015 created much more global shock, grief and response than a more or less comparable attack in Beirut just days before the Paris havoc and one in Mali a few days thereafter.

Leadership in extreme conditions can thus be characterized by the following features:

- It is full of risks and hazards. Often the victims' and helpers' lives are at stake;
- The tasks, the challenges and context are often unknown. The assignment, resources and the location, in which to operate, are often uncertain and complex;
- Providing assistance means working in a multiteam-system. The other teams may consist of other professionals but also of authorities and civil servants in other parts of the assistance chain, each with their own interests;
- Various disciplines and specialists are involved.

The complexity for leadership at a higher level contains the following elements: dealing with various languages and cultures (of countries/regions but also of other professions), ambiguity in goals and interests (in the short and the longer term), diversity of human and infrastructural resources and intense dynamics. How to perform in such circumstances? What do these leaders need to be able to do?

3 Traditionally Required Skills

In the conventional management and leadership literature, clear ideas exist about which characteristics leaders need to have in order to achieve good results in extreme conditions. For a large part these characteristics are derived from the literature on military operations, which is not strange given the fact that particularly during military operations young people are required to achieve goals in extremely dangerous conditions. American scholars who have conducted research in the military have come up with a list of characteristics, often personality traits, of the ones who are in charge (e.g., Bass and Riggio 2006; Wong et al. 2003; Krulak 1999; Hannah et al. 2009; Sweeney 2010; DeChurch et al. 2011; Campbell et al. 2010):

- *Stress resistance*. From the military world, but not only there, it is well known that not everybody can stay calm and cool and task-oriented in extreme conditions (Driskell and Salas 2013). Yet, this is a basic requirement for every aid helper and those who lead them. No one with such responsibilities can afford to panic in extreme conditions.
- *Resilience*. This concept is closely connected to stress resistance; it specifically refers to the psychological capabilities of recovery. Is the person in charge able to resume or restart his or her activities once the extreme conditions have occurred (Meredith et al. 2011; Bartone 2006)?
- *Can-do mentality*. Many service (wo)men, including their commanders, simply love this concept. It refers to a mentality of quick action—"act, act, act"—, i.e. solution oriented response without a lot of discussion, doubt and whining.
- *Being directive in a clear chain of command*. From historical times, this is a much sought after competence in the military domain, particular during extreme conditions. It goes back to the organizations' tendency to (re)centralize

management and decision making in times of crisis and stress. In times of crisis and disaster, time is always short, at least that is what humans generally perceive to be the case.[2] Shortage of time implies speed and speed does not allow for debate among participants who are involved as well. In such conditions leadership needs to be centralized, quick and decisive.
- *Being competent and prepared*. Extreme conditions are always full of unexpected events, but not everything that will be happening is unexpected. One can prepare oneself by training what to do, with whom, in which roles and with which human, material and financial resources. Leaders play an enormously important role in such preparations, contributing to an organizational culture and mind-set that prepares for the unexpected (e.g., Weick and Sutcliffe 2001).
- *Being trusted*. During the training and preparation stages leaders and commanders must gain trust among their subordinates. Trust among subordinates implies that these workers can take the stamina, competences, honesty and benevolence of their superiors for granted. However, trust is a precarious feature that needs strengthening continuously, particularly when the real action and the dangers that come along get started. Obviously there is a difference between training and the ‘real thing’, the real action.

This is an impressive list of required skills. But is this all there is to say? Is everything in this list clear-cut, or is reality more intricate and difficult?

4 Contemporary Demands

Many people tend to think that relations between phenomena are linear: the more one observes of A, the more—or the less—one observes of B. In reality, relations are often more complex and take the form of an inverted U-connection: in the beginning there is a positive relation (more A leads to more B), but after a certain point the connection turns around and becomes negative (more A leads to less B). It is important to be aware of the area where this turning point occurs. A couple of examples may illustrate the significance of this phenomenon with respect to our study of leadership in extreme conditions:

- A *can-do mentality* is an important feature in extreme conditions—in such situations one should take initiative and act, without doubting too much and without waiting for things to happen. More *can-do* leads to more effective action. However, too much action without doubt can cause great trouble. In the Vietnam War this mentality in the U.S. Army spawned a disastrous chain of

[2] In general there is a difference between the objective time that is available to respond and the perceived time to respond. Often there is more time than people in such situations are inclined to think.

events (Lind 1997). One simply and optimistically assumed that the larger numbers of American soldiers and weapon systems would inevitably lead to victory. As long as the number of casualties among the enemy would be larger than the number of casualties among their own troops, victory would come inevitably. Doubting this assumption was dangerous for military officers, particularly if one cherished one's career prospects. Finally, when the number of 'body bags' returning to the U.S.A. increased all the time, societal support for the war dropped, irrespective of the number of Vietcong casualties. The American operations ended up in defeat.

- The inverted U-connection can also be seen in discussions and negotiations: too little discussion can lead to uncoordinated actions that produce suboptimal results. Too much discussion, however, is problematic when time is short and 'windows of opportunity' will close again. There have been a series of accidents in mountain climbing, because the teams were too focused on achieving the top ("we can do it"), whereas there had been more than enough signals that indicated continuing could have dramatic consequences (Burnette et al. 2011). Powerful leadership stressing *can-do* may easily lead to *group-think* with lethal consequences. Structured, regular discussions, with possibilities for all people involved to express their views without social pressure, prevent such tragedies.
- In a comparable vein, decisive, direct leadership and decision-making are excellent qualities, especially when time is short. But here again there is a downturn: if this type of leadership is too dominating, too intimidating and too "punishing", people no longer dare to express their ideas and views, which implies that the learning, adaptation and decision making capabilities in the team as a whole decrease. In airplane crashes this dynamism in the cockpit has more than once been a dramatic factor (Flin et al. 2008). Leadership will always need to show its competence by proper coaching, asking the right questions, encouraging the team members, and creating psychological safety in the team (Hedlund et al. 2015).
- *Resilience* is an important feature for people and organizations when things turn bad; no one will deny that. But, if resilience implies that one does not learn from the events that caused the problems and the extreme conditions, resilience becomes stubbornness; in that case resilience implies lack of learning capacities.

All in all, it is important to distinguish the turning point between the contributing and the damaging impact of a can-do mentality, discussions, direct leadership and resilience.

Recent research by Baran and Scott (2010), based on insights provided by Weick (1999), shows that American fire fighters perform adequately when they allow room for three processes to happen:

- *Framing* what is happening, a process in which previous experiences are important to come to an interpretation and recognition of the situation at hand; it is important that the people in the team develop a "shared understanding" of the situation, preferably quickly, but at least at some point in time;

- "*Heedful interrelating*"; this implies that everyone and everyone's opinion counts; leadership is sending and receiving information; it is a multi-directional process; everyone has to pay attention to one another, and leadership needs to have the orientation to delegate matters to the right levels below them, enabling processes of self-steering (Vogelaar et al. 2010);
- *Adapting and improvising*; extreme conditions always contain a lack of clarity, uncertainty and swiftly changing situations; preparation and training are therefore indispensable but they cannot solve all the problems. Therefore, one needs to be able to be adaptive, flexible and to act according to what is happening. Following the French ethnologist Claude Levy-Straus, Karl Weick demonstrated that improvisation may be life-saving. Putting out a small fire can stop a large bushfire, irrespective of how contra-intuitive this may seem. *Bricolage*, as the famous French word goes, implies being able to deal creatively with the situation at hand. This is particularly important in extreme conditions that often constitute a transition from the 'known' to the 'unknown'.

5 How to Prepare and Facilitate the Leaders and Their Teams?

Following from the previous sections one may develop the idea of a leader in extreme situations as a centipede, a Jack of all trades, a spider in many webs. We have to reject the illusion of an omnipotent person right away. In contrast, in today's organizations the leader has become relatively less important, or to express it more positively, other competencies turn out to be more valuable for a leader. Actually, the team itself has become influential in crisis situations. This new emphasis on the team itself requires the team members to have adequate competences and attitudes. From the perspective of the leader, this section will elaborate these major competences and give suggestions as to how to grow and nurture these capabilities (cf. Zsambok and Klein 2014).

Situational awareness is an important team competence, which indicates the capability as a team to keep track and oversight in a complex and dynamic context. The absence of situational awareness has been the major cause of many (near) accidents, as research at the North-American Fire Service indicates (Dow et al. 2013).

Every single team member is constantly constructing and reconstructing his or her situational awareness. From the team perspective it is important to share these various 'social constructions of realities' in order to build a shared mental model. Especially in a team with specialists this needs to be a serious, repetitive action. One can think of a crisis or military command center with diverse staff officers, a nuclear power plant, or a medical surgery team. It is the task of the team leader,

often a generalist, to monitor this process of constantly building and rebuilding this shared mental model.

It is essential for the team leader to work on a shared mental model; (s)he is the one to make decisions, preferably in close communication with the others. Specialists and professionals all have their own perspective and filter to look at the history, actual state and progression of an event. Constantly building an actual shared mental model by exchanging facts and expectations will force them to look and think with a wider perspective, making connections and gaining new insights. Everyone working and staying in his own 'bubble' will hamper the emergence of team synergy.

When a team is mastering this process of frequently (re)constructing an actual shared mental model, this team has the ability to respond to expected situations, reaching 'the front of the problem', moving from a reactive mode to a proactive mode. The team has increased its adaptive power (Endsley 1995), which is a decisive element in complex crisis situations.

Stress, sleep deprivation or fatigue influence situational awareness. That is why experiencing these factors in working conditions, and learning how to cope with these critical conditions are prerequisite for every team member, not least for the leader. Crisis teams working 24/7 have their policies about replacements and shifts (with a thorough 'hand over take over') and sleep management to prevent decreased individual and team effectiveness.

Mindfulness is a present-day popular activity helping to reduce stress. This practice helps people to experience what is happening right here and now, without their minds wandering too much in the past or the future, or elsewhere. Mindfulness training has become a standard feature in some sectors of industry and public administration such as American fire brigades. Research at the American Marines has demonstrated that mindfulness training brings positive effects on mental and physical level, especially after experiencing stressful situations (Johnson et al. 2014).

Communication was, is, and will always be a significant aspect of leadership. In connection with the previous section, without communication there will be no shared mental model. Most leaders are not short of communication skills. But are all these skills well developed (e.g., Hedlund et al. 2015)? Being silent and questioning (both at the right moments) are important skills as well. Leaders have to pay attention to the *meta-communication* in the team, which indicates the need to regard all aspects ("all senses") of what is going on in the team. For example, leaders have to take notice if a team member is quiet, subdued, and withdrawn. This may indicate sub-assertiveness while this professional needs to share unsolicited his or her information and ideas to increase team performance.

Elaborating on 'all senses', meta-communication also involves the level, content and characteristics of interaction and emotion. It is related to questions like: Is there a healthy debate or dialogue? Is everybody's behavior open and respectful to each

other? Communication even implies expression without words, it is about behavior, actions, body-language, attitude from and towards team members.

To conclude, mastering communication skills by the leader, and a sound and open professional team climate, can lead to discussions about intra-team communication (level of interaction and emotion) and—structures (procedures). When the team leader can accomplish these kinds of discussions with the team, the team members and the team itself can be successful during work. This is crucial when working as a crisis team; the last thing you want is the team itself being in crisis!

The way of leadership deserves attention as well. As we already saw, the team is the building block in crisis management, and the role of the classical leader has become less conspicuous (Olsthoorn and Soeters 2013), or to state it more accurately: leadership has changed. The almighty, omnipotent, and all-knowing leader already disappeared from most organizations some time ago. In a crisis team this leadership style will definitely not work either. A way of coping with all the internal and external challenges and opportunities is *distributed leadership* (e.g., Spillane 2012). In this conception of leadership it is normal—in certain circumstances—that at a given moment a team member takes over the leadership role because he or she has more experience or knowledge of the issues to deal with on that particular moment. For the leader this involves followership: knowing when to step back as a leader. At the team level: distributed leadership, as well as distributed followership (!) should be a common process in dealing with particular issues.

It is crystal clear that this concept only works when the previously cited elements are functioning optimally. There must be a shared mental model, so that every team member knows what is happening and one can consciously step forward to take the lead if necessary and appropriate. This requires openness and transparency at all levels of communication. Finally and not yet mentioned, the leader must have arranged the organization structure including the formal responsibilities and horizontal and vertical delegation in such a way that the professional staff can work in the most optimal manner.

Examples of such multidisciplinary teams in crisis situations were Dutch military platoons in Uruzgan, Afghanistan, leaving the barracks on patrol. Dependent of the mission and threats at hand, specialist groups were ‘clicked’ to the standard platoon, e.g., a Forward Air Controller-element, an explosive ordnance disposal-team, a radio connection unit, and Special Operation Forces units. Through this expansion the standard platoon was sometimes twice as big in terms of personnel and vehicles. The platoon leader, most often a young lieutenant, was not skilled in the use and functionalities of all this military and materiel. Thus, in case of a sudden threat or hostility (e.g., a possible Improvised Explosive Device) the interaction between the lieutenant and the specialists added to his platoon can best be defined as distributed leadership. The disadvantage of not knowing each other and the consequential absence of intrinsic trust among each other was re-installed by faith in each other’s expertise and the sharing of a common culture. Hierarchy was replaced by expertise.

Preconditions of effective teamwork are essential. When we leave the team and take a look at a higher level, managing and coordinating teams in a multiteam-system, the aforementioned applies even more. The aim of the leader, the higher purpose, then determines what needs to be done. Crisis situations are most often so complex, dynamic and dislocated that higher management cannot apply micromanagement. Only at the 'hot spot'—where the threats and the dangers emerge—one can build situational awareness. This type of higher-level leadership—accepting that one is not in charge directly and that one needs to instruct leaders at lower levels in general terms—has become known as mission command, or, to honor the late 19th century German origin: *Auftragstaktik*. In this conception, the WHAT is clear, but the HOW is left to the commanders in the field who have the best view of the actual state and expected developments. This lower level commander is able to fulfil his mission independently, even though his unit would be cut off from his or her parent unit.

The underlying thinking also is: even though there was room for planning and preparation, once the action starts or when the disaster unfolds, the reality deviates from the written plans. The leader and his or her team members or subordinates consequentially have to adapt to the changing and evolving situation, like the *bricoleurs* we have seen before. If this is the style and approach of the team leader and his or her team members, and if they have the appropriate resources, then we can speak of a resilient but learning system; the team members, resources, and processes are robust.

An important condition for a team to become effective is professional training. *Train as you fight* is the motto of the Dutch Royal Army. Therefore, also unexpected aspects should be built into the program when training and exercising, fostering both mental fitness and dexterity in the technical domain. In this context one may be encouraged to think and act 'out-of-the-box'. In a safe training environment errors can be made. To enable 'failure based learning behavior', psychological safety is most important (Carmeli 2007).

Training is one thing; to keep learning, teams have to evaluate on a regular base, even in the hot phase, during operations. In the military domain, After Action Reviews (AARs) are standard practice: a short, concise, on scene evaluation immediately after the action (of course in safe conditions). Frequently and swiftly working down the PDCA- or the OODA-loop is found to provide significant advantages, also in a dynamic context (Boyd 1987).

A leader will only receive trust from his/her team members if he or she positions himself as vulnerable, a human with a leadership position. People-oriented leadership is always important. On the other hand: the leader can be his own person as well. Role-playing will stop quickly when a team is functioning sub-optimally. That is the essential added value of the buddy system: keep each other mentally and physically fit and adroit. Two buddies are a micro-team, in a context of distributed leadership and all the other aspects mentioned before.

6 Conclusion: More Complex Than One Is Inclined to Think

In this contribution a number of important aspects of leadership in extreme situations have been mentioned: a *can-do* mentality, communication, direct leadership, and resilience. The turning points around the inverted U-shape, between the good and the bad sides of these relations have been highlighted as well. The last section has shed more light onto these turning points, providing leaders with comprehensive solutions to work on these items, and to place teams and teamwork center stage.

Nowadays the idea of idealizing strong leaders with excellent personal characteristics and traits no longer seems appropriate. Those are often leaders with a large degree of overconfidence, too much trust in themselves and the good course of things. Overconfidence is, according to the Nobel laureate and famous psychologist Daniel Kahneman, the personality trait he would like to conjure away if that were possible (Guardian 18/07/2015). Instead, even in extreme circumstances, good leaders will enable others to put forward their insights and knowledge, intelligence, experience, action skills, and understanding of the situation. At the start this may be more time consuming, but at the end, it will pay back, next to the increased quality of the process of decision making. Besides—even in extreme conditions—often more time is available than one would expect.

With this leadership style, lives may be saved, which has been demonstrated so often. The good leader enables self-leadership, mission command and distributed leadership among his team members and he or she may, as such, hardly be noted. Maybe good leadership is unobtrusive leadership: it is present but hardly noticed (Olsthoorn and Soeters 2013). For sure, this constitutes a paradox, an apparent contradiction, which perhaps is inevitable in the complexity of extreme conditions. This we simply may have to accept.

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Authors Biography

Joseph Soeters is a professor of management and organization studies at the Netherlands Defense Academy and he is a part-time professor of organizational sociology at Tilburg University. In October 2015 he was awarded the Morris Janowitz Career Achievement Award by the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society. He has published extensively in the field of military studies, with a focus on multinational military cooperation, effectiveness of military operations and diversity issues in the military among others. His most recent edited volume (together with Patricia Shields and Sebastiaan Rietjens) is the *Routledge Handbook on Research Methods in Military Studies* (2014). His newest edited volume (together with Irina Goldenberg) will be on information sharing in security operations.

Tom Bijlsma is assistant professor of management and organization studies at the Netherlands Defense Academy. He has published several articles and chapters in the field of team performance and team cooperation in military operations; he is particularly interested in crew resource management, about which topic he has published a number of books in the Dutch language. He is a reserve lieutenant-colonel of the artillery of the NL armed forces.

Leadership, Morale and Cohesion: What Should Be Changed?

Eraldo Olivetta

Abstract Just how essential cohesion is for operational efficiency is widely known, as is the role of leadership in furthering this cohesion as well as in sustaining the morale and maintaining the team spirit of a military unit. However, over the last decades, significant changes have affected the armed forces of the Western countries, both organizationally and culturally, most notably the transition from the institutional model to the employment model. These changes give rise to the following questions that shall be answered in the present article: In the new context arising from such changes, has the function of leadership in maintaining cohesion remained the same or has it changed? And, if it has changed, how and to what extent has this been happening? What should the responsibilities and skills of a good commander who is called to play his/her role in the changed modern military organizations be today? Using in-depth interviews, the command experience of 43 Italian officers engaged in missions in asymmetric conflict environments in recent years is analyzed. The results show a clear evolution towards leadership styles that are, on the one hand, guided by models more focused on relationships and, on the other hand, seem to be closer, now more than in the past, to those of civil organizations, despite the military's individual characteristics. These styles, with regard to certain skills, seem to be reminiscent of Goleman's theory of transformational leadership.

Keywords Military leadership · Cohesion · Emotional intelligence · Transformational leadership

E. Olivetta (✉)
University of Torino, Turin, Italy
e-mail: eraldo.olivetta@unito.it

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1 Introduction

For the efficient operation of military organizations, it is essential to research and promote cohesion among the members of a unit. Since the existing studies and literature[1] basically agree on emphasizing the importance of the role of leadership in maintaining and promoting morale, team spirit, and cohesion, it may be useful to ask if, in the modern armed forces today, this function has changed with respect to the past.

Now less than ever before, the modern armed forces can be considered as a closed institution, separated or divorced from the parent society. As amply demonstrated (Olivetta 2012b), the changes that have been taking place in the last decades in the society of affiliation have resulted in changes both in the military and in the specific sub-culture of the latter.

The changes that have occurred in society, and especially in the culture of the society of affiliation, have definitely influenced the characteristics of the actors involved in military organizations. On the one hand, the officials, who upon finishing their studies at the academy and university are called to fill leadership roles, are the first members of that parent society in which they experienced its primary and secondary socialization processes, learning the culture and internalizing its values and norms. On the other hand, the men whom they will be called upon to command, in addition to the fact that they are part of the same civil society and like the officers, have participated in primary and, at least in part, also secondary socialization processes that were more or less similar, are no longer soldiers recruited by conscription, but volunteer professionals who have made a specific career choice.

If the military institution has changed according to the variant of the parent society, if the sub-military culture has also changed due to the change in the culture of the affiliated society, and if the characteristics of the social parties (officers and soldiers) have also changed due to the different socialization previous to their enrollment, one wonders whether or not its leadership (and control styles) has also changed or is changing; whether the ways in which this affects the soldiers' morale and raises the team spirit are changing; and whether the ways in which it promotes cohesion also tend to vary in the new context arising from changes that have occurred or are still underway.

2 Theoretical Framework

As already mentioned for the efficient operation of military organizations, it is essential to research and promote cohesion among the members of a unit. Etzioni (1961, p. 176) considered cohesion to be "a positive expressive relation between

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[1] See Sect. 2.

two or more actors […] in which the actors have a positive emotional investment towards one another" and that "these investments are not 'natural' but are regulated by rules". In military language, cohesion is understood as "the coordinated and continuous work conducted by units of soldiers who, for their skill in leadership and proper training, reach that mode of automatic operating which, in addition to allowing them to achieve their goals, also allows them to minimize the cases of indiscipline, at whatever level they may occur" (Nuciari 1990, p. 28). A group that is cohesive is one that reacts as a unit, that feels the 'esprit de corps' (team spirit) as a way of belonging to a specific armed force unit whose existence and whose work must be supported and defended (Nuciari 1990).

In the military, cohesion depends not only on the factors mentioned in the scientific literature that are generally able to influence the formation of intra-group and inter-group ties, from typical elements such as the technical aspects of weapons, the unit's type of organization and rotation system, and the nature of the threat being faced, but also on the performance of the immediate commanders (Janowitz 1959). As Stewart (1988) claims, partly incorporating Etzioni (1961), military cohesion is made up of three components: peer relationships (horizontal cohesion), relations between superiors and subordinates (vertical cohesion) and relations toward the armed forces (organizational cohesion), as well as a fourth aspect concerning the relations of the individual and of the armed forces with society and the culture of origin in general. The author emphasizes that the task of conveying the horizontal relations in the right direction so as to reach the objectives is up to the leadership, through vertical cohesion. Therefore, the function of leadership is to promote and "manage" cohesion, and develop the "esprit de corps" in order to obtain that operating automatism which allows the organization to achieve its objectives.

That is why, ever since the Second World War, leadership has been systematically studied in order to also understand its function with respect to cohesion and consequently, to operational effectiveness. Etzioni (1961, p. 176) stated that leadership was "the activity aimed at influencing people in a given situation and directed towards the achievement of one or more specific objectives." In this definition, although it is clearly a more task-related orientation rather than a relationship-based one, nevertheless, the particular aspect of the substantial role in the ability "to influence people" was already being mentioned.

The function of junior officers with regard to the cohesion of a group and the overlapping of their formal and informal role, especially on the front lines, has been a matter under discussion since some early research in the 1940s (Stouffer 1949; Shils and Janowitz 1948). But cohesion can also be dysfunctional, as evidenced in all those cases in which the horizontal and vertical links may privilege outsiders' achievement of objectives, and sometimes on the contrary, those of the organization. For example, that is what happened in the war in Vietnam (Moskos 1975; Savage and Gabriel 1976; Rielly 2001), or with the Canadian regiments on peacekeeping missions in Somalia, and in former Yugoslavia in the early nineties (Winslow 2003). As previously mentioned, it is precisely the leadership, and the

junior officers in particular, who are bestowed with the task of channeling the horizontal relations in the right direction for the organization's objectives.

Pullano (1996) stated that good leadership means being able to sense and perceive the changes and the complexity of the system. In the list of the qualities that a leader should possess, Pullano already distinguished between three different levels: oneself (self-confidence, self-control, willpower, ability to improve, anxiety control), one's relationships with others (charisma, fairness, authority, availability), the environment (competence, decisiveness and initiative, sense of reality, intuition, and flexibility).

Ulmer (1998) listed the following characteristics of leadership skill in the military: someone who is able to instill confidence, clarify goals, focus efforts, build a cohesive group, provide a good example, raise others' hope, integrity, energy, courage, and loyalty to the institutional values. But in the Italian studies on leadership qualities, it was Bagni (1998, pp. 129–134) who explicitly cited the ability of leaders to "pay attention to the people under their command and their feedback" and "instill motivation".

An evolution in the way of considering the role of leadership is already evident in the existing literature on the function of cohesion in operational effectiveness, and studies on the military institution in Western countries are equally in agreement with emphasizing the changes that have occurred, relating them to changes in the parent society.

As for the military institution, the change in the perception of a threat following the disappearance of the Cold War (Moskos and Burk 1994; Olivetta 2012b), the recruitment reform which saw the transition from mass armies based on conscription (the draft) to armies formed by volunteer professionals (Haltiner 2003; Boene et al. 2000; Olivetta 2012b), technological innovation (Manigart 2000; Olivetta 2012b), organizational change, for example, downsizing (Manigart 2000; Olivetta 2012b), changes in the international geopolitics and involvement of armed forces in conflicts that are increasingly different from warfare as it is traditionally understood, the peculiarity of modern asymmetric conflicts, but also the changes in the economic environment of the parent society as well as in the social and cultural society, have profoundly transformed the military institution in Western countries and, in particular in Italy, a country that is the main point of reference in this work. So, if the military organization has changed, how is the leadership that must direct such an organization changing, or how has it already changed?

3 Hypotheses

In light of considerations on the function of "leadership skill" for the maintenance of morale, for the promotion of 'team spirit' and thereby, for cohesion, the idea behind this work is that the model of military leadership today is tending to change,

just as is happening in the civilian world. In particular, also in the military, more relationship-oriented leadership models are being added to (but not replacing) the more task-oriented leadership models. In addition to the styles similar to more authoritarian models, models that are closer to the transformational leadership expressed by Goleman tend to be added particularly in situations of stress, such as those typical of the missions in the field of asymmetric conflicts. Good leaders, who still have to be flexible and able to adapt to different situations (Nuciari 2003) by mobilizing the leadership style considered most effective at the time, must be able to appeal to their soldiers' emotions, keep their morale high, and encourage their motivation and commitment.

Even if this hypothesis were only partially verified, this would be a further indication that the model of military leadership is closer to the leadership models of civil organizations. In fact, the military organization has particular characteristics that make it differ from civilian organizations. As a result, the leadership models of civilian organizations cannot always be transferred, at least not without appropriate adjustments, to the military organization. For example, just think of the fact that in the military, the senior leaders become such within the organization itself (Ulmer 1998). But the shift toward models that are at least partially similar to those of civilian organizations would, ultimately, also assist with the training and the preparation of the commanders who will be called to work in current operational theaters, in order to provide them with the tools necessary for effective leadership styles that foster the cohesion necessary for the required operational efficiency.

4 Methods

In order to verify this hypothesis, as part of the Research Project "*Officer and Commander in Asymmetric Warfare Operations*" of the European Research Group on Military and Society, interviews with 43 commanders who participated in missions in contexts of asymmetric conflict were conducted by Italian scholars belonging to the working group 'The Military Profession'. All those interviewed had held positions as the commander of a platoon, company, or battalion, or as mentors. The sample was designed with semi-structured interviews carried out with the in-depth interview method, in order to grasp the essence of the interviewee's thinking and therefore, of their experience. Among the variables studied, the officers were also asked how their soldiers' morale had been during the mission, what factors had had an impact on it, and how they had dealt with managing both the situations stemming from the troop's morale, and the factors that had precisely given rise to them. Careful consideration of these influencing factors leads to reflecting on the model of leadership and styles of command found in the collective imagery of the sample, thus gathering food for thought concerning the initial hypothesis.

5 Results of the Research

All the interviewees recognized and confirmed the function that morale has regarding cohesion and operational effectiveness. Among the factors that can affect the unit's morale, the officers interviewed made a distinction between endogenous elements (typical of the theater of operations) and exogenous factors (outside of the context of the mission).

Regarding the endogenous factors, the sample cites the following experiences: the duration of the mission; the type of activities performed and the level of commitment required; the living conditions and the "well-being" of the personnel; the amplifying effect of the particularly stressful situations that are created on a mission; separation from the unit; baptism by fire; and the loss of human lives. As for external factors, i.e. outside the unit as an organization, but still able to affect its morale, the respondents placed particular emphasis on the function of the family. Let us briefly examine these factors.

(a) The length of the mission

The respondents cited the length of the mission in relation to the soldiers' morale especially regarding two aspects: on the one hand, there is a need for certainty concerning the time period of employment, and on the other hand, the evolution of morale during the different stages that the mission is divided into. The certainty of the employment period would seem to affect morale to the extent that the latter requires deadlines as definite as possible with regard to both the end of their employment and their furloughs, which should be clearly planned by referring to explicitly declared and equitably managed universal criteria, within the limits of the unpredictability of events, related both to the context of the mission and to any family needs that may arise during the employment period.

> Regarding morale, this mission [Afghanistan 2012-2013 - author's note] went better than others I had previously participated in. A major factor was the certainty of the period. It is important to have well-defined periods of employment and that these are respected (Battalion Commander – aged 45).

As for the evolution of morale during the mission, the respondents show an oscillatory behavior in relation to the different events that accompany the mission. Regardless of the occurrence of such events, which we shall deal with later on, in conditions of the "normal" functioning of the mission, respondents reveal: there is a higher morale at the beginning (the first two months), related to the novelty that accompanies the start of the mission, and to the many things that need to be learned at this stage; morale is good in the intermediate stage, where the initial enthusiasm perhaps tends to be lacking, but the levels are still fairly high; towards the end of the mission (the last month and a half), morale tends to diminish, with the approaching date of their return.

The sample stressed the role of the commander, especially of smaller units (squads, platoons), precisely in this final phase, and centered on their presence and

attention towards their men and "keeping the rope taut" to avoid downturns in operational effectiveness and efficiency.

(b) The type of activities performed and the level of commitment required

On the one hand, involvement in operational activities, when these involve a high risk, can lead to a greater stress. On the other hand, according to some respondents, the routine and more or less long situations of scant operation may adversely affect the morale of units. Boredom may therefore be detrimental to the morale.

The task of the commander is to boost the soldiers' morale by keeping them constantly busy, motivating them, giving them objectives to be achieved, and stimulating and gratifying them as to their achievements.

(c) The living conditions and the "well-being" of the personnel

Another aspect mentioned that can affect the unit's morale is the soldiers' "well-being", an expression the respondents use to express the general living conditions in the operating theater. Although aware of the specific context of a mission in the theater of operations, the inability to have access to certain services related to needs that the respondents considered basic (such as showers inside the base), can affect the troops' morale, especially concerning the influence of the amplifying effect, which will be addressed in the next step.

> Nobody was asking to have caviar. However, at times the basic conditions were lacking. If I have been out in the cold all day long, when I return I'd like to be able to take a shower. If the showers do not work for three days, people begin to get fed up. Or if it rains three days in a row, and for three days, you practically need a boat to get around (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

(d) The amplifying effect of the particularly stressful situations that are created on a mission

According to the respondents, the particular context in which the mission is carried out and its related conditions of stress seem to amplify uncomfortable situations that may naturally come to be created in a military mission. The relevance lies not so much in the fact of the seriousness of the specific situations as it does in the fact that under stressful conditions such as those accompanying the missions, the capacity to endure may diminish, and facts that in other contexts would not be particularly serious, might negatively affect the unit's morale instead, especially when they have been accumulating.

> The fact is that everything there is amplified. All it takes is a trifle. For example, if the showers don't work: at the beginning of the mission, the men don't complain; during, or half-way, or when it's cold, then it is a real mess! And again: Unpredictable situations that come to be created can lead to some small misunderstandings in an environment with few people but a forced cohabitation nonetheless, thus exploding into dramas that, in the end, are resolved with 'a glass of water' (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

In addition to interventions aimed at the solution of technical and logistical problems (showers, services, etc.), for the respondents, in these cases the task of the commander is to put the problems, if magnified by the specific context, into the right proportion and ease the sharpness and tensions that can come to be created at a relational level. With regard to the latter, they underlined the importance of knowing how to negotiate and resolve disagreements that may be created.

(e) Separation from the unit

All the commanders stressed that morale was deeply affected in cases where one or more elements had been separated from the unit. In one case, it had been necessary to split the platoon; in another, a soldier had been sent to support another task force. The effects described by the respondents who reported a decline in morale highlighted the primary group's propensity for unity.

> What really undermined morale for us was being separated: a person in the platoon had to go help another task force. That undermined morale not because people did not want him to go there, but because they were not clear about the reasons for this (Platoon Commander – aged 28).

If it is the case that the event is imposed by the higher needs, the unit commander, who is not supposed to have to make such a decision, should be able to handle what may in fact represent an attack on the cohesion of the group even more carefully, especially by explaining and justifying the need for the decision made by the higher ranks. Instead, regarding the level at which these decisions are made, there should be a growing awareness that such choices are only attributable to cases of extreme necessity to avoid compromising the cohesion of the primary group, when there are not even any 'buddy relations' (Little 1964), and the effects of synergies and coordination painstakingly built during the preparation may be lost, and perhaps more.

(f) Baptism by fire

Another element that is mentioned by many respondents when talking about the morale is the soldiers' encounter with their first combat situations or first intensive-risk events (IED strikes, etc.). One interviewee expresses it in these terms:

> Of course the first time you get shot at you feel pretty shocked. Then, after the second time, it becomes routine, and you go by the rules (Platoon Commander - aged 33).

As for the role of commanders in helping the unit's morale in such cases, see the next point.

(g) The loss of human lives

The death of a comrade is described by the respondents as the event that can have the most effect on the unit's morale. The same is true, albeit to a lesser extent, for events that may cause people to be injured. Regarding the fact that in these severe cases, specialized psychologists are sometimes sent into the field, some respondents expressed reservations about their effectiveness, noting that they tend to be seen as

an 'out-group' person (Sumner 1940), someone who did not start out with them at the beginning of the mission. On the contrary, it seems that a much more important role, and partly to substitute that of the psychologist, is played by the chaplain, to all effects considered an 'in-group' member.

When asked what the commander should do in all of these cases, including those referred to above, among others, the respondents stated three particular aspects:

– an attempt to rationalize an event with their unit members, by analyzing how the facts occurred, studying the details and circumstances, the actions of each person's behavior containing the best practices, and instead, those that need to be corrected or improved. The importance of 'talking about what happened' with their men, which seems to invoke a kind of catharsis, is often emphasized by the platoon commanders.
– Since the majority of the samples recognizes the fundamental role of the primary group in supporting morale when faced with severe events and in the most difficult times, the commander should promote and encourage 'team spirit' and the ability to be a 'group'.
– The attentiveness of the commanders, especially of teams and platoons, who should be able to recognize the signs of a lowering of their soldiers' morale and intervene promptly with their support in terms that will be defined better later on.

Before considering the merits of what the respondents seem to consider to be the basic elements of the goodness in leadership capable of sustaining the morale of the soldiers involved in situations of asymmetric conflicts, it would be appropriate to dwell on yet another factor indicated in many of the interviews as strongly able to affect morale: family.

Unlike the previous factors, in this work the latter has been considered as exogenous, in that in itself, it is outside the organization being studied and yet it is able to significantly affect a soldier's morale. The family, the primary group *par excellence*, can enter into competition with the primary group in the operating theater (the team or platoon), also favored by the improvement of the possibilities of communication (mobile phone systems, Skype, etc.). Therefore, there are two 'greedy institutions' (Segal and Blair 1976; Bowen and Orthner 1989; Moelker and Kloet 2003; Farina 2004; Sertorio and Nuciari 2009; Nuciari and Sertorio 2009) that can be in competition with each other, asking the social actor (the soldier engaged in mission) to meet the exacting demands of both of them.

According to respondents, the family's ability to affect a soldier's morale can take place on two different levels:

– One is the support that the family can guarantee for a spouse who is employed in a mission with an attitude of understanding, and ensuring their emotional presence and moral support;
– The other is the possible problems that the family may have at home and that the soldier engaged in mission is not able to handle.

> While one would expect that the family never fails to support those who are on a mission, perhaps in some cases in which a person was having troubles, it would end up with them accusing the spouse in the theater of operations, blaming them for not being present to deal with them (Battalion Commander – aged 45).

In the experiences gathered from the research, it was always a matter of serious cases such as the health of their children or spouse, death, or conflict between spouses that was leading to separation, etc. In all these cases, the primary family group seems to prevail over the primary "unit" group, thereby seriously undermining the soldiers' morale to the extent of forcing the commander to arrange for them to be repatriated. The experiences reported below confirm what has just been said.

> If you get a call from home and they say: 'your father is sick', then that man is lost. He's lost in the sense that he is not thinking of anything else, just about going home. If they get a call from home about important things, they just turn off. So, since they are turned off, it is no longer useful to keep them there. In principle, if you can, you send them home (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

> Not being able to take action on the problems of their own family drives them crazy! It makes it really hard for them. The cases that I have had were almost all irrecoverable: we had to send them home (Battalion Commander – aged 45).

> Then also because being there, I think all your emotions are a little amplified and the distance from home makes you perceive the problems as being bigger. They already are, just for the fact that you're not there: so it is not just a feeling (Company Commander – aged 34).

With regard to this particular factor of influence on the morale of the unit and the individual soldiers, some respondents with a higher leadership role and with significant experience at home have complained about a substantial weakness of the institution in terms of supporting the families, especially with respect to what happens in other countries. The need for solutions regarding family support was stressed, also for the serenity and therefore, the morale of their spouses on a mission.

> Someone who is on a mission should not be concerned with family problems and they should be reassured about those who are at home. This is what would make it so that someone could manage to withstand a long period of permanence on a mission, away from home (Battalion Commander – aged 45).

If the sample's answers given so far about the factors that can affect soldiers' morale already allow one to begin to make an outline of what the role of the commander is in situations of asymmetric conflict, the respondents were also explicitly asked to explain this role and in their experience of command in mission, what a good leader should actually do to keep the morale of his[2] men at acceptable levels.

All respondents unanimously recognized the importance of that role, emphasizing its importance especially at the level of the commanders who are closest to

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[2]The generic masculine is used in this text for the purpose of simplification, but it equally refers to women.

their unit members, in particular the squad leaders. The latter, in addition to often having had significant experience in previous missions, have a smaller number of persons to be controlled, and they belong to the primary group which consequently considers them as the 'in-group' (Sumner 1940). This results in a better knowledge of their men and therefore a greater ability to recognize the signs of a decline in morale, both in the individual and in the unit.

> Surely the squad leader, having eight men, could undertake a more thorough control. Then, by living in dormitories with the others, being in contact with them every day, maybe knowing to say 'look, he just had a fight with his wife yesterday on the phone' and so I [Platoon Commander - author's note] didn't have him go out on patrol. I replaced him with another guy who had his wits about him (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

Regarding the role of commanders in promoting and boosting the morale of their soldiers, the entire sample has stressed the need, on the part of the latter, to grasp the changes that occur within them, and especially to recognize the signs of any decline.

So how can a good commander do that? The interviews reveal a series of actions and behaviors to be implemented which, taken together, further contribute to complete the picture of the good leader outlined so far. The first point the sample stresses is the need to 'talk' with their personnel, both to know them better and to be able to recognize the distress signals that reveal possible declines in morale.

> Talking with people is essential. Maybe at a gathering, and therefore, a moment that is formal. Or if you see that something is wrong with someone, you take them aside, and you go and get a beer with them, and talk to each other (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

> Lower-level commanders also have the task of being close to the personnel and cheering them up. It is also our role to know our people, to approach them when you see that someone is a bit off, and to talk with your people. You can't know someone unless you talk with them (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

Connected to the first, the second necessity the sample stresses is for attention, to be able to 'listen' to their personnel. Just by listening to his men, the commander is able to support them at the first sign of abatement. This support seems to be of particular importance in cases where the soldier has personal or family problems. Specific training done during the preparation by psychologists concerning this function seems to be useful.

This attention paid to the soldiers, and the ability to listen and talk with them seemingly refer to the capacity for empathy, which is also somewhat *sine qua non* for recognizing the signs of declining morale. The good commander must be able to "step into the shoes" of his Troops in order to better understand their behavior and to develop appropriate intervention strategies if necessary.

Finally, another aspect that the commanders interviewed mentioned repeatedly is the ability to properly and effectively manage the primary group (especially a squad or platoon). For respondents, being in charge of a unit on a mission in certain operational theaters such as Afghanistan, is different from controlling the same units in other missions, and far different from doing so at home.

> I won't say that commanding a platoon in Afghanistan is the only real kind of control but there are few other occasions for this kind of experience. When you are commanding people in critical situations where everything that happens is your responsibility… you say what to do, you take responsibility for everything. Perhaps that is the true experience of being in command (Platoon Commander – aged 29).

The characteristics of the commander's role that emerged from the sample in this regard are those of being able to foster and promote cohesion, develop team spirit, contain any friction that may arise in a stressful situation where, as mentioned, everything tends to be amplified.

Also studying the indications (omitted here for brevity) provided by the sample about how this should be done, the model that respondents seem to be referring to is more a kind of leadership that, while not losing sight of the task, also seems to be oriented to relationships (Bales 1950). In fact, they speak of the capacity to resolve conflicts, to ease tensions, to be conciliatory; to give help, advice, and encouragement; to show fairness and equity.

6 Discussion

According to the respondents, by examining the factors that are able to affect the morale of the soldiers, especially regarding the ways that they think commanders should act when dealing with those factors, useful information can be obtained about the leadership model being referred to in the sample studied, thus making it possible to test the initial hypothesis.

Already in examining the factors that have been defined endogenous, for example, by treating the problem of routine and the more or less long periods of limited activity that may adversely affect the morale of the unit, the commanders interviewed stressed the need to provide reasonable but challenging goals, and to stimulate a focus on performance. However, these skills coincide with the fourth skill (orientation towards results) of the second dimension (self-management) of the model of transformational leadership according to Goleman (2002). In fact, that skill means that the good leader is constantly prodded to seek improvement, not only for himself, but for his men, by setting reasonable yet stimulating goals (Olivetta 2012a).

Continuing the examination of factors that may affect morale with regard to the routine situations of low operation and eventual boredom, as we have seen, the sample emphasized that the commander should be able to motivate his soldiers by giving them objectives to be reached, and stimulating and gratifying them in order to achieve them. These skills tend to coincide with the first skill (motivational leadership) of the fourth dimension (interpersonal relationship management) of Golemans's model of transformational leadership (2002). Among other things, this expertise means that the leader is able to inspire others, stimulating his people and describing their shared mission so as to encourage them to follow him. He must be

able to transmit their shared purpose which transcends the daily tasks and makes the work exciting (Goleman 2002).

Included among the factors that can affect morale and considered endogenous, as a means for treating the amplifying effect that the particular context of the asymmetrical missions can create, the commanders interviewed relied on the need to be able to put problems into the right perspective when magnified by the specificity of the context, to settle the sharpness and the tensions that can come to be created on a relational level, and to negotiate and resolve disagreements.

All these skills, however, also coincide with the fifth skill (conflict management) of the fourth dimension (interpersonal relationship management) of Goleman's model of transformational leadership (2002). This particular expertise relates to the leader's ability, in case of tension, to find ways to talk to all the parties concerned, so as to be able to understand their different perspectives and to finally resolve the disagreements. In practice, this is precisely what the commanders interviewed said they had had to do when they found themselves having to deal with the disagreements among the soldiers when they were experiencing the elevated effect of a particular theater of operation.

Among the endogenous factors that can affect the morale, there is the function of the primary group, especially concerning events such as the death of a colleague, the baptism of fire, etc. In all these cases, the commanders have cited the importance of the group, the soldiers need to feel that they are a part of it, the commitment to promote the 'team spirit', the importance of the pursuit of the objective of cohesion. The task of the commander is therefore to build the identity of the group.

This, however, coincides with the sixth skill (teamwork and cooperation) of the fourth dimension (interpersonal relationship management) of Goleman's model of transformational leadership (2002). This skill implies that the leader is able to induce the others to act as a team and that he is capable of building the spirit and identity of the group by dedicating time, perhaps even beyond the requirements dictated by the work, and shaping and establishing relationships among the group members.

An even more useful example for testing our initial hypothesis then derived from what the respondents said concerning the family. It is considered one of the factors that can affect soldiers' morale and it is outside the institution. Nevertheless, it can significantly affect their morale and the related operational efficiency. According to the respondents, when faced with the problems that may arise with the families of their own soldiers, good commanders should be able to recognize the problem right from the early signs, they should talk to their men showing that they know how to listen to and understand them, in order to then be able to intervene by engaging in actions that can help them.

Again, the sample studied stressed such actions as 'talking', 'listening', 'getting to know' and 'understanding' their men.

> It is our role to know our men and, when you see someone who is a little off, to approach them and talk with them… You can't know someone unless you talk with them (Company Commander – aged 32).

These actions may ultimately be summed up in the expression ‘caring for their people’. This focus, in turn, calls for and coincides with the concept of empathy, understood as the ability to understand what the soldier is feeling and thinking, and to perceive his state of mind and emotions. Once again, empathy is one of the skills of Goleman’s model of transformational leadership: it (empathy) is the first among the skills of the third dimension (social awareness). It is expected that the leader is able to tune into a wide range of emotional signals, capturing the unspoken but perceptible emotions of the individuals or group. By listening carefully, he can manage to grasp their perspective (Goleman 2002).

Finally, the respondents highlighted the importance of ‘understanding their own men’, knowing their problems in order to implement the necessary actions to solve them, because that is what they expect from their leader.

> You have to understand who they are (your men, what their expectations and needs are), and then be able to give them the right answer (Company Commander – aged 32).

> Being commander means bearing the responsibilities and the personal problems of your men (Company Commander – aged 34).

> The commander is the person everyone looks to when there is a problem. In certain situations, you really feel people’s eyes looking right through you, while they are waiting for an answer (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

> A good leader is also one who solves your problems and puts you in a position to work in a certain way (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

The experiences of the respondents engaged in various leadership roles of the Italian Army in recent missions abroad shed light on valuable insights about the characteristics of leadership in these operating contexts: a good leader must be able to direct the emotions of the group in order to guide the latter towards the achievement of its objectives. In other words, the leader must have emotional intelligence (Goleman 2002). The more difficult the task to be accomplished is—and we have seen that a commitment in the mission may involve high levels of stress—the greater the leader’s empathy and support must be.

These considerations provide useful information about the verification of the initial hypothesis. The sample of the Italian Army commanders engaged in missions in theaters of asymmetric conflicts would seem to refer to a model of leadership that is evolving more and more from the prevailing models closer to the authoritarian model of the past, and shifting to styles of command that tend to be closer to Goleman’s model of transformational leadership.

However, in doing so, it would also seem that, more than in the past, it is closer to leadership models that are more consonant with civilian organizations. The gap between the two models of reference somehow seems to be shrinking, at least in the perception of the respondents with regard to situations of great stress, such as combat. Without going further into the merits of the reasons for this, the study of which can be found in subsequent works, a possible explanation that could be advanced lies in the changes in the military culture (or would it be better to speak of sub-culture). The last decades have been characterized by extensive cultural and social changes in society.

The military institution which, like other institutions, is part of society, has also undergone transformations that are nothing more than the consequence of the changes in the broader society to which it belongs. For example, consider the transition from the form of recruitment based on conscription armies consisting exclusively of professional volunteers; or, the transition from the Institutional model to the Occupational model (Moskos 1977). The military institution cannot be seen as a hermetically closed system, but must be considered in the context of its ongoing relationship with the society of which it is an integral part (Olivetta 2012b).

The culture of the society to which it belongs, in itself dynamic and variable (Herskovitz 1948), has changed and continues to change over time. But the military, whether officers or simple soldiers, being first of all members of that society, cannot help but be affected by these changes and, in doing so, become their own bearers of new values and new standards in the organization to which they belong and in which they work. As often happens, the culture of the individual actors belonging to a particular organization is evolving faster than the organizational culture of the institution of which they are members. Proof of this is the fact that, in this study, the younger officers are the ones who seem to confirm the hypothesis of this work, showing that they refer to a leadership model closer to the one proposed by Goleman and are therefore less distant from the models of civilian organizations. Therefore, it is also reasonable to hypothesize further adaptations of the organizational culture, with a shift, even formally, to leadership models closer to what has emerged, informally, from the experience of the commanders interviewed.

This is a model in which authority, conferred from the outside through the formal allocation of a particular status, turns into power the moment the commanders' role is acknowledged by the other actors (Trentini 1997; Olivetta 2012a).

> The good commander is one whose soldiers acknowledge him as their commander (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

Being the "head" means being able to assume the formally defined leadership role and exercise the authority, always formally, attributed to them. However, the moment the employees actually acknowledge the role of his being the head and they also informally grant him the authority corresponding to that status, the head becomes the leader and "headship" becomes leadership.

> I am a commander not because I have ranking, but because it is my men who consider me as such. That is the basis of my work (Platoon Commander – aged 30).

> If people respect me just because I am a lieutenant or officer, in my opinion I have not reached the level that I need [for the right operational efficiency - author's note] (Platoon Commander – aged 29).

Finally, it should still be clarified that the considerations made thus far refer to the typical situation of stress in the missions of asymmetric conflict, which also coincide with the experience of the sample studied. It is precisely in this context that the need arises to deal with situations that are suddenly and rapidly changing. The respondents themselves pointed out that, having returned from the mission, the leadership model tends to change again, at least partially, and they stressed the

importance of returning to the more formal aspects of their role as leader and to the hierarchy. Therefore, both in mission and after returning from it, the 'good commander' must be able to adapt to the situation by passing from one style of leadership to another in a flexible manner, in order to keep the morale of his men at high levels, to foster team spirit and cohesion, and to achieve their objectives effectively and efficiently, without losing sight of the importance of their relationships.

7 Conclusion

Therefore, a verification of the initial hypothesis seems to confirm a change in leadership and leadership styles more oriented towards the relationship models, and in fact, closer to the models of civil organizations. This evolution is confirmed by the repeated mention by the officers interviewed of the specific skills that are at the basis of Goleman's (2002) four dimensions of emotional intelligence. This confirmation is even more important when we consider that none of the officers surveyed had ever studied Goleman's theory of transformational leadership during their training courses at the academy and at university or during higher training. This means that the reference population interviewed is unknowingly using a model that they have not studied, implementing the actions that refer to skills (those of emotional intelligence) which they learned while leading their men in operating theaters.

Those men and those situations are different today from those of the past, and therefore they require a new kind of leadership and new leadership styles that can affect soldiers' morale, raise team spirit, and promote cohesion.

The men's morale, team spirit, and cohesion are induced, and, at the same time, derive from their action. Those same men who, as shown by research, seem to be 'ahead' of the very organization that they belong to, directly learning from their command experience how to shift from their formally received authority to the informal power conferred on them by their own men; to go from being their boss to being their leader.

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Author Biography

Eraldo Olivetta (Ph.D. in strategic sciences) is assistant professor of sociology at the Department of Economic and Social Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, University of Torino, Italy; he lectures in general sociology and sociology of organizations at the School of Strategic Sciences. He is a member of the European Research Group on Military and Society (ERGOMAS) and a member of the Associazione Italiana di Sociologia (AIS), section: Political Sociology. The main focus of his research is in: military sociology, military profession and organization, leadership and cultural diversity. He is the author of many volumes and articles on military profession changes.

Leadership in Extreme Conditions and Under Severe Stress: Case Study Analysis

António Palma Rosinha, Luís José Sameiro Matias and Marcos Aguiar de Souza

Abstract Leadership under dangerous conditions occurs in extremely unpredictable situations, with a lack of information, and requires an instant overall evaluation of what is happening, which will affect decisions made and the physical and psychological wellbeing of troops and civilians. In this chapter, we present an individual typology required for military leaders in dangerous contexts, with special focus on critical tasks and individual capabilities. Further, we review and apply leadership in extreme situations (Hannah et al. 2009) to a real case which required a reaction to an act of armed terrorism. The application of theoretic models to the analysis of real cases enables us to provide the knowledge military leaders need when dealing with dangerous circumstances and situations where lives are at risk and to draw conclusions about lessons learned and future behaviors. Our main purpose is to characterize the field of application of military leadership and explore the challenges faced by commanders in extreme situations. On final reflection, it is clear that the human factors associated with leadership are key elements of fighting power.

Keywords Leadership · Military leadership · Extreme conditions · Extreme situations · Severe stress · Case study · Human factors

A.P. Rosinha (✉)
Military Academy, Military University Institute and School of Business Communication, Lisbon, Portugal
e-mail: antonio.rosinha@sapo.pt

L.J.S. Matias
Military University Institute, Lisbon, Portugal

M.A. de Souza
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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1 Introduction

Given the history, culture, size and structure of the armed forces and the complexity of the missions assigned to them, such as day-to-day management in the barracks, peacekeeping operations, action in non-military fields including humanitarian aid and assistance to refugees, and, in the extreme, combat operations, leadership plays a central role in conducting missions, with special focus on the chain of command and control. What all kinds of operation have in common, especially modern warfare that is characterized by close, urban combat, is that the context involves dangerous situations in which lives are inherently at risk. By dangerous situations, we mean unpredictable, highly dynamic circumstances in which commanders and their men are involved in actions that place their physical and psychological wellbeing at risk in order to complete their mission (Sweeney et al. 2011). There is a clear awareness that the troops' wellbeing is essential to the fulfillment of their duty, but that there may be a point of no return. The demands of the situation may have a harmful influence on the nature of the relationship between military leaders and subordinates.

The main questions that need answering are what make military leadership specific? How is it different in extreme, dangerous settings? In order to answer the question, we present and review the "framework for examining leadership in extreme contexts" (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 899) which helps describe the degree of severity and involvement of members of the military. This chapter characterizes the field of application of military leadership and looks into the challenges facing commanders in extreme circumstances. The arena involves Spanish troops viewed through the lens of the model devised by Hannah et al. (2009).

2 Characteristics of Military Leaders in Dangerous Situations

Since leaders are responsible for the lives of others and have to be able to deal with the catastrophic consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder, they must have considerable psychological hardiness, credibility and reliability. Confidence in our leaders is decisive in our perception of their competence, character, care and relationship with their subordinates. The combination of these aspects makes leadership in potentially dangerous situations unique and vital to the fulfillment of the mission.

In Fig. 1 we show an individual typology of components required for military leaders in dangerous situations (Rosinha and Matias 2015). Competence is determined by the specialist's knowledge of his field of action and relationship as a whole. Given that the circumstances are unpredictable, they require quick, but ethical decisions. Facing life-threatening situations requires stress management, i.e. coping skills (reflecting cognitive and behavioral efforts made to face up to internal

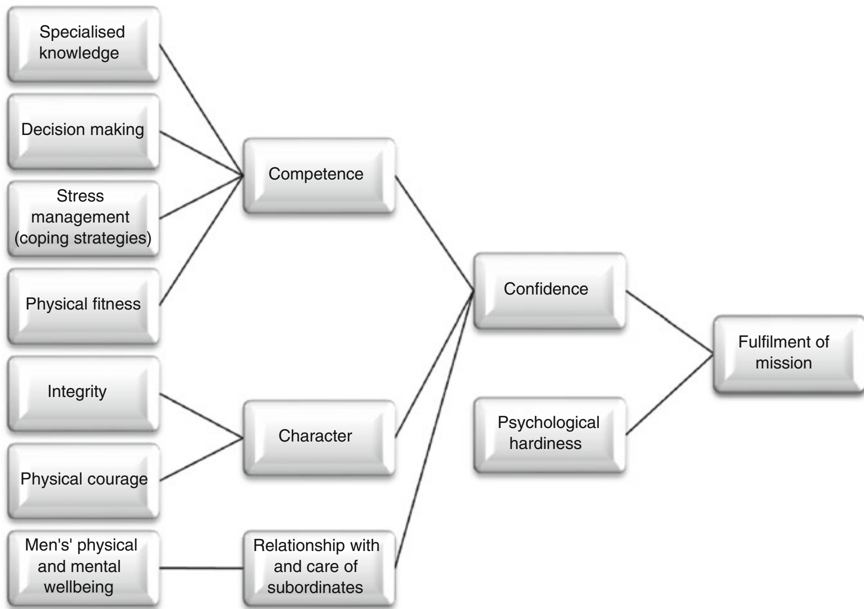

Fig. 1 Attributes required of military leaders in dangerous situations (Rosinha and Matias 2015)

and/or external demands that may exceed the individual's resources). According to a functional approach, commanders and military leaders are essential in influencing, planning, coordinating, guiding and deciding on military operations. At the same time, they have to boost their teams' resilience with positive coping strategies, make them understand the reason for the mission and, in the worst case, handle the grieving process. Physical fitness is another general requirement that contributes to the promotion of psychological hardiness. It helps foster self-sufficiency, which is essential in assessing the demands of the situation and the necessary responses to it.

Character, a very military term, reflects the traits of honesty and integrity. Subordinates trust leaders who stay true to themselves and to military values, who are capable of making decisions based on positive values but who provide all the complete, up-to-date information that they have about operations, with no hidden personal agendas. Physical courage is another sign of character. Leading by example, with no fear of running risks or even sacrificing one's life to get a mission done is a noble act. Concern and care for the troops must take precedence over any other duty. Subordinates have to believe that their commanding officers' concern is really their wellbeing and professional development.

Direct leaders work in the barracks and in combat. Due to the unpredictability of missions, shortage of information, distance from support and the need to face situations of constant risk, adaptability is more important in combat than in the

barracks. Below, we discuss the critical tasks and individual abilities required of direct leaders during operations or in combat and the challenges faced when missions vary between the barracks in times of peace and theatres of operation in wartime (Rosinha and Matias 2015).

2.1 Critical Tasks

Direct leaders play a central role in the fulfillment of missions and orders from higher ranks and the implementation of their tasks and responsibilities. They are responsible for soldiers' wellbeing and training and the maintenance of materials and equipment. During an operation or combat, the critical task is to fulfill the mission while keeping the group together. In the barracks, leaders focus on instruction and developing soldiers' skills.

In a company, the commanders are responsible for a number of aspects of the soldiers' lives, ranging from fitness and military training to financial or legal problems and family concerns. At platoon level, leadership means clarifying the way to go and the role that each subordinate has to play. Maintaining the troops' wellbeing is an essential task.

In combat, the clarification of rules of engagement and procedure are critical aspects, in the barracks, it is essential to create a good working climate. Rotation of roles is one of the most critical tasks in combat. Soldiers are obliged to change roles quickly (McFate 2007) when fighting or providing humanitarian assistance. They are asked to perform a multitude of missions that include patrols, riot control and ensuring the safety and protection of the public and infrastructures. Soldiers fight against insurgents, neutralize hideouts, engage in psychological warfare and negotiate with local leaders. This means constant changes in roles, which require agility and adaptability from military leaders. Conduct that does not respect the population or legitimate leaders may hinder cooperation and provoke attacks by locals or terrorists. They therefore have dual accountability for the lives of their troops and those of the local population. Adaptability entails pragmatic changes in leadership styles (Yammarino et al. 2010) in situations that involve interpersonal relations with soldiers and locals and on the other hand operational contexts of protection and the use of force.

2.2 Individual Skills

A meta-analysis conducted by Judge et al. (2002) with the big-five model showed that neuroticism (a tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or depression) is not conducive to effective leadership. On the other hand,

conscientiousness (tendency towards self-discipline and goal-orientation) and extroversion (positive emotions and a tendency to seek stimulation and the company of others) are conducive. A study by Chan and Drasgow (2001) showed that conscientiousness may not be a predictor of leadership as it does not take account of motivation to lead. Motivation to lead is a variable that mediates between conscientiousness and effective leadership. The data pointed to the most effective direct military leaders being more extroverted and more conscientious.

A study by Dvir et al. (2002) in the Israeli army, which monitored the effect of training and with and without transformational leadership and its impact on the soldiers, showed that soldiers under transformational leadership expanded their potential and gave better performance than those who received normal training. Another study examining the effect of stress showed that transformational leadership and contingent rewards are predictors of better performance (Bass et al. 2003). Adaptability is also a dimension that explains the transition between combat and the barracks (Pulakos et al. 2000).

In spite of the technological advances used in recent conflicts, military missions are still an intensely human effort. The streets of Bosnia, the Afghan mountains and the deserts of Iraq require boots on the ground, leaders who fulfill the mission with their subordinates (Wong et al. 2003). In addition to the natural characteristics arising from operational experience, such as risking one's life and dealing with death, Laurence (2011) states that the theatres of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan involve irregular conditions of war that require cultural skills, with a focus on people and not just technology. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have sparked criticism of socio-cultural knowledge in the development of military leaders (McFate 2007) and consideration of how irregular operations, asymmetric war and counter insurgency are managed. In addition to intelligence, operations in Iraq and Afghanistan require high rotation of roles and a central understanding of cultural communication, particularly skills that reflect the heart of the relational process of leadership.

An understanding of diversity and acceptance of different cultures contribute to the building of trust and creation of alliances and the ability to influence and understand people's motivation (McFate 2007). This aspect is important in military units or teams and beyond the organizational frontiers for a better understanding of the role of tribal leaders and their history. This means developing relationships with the in-group (subordinates) and out-group (population and their leaders) (Popper 2004). While on the one hand, social psychology studies on the categorization of groups have emphasized the role of the in-group and out-group as concepts rather than the construction of the group's identity and affiliation, this new paradigm focuses on toning down social groups. It is up to the military leader to take the role of the manager of relations between the in and out group and this requires strong communication and diplomatic skills, which include social, emotional and cultural intelligence.

We are clearly looking at the concepts of social, emotional and cultural intelligence, i.e. the ability to understand, monitor and manage social, emotional and cultural information (Mayer et al. 2008). Are we looking at management of primary emotions, management of fear, anger, hate, pain, joy and love? It is necessary to decipher current emotional rules in order to recognize anger, happiness or sadness or when a smile is just a cover-up in order to do the right thing. The way a message is given may be more important than its content. Communication consists of managing our facial expressions and tone of voice and knowing how to distance oneself. More than spoken language, we must consider emotions and establish mutual attention and positivity in relationships.

The management and expression of our emotions and the interpretation and meaning of others' emotions are a crucial skill in modern operations. These situations are characterized by "differences of language, religion, conduct, values, beliefs, social organizations, political systems, economic systems, education, history, law, customs and social controls, which require characteristics and skills such as empathy, respect and interest in others, flexible behavior, tolerance of ambiguity, initiative, open-mindedness and sociability" (Earley and Ang 2003, as quoted in Laurence 2011, p. 492). Local cultures should therefore not be interpreted on the basis of the force's cultural paradigms. It takes skill to interpret other people's behavior and act appropriately in order to achieve trust and legitimacy. Cultural awareness is more than just situational awareness, as it requires a broad vision of the interests, habits, beliefs, social organizations and cultural policies (McFate 2005).

It is necessary to cultivate relationship skills not only for internal dynamics but also and mainly for external relationships. What is new in this type of mission is that it is not only necessary for commanders to have these skills, but subordinates also have to make crucial decisions under the direct supervision of their superior. Network operations are an example. Due to dispersion, leadership is carried out at a distance, which places obstacles in the way of communication and requires more independence in decision making.

2.3 Changes of Scene—Peace and War-Demands

Given that military leadership is different in the barracks in peacetime and at the extreme of war, the roles required of military leaders are contradictory. Quinn's (1988) contrasting values approach is particularly interesting in an analysis of this dichotomy in that it describes eight leadership roles arising from flexibility versus control and internal versus external focus: facilitator, mentor, innovator, negotiator, producer, director, coordinator and monitor (Fig. 2). This military model of leadership is based on the assumptions of expected frequency of certain events and the associated risk (Santos 2008, p. 7).

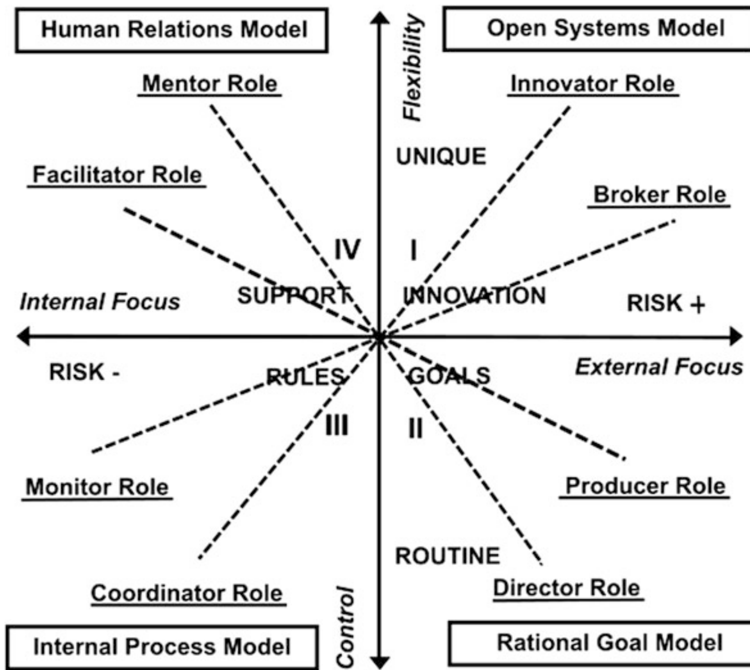

Fig. 2 Situational model of leadership for combat and barracks (adapted from Quinn 1988 and Phillips 1991 by Santos 2008)

Quadrant I refers to combat or situations of change, Quadrant III to everyday management in the barracks and Quadrant IV to training and development of leadership in the barracks.

The model can also be viewed from four perspectives: orientation towards innovation, goals, rules and support. The innovation model in open systems (Quadrant I) is represented by the innovator and broker roles. The rational goal model (Quadrant II) involves the roles of producer and director. The rule and internal process model (Quadrant III) is represented by the monitor and coordinator roles and the human relations support model (Quadrant IV) involves the roles of mentor and facilitator.

If we analyze the complexity which we referred to previously, we find that certain behaviors are effective in a combat situation and in circumstances that require change, but are not suitable in the barracks, where management is necessary. We need to discuss the distinction between the concepts of leader and manager, as managers use rational techniques that are task-and process-oriented and endeavor to maintain the status quo, while leaders use imaginative techniques that are designed to end the status quo (Rosinha 2012). It is easy to see that flexibility and external focus associated with innovation, creative problem-solving and change management are valuable characteristics in strategic leaders in order to create a

mentality of continuous change in the institution. However, it is appropriate to say that

> innovation and risk taking increase survival of the organization in war and in combat, but in excess they can create confusion and anarchy. When reflecting on the huge challenges that the Gulf War posed in terms of logistics and leadership, Lieutenant General Pagonis (1992) said that a military organization is a structure that depends on flexibility and rigidity. Doctrine and innovation must walk side by side. Leadership is not made only of visionary leaders; sometimes it needs stability and routine (Rosinha 2012, p. 33).

3 A Framework for Examining Leadership in Extreme Contexts

This framework for examining leadership explores types of extreme contexts under pressure and their influence on the leadership process (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 897). The intention is not to model a style of leadership, but how the leader should react in accordance with the situation and how extreme it is.

Five primary contextual dimensions are used to describe extreme events that, when exposed to certain attenuators or intensifiers typify the “level of extremity” and influence the capacity of adaptive leadership (Fig. 3).

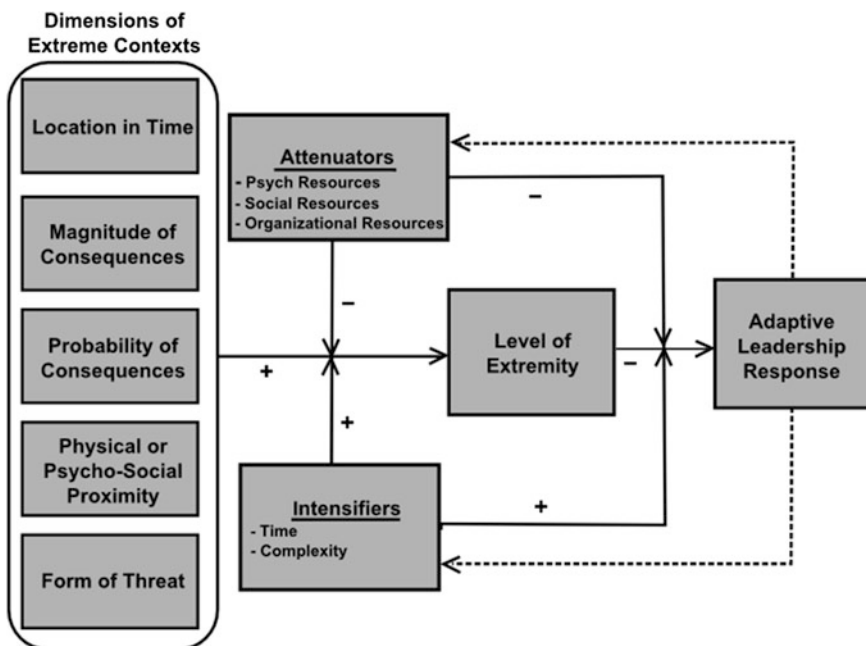

Fig. 3 Types of extreme contexts (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 899)

The leader, in turn, may act on the attenuators and intensifiers (represented by the dotted lines) and change the level of extremity (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 902). The level of extremity is determined by the five primary contextual dimensions: (1) location in time, (2) the magnitude of the consequences, (3) the probability of the consequences (4) physical or psycho-social proximity and (5) the form of threat.

3.1 Dimensions of Extreme Contexts

3.1.1 Location in Time

The transition from a state of normalcy to one of exception and then the return to normal must be efficiently managed. It is therefore essential to invest in training and planning to guarantee a response to crises (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 902). It is also necessary to analyze lessons learned as a reference in future operations. In these situations, teams are more predisposed to accept sudden, untimely decisions and more centralized, autocratic leaders.

'Time limits' may occur at three moments: (1) in the preparation phase, (2) in situ and after the event. Leadership is critical during the preparation phase because it is necessary to foresee potential threats, be alert and inform followers that the situation may happen and prevent them from relaxing. In situ, the group members are more motivated to take part in the action and face up to the threat, as in dangerous situations, followers are readier to accept sudden decisions and centralized, autocratic leadership. On the other hand, social factors such as cohesion, commitment and leadership serve to mitigate stress and anxiety and maintain performance. Finally, after the extreme situation is over, it is necessary to have leadership that helps restore the system, procedures and resources. In order to gain trust and allay anxiety, leaders must be open and transparent and announce the procedures needed to restore the situation, re-establish personnel and other resources and support their followers. It is a critical phase, as followers tend to be more vulnerable and want justifications from their leader for the organization's processes and the assumptions that led to the group's actions (Hannah et al. 2009, pp. 902–905).

3.1.2 Magnitude and Probability of the Consequences

The degree of extremity must be based on the loss, impact or effects caused (consequences). High potential magnitude of consequences alone is not enough to create an extreme situation, but if we add a high probability of occurrence, people will have the idea that they are facing an extreme context. If the magnitude of the consequences is great, the organization tends to overcome inertia more easily and demands an increase in leadership capacities, in which case the followers are more focused on their leader's competence than on his/her character. Leadership in

extreme contexts may mean adverse impacts on the team's morale. The leader will have to face the moral dilemmas of the possible consequences of his decisions (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 906).

3.1.3 Physical and Psycho-social Proximity

The fourth dimension is 'physical, social and psychological proximity', which suggests that leadership style and followers' behavior vary on the basis of the degree of physical separation between leader and followers, which determines the influence process. For example, in combat situations a leader who shares the dangers and difficulties is regarded as more loyal and effective (Little 1964, as paraphrased in Hannah et al. 2009, p. 906). In extreme circumstances, social and psychological factors are more important than proximity. An appropriate social distance between leader and followers is important if he is to remain impartial and emotionally distant from his followers (Martin and Sims 1956 as paraphrased in Hannah et al. 2009, p. 907). In combat, however, this situation is reversed and the leader must be viewed as "another equal in the group". Authors have suggested that proximity between leader and followers in extreme situations is an advantage as it creates high cohesion and trust.

3.1.4 Type of Threat

The threat may be physical, psychological or material. Psycho-social effects are decisive in the influence of the style of leadership, depending on the risks in question. Leader and team will have to change and adapt in accordance with the type of threat (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 906). A threat to their psychological wellbeing requires leadership that facilitates "sense-making" for the team (Foldy et al. 2008, as paraphrased in Hannah et al. 2009, p. 908). If it means danger to their physical integrity, then the leadership must be aggressive and resolute (Gray 1959, as paraphrased in Hannah et al. 2009, p. 908). As the form of threat changes, the followers' perception and attitudes also change and so the leader needs to take a different approach.

3.2 Attenuators and Intensifiers

The authors define attenuators and intensifiers of the degree of extremity. The attenuators are divided into psychological, sociological and organizational resources and the latter into time and complexity.

3.2.1 Psychological Resources as Attenuators

The fear experienced in extreme situations can be perceived in different ways. A negative emotion such as fear may have been caused by a perception that the threat is greater than when it was evaluated, which limits knowledge and attention and reduces reaction potential. On the other hand, positive emotions, like happiness, hope and pride facilitate the ability to adapt in stressful situations. Another fundamental aspect is resilience of both the leader and his team. We have to take account of trust in individual and group capacities that may increase individual and group efficiency (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 909).

3.2.2 Social Resources as Attenuators

'Sociological resources' in social leadership networks are important and may mitigate the situation because in extreme contexts, it is difficult to exchange information and coordination. It is therefore necessary to establish a leadership and communication system in the internal and external networks.

Some attenuators, such as group morale, cohesion and effective leadership are associated with the group's effectiveness and fewer cases of psychiatric leave in combat (Belenky et al. 1985; Little 1964 as paraphrased in Hannah et al. 2009, p. 909). This improves the team's performance and acts as a social support network for trauma experiences.

3.2.3 Organizational Resources as Attenuators

The organization's ability to adapt in extreme contexts depends on whether it has resources and proper communication systems to ensure that it can share information and coordination. The organization's technical, financial and human resources (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 910) and a team's social and psychological resources are decisive in mitigating the response to extreme situations and may have a positive or negative effect.

3.2.4 Time as an Intensifier

An important intensifier is 'time', i.e. the duration and frequency of extreme events. Time compression occurs when there is a drastic reduction in available reaction time due to an unexpected event that limits response time and the window of opportunity for decisions, planning and coordination and the ability to use resources. The frequency with which situations occur may reduce innovation and the capacity for anticipation. Situations may even be perceived as normal if they are very frequent. Frequency of an event limits future response capacity.

3.2.5 Degree of Complexity as an Intensifier

Complexity is an important intensifier in a response to extreme events. The more factors interacting with each other, the more complex the response is, sometimes obliging leader and teams to diverge in their positions. The degree of complexity depends on the technology being used, the degree of uncertainty associated with rapid change and the number of events that may be happening at the same time. Other aspects to be considered are the leader's or team member's loss of personal response capacity, conflicts of authority and jurisdictional differences in the organization (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 911).

3.3 Response from Adaptive Leadership

Leadership in extreme contexts entails adaptive influence processes and so it requires an adaptive leadership response. This type of response means the leader has to understand and establish what needs to be done so that individual and group efforts achieve their goals. In short, leaders must examine the dimensions, attenuators and identifiers of the degree of extremity of the situation they are in and make their decisions accordingly.

4 Case Study: Reaction to an Armed Act of Terrorism[1]

4.1 Contextualization

In the 1980s, ETA, the Basque terrorist organization (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna*)[2] was at the height of its activity. There were operational commands in each of the three Basque Provinces in addition to the so-called liberated commandos in France, which made some incursions over the Pyrenees into Spanish territory, where they committed terrorist attacks and then returned home (Gazapo et al. 2015). The hostility against the security forces and armed forces was total. They often made indiscriminate attacks against members of the military and their families inside and outside their barracks, in an attempt to inflict maximum material and personal damage.

[1]The case was developed by Lieutenant Colonel *Guardia Civil* Garcia Gazapo (ESP); Major NAV José Oliveira; Major ADMIL Jorge Rainha, Major CAV GNR Manuel Ferreira and Major TM Lopes Antunes and is part of the book Rosinha and Matias (2015).

[2]Basque Homeland and Freedom.

4.2 *Dimensions of Extreme Contexts*

4.2.1 Location in Time and Time Limits

Preparation Phase

Training, education and adaptation to violent environments prepared the members of the *Guardia Civil* stationed in the Basque Country to deal with extremely violent situations, such as terrorism and hostility on the part of the local population. Before their preparation, they spent an adaptation period to minimize the impact of involvement in an adverse environment. The local commander's responsibility was to maintain permanent levels of readiness of his troops for unexpected terrorist attacks. There were simulation exercises in the classroom to cultivate camaraderie and mutual help and facilitate aspects related to the conditions of infrastructures, security of the area, means of communication in support of operations and also social and psychological support. These concerns were aimed not only at the troops but also at their families (Gazapo et al. 2015).

Action Phase

The *Guardia Civil* contingent commanded by a recently promoted officer, a sergeant and eight soldiers, some of whom lived there with their families. The barracks were not near the town and its occupants lived in total isolation (Gazapo et al. 2015).

One Sunday afternoon, there was a concert at an open-air sports facility around 80 m away from the barracks. A lot of people attended the event and the commander gave orders to reinforce security to prevent incidents. At nightfall, during the concert, there was a terrorist attack by four armed ETA members with assault rifles and grenade launchers. The terrorist group was hiding in the garden under cover of darkness and their first shot was aimed at the sentry guarding the gate of the barracks. Fortunately, they missed and hit a metal sheet near the sentry's head, allowing him to react and fire some shots in reply.

The terrorists then fired several bursts and launched a grenade against the front of the building. One of the guards was wounded in the neck by shrapnel. In the next few minutes that seemed like an eternity because of the violence of the attack, some of the troops regarded as followers ran out into the courtyard firing into the air, without knowing exactly what was happening. They then managed to recover the cool-headedness and self-control that the situation required, plus cohesion and trust in their commander.

The commander's first reaction was amazement. He had no idea what was going on and the gunfire continued for several more minutes. He then managed to paint a mental picture of what was happening so that he could take the necessary measures. After realizing that the source of the attacks was the sports facility, with all the

characteristics of firm, energetic autocratic leadership, he made the assertive decisions that the situation required. He repeatedly ordered his troops not to return fire directly but to fire into the air and maintain their self-control so as not to hit the civilian population. He ordered a request for reinforcements to help defend the barracks and the men inside. The idea of this decision was to avoid casualties among the concert-goers who were in the same line of fire as the terrorists.

It is at moments of high tension like this, aware of the consequences of a quick response to enemy fire that a commander must have the wisdom, sangfroid, courage, clear-sightedness and strong emotional intelligence to deal with the situation itself and also to get his men to spontaneously obey his orders. They were all aware of the consequences and negative effects on the organization's image of failure to obey the order not to return fire directly, in order to avoid casualties among the civilian population, which would only exacerbate hostility against the *Guardia Civil*. In extremely violent situations, only a disciplined, very professional, highly trained group could handle the situation by obeying the orders that they were given at all times.

Post-event Phase

The terrorists did not achieve their goal and made a cowardly retreat in the midst of the crowd, attending the concert (Gazapo et al. 2015). After the situation of extreme stress, there was a need for leadership that would re-establish the system, procedures and resources. After a few minutes they followed some predefined post-attack procedures to prevent the troops from being injured by booby traps that the terrorists often left along the way when retreating. After the reinforcements arrived and order had been restored, the judiciary police and *Guardia Civil* intelligence examined the scene. The troops who had been involved in the attack and their families were provided with all possible social and psychological support in order to help them recover from the high-stress situation (Gazapo 2012). The commander's leadership also had to be more empathetic with his men and their families in order to help them understand the emotions that they had experienced during the situation (Gazapo 2012). The atmosphere in the region was extremely aggressive and the unit was closed down some time later and its men transferred.

4.2.2 Magnitude and Probability of Consequences

'Magnitude' is assessed by analyzing damage and losses and not merely their probability. Extremely high magnitude is interpreted by means of the violence of the attack and the fire power used. The probability of casualties would have been high if the troops had returned fire, as the crowd was in the same line of fire as the terrorists (Gazapo et al. 2015).

4.2.3 Physical and Psychosocial Proximity

This dimension can be interpreted on two different levels. On the first, the leader must keep an appropriate social distance from his followers and remain impartial and emotionally distant. On the second, there was the need for the leader "to be just another member of the team". During the attack, the commander stayed very close to the group (Gazapo 2012). Nonetheless, for a few moments he had to assume firm, autocratic leadership, which only resulted from his daily training. It is at times like this that the bonds of cohesion, respect and leadership are cemented (Gazapo et al. 2015).

4.2.4 Type of Threat

During the terrorists' attack on the barracks, when people's physical integrity was at risk, the commander's leadership style had to be domineering, aggressive and determined, so that his subordinates not only had no doubts about what to do but also so that they maintained their trust in their commanding officer and his orders at a time of high stress (Gazapo et al. 2015).

4.3 Attenuators and Intensifiers

4.3.1 Attenuator—Psychological Resources

Given the context in which they were living, the soldiers were aware of the threat but although the attack was probable, it was never actually expected. These men were physically and psychologically prepared to handle extreme events. Nonetheless, being trained and aware of reality is not the same as experiencing it, in the presence of their families, whom they want to protect at all costs (Gazapo et al. 2015).

The troops' adaptation period was designed to prepare them for the reality in the Basque Country. It served as a 'psychological resource' and attenuator for facing the moment of stress but it was not strong enough to last long, as shown by the requests for psychological leave and transfers to other units.

4.3.2 Attenuator—Sociological Resources

The men in the barracks knew each other well, but the commander was new to the unit. There was a large age difference to the sergeant, who was nearing retirement age. Some families lived at the barracks, meaning there were strong ties, as the troops lived with them beyond working hours and the atmosphere was more than just professional. The barracks' physical separation from the city and the isolation

from the local population united the military family even more. On the other hand, the group responded effectively as a whole and no one made a negative impression or failed to follow their order which demonstrates cohesion and team spirit. In terms of communication, the orders were given inside the barracks and there was no sign of a lack of understanding by the subordinates. This shows that 'sociological resources' served as an attenuator.

4.3.3 Attenuator—Organizational Resources

The troops had enough weapons to respond to the attacks, but were unable to use them to prevent civilian casualties. This factor was not an attenuator, but rather a mixture of frustration and impotence in a case of extreme need, i.e. having a weapon increases confidence, but not being able to use it makes one vulnerable (Gazapo et al. 2015). At the same time, the human factor was crucial in this event and there was no need for technology except when reinforcements were requested. The commander's role as an individual resource from the organization was decisive. Even with little experience, he was able to contain the situation to prevent it from becoming even more extreme and involving civilian deaths outside the barracks. The organization responded promptly and efficiently to reinforce the requests made.

4.3.4 Intensifier—Time

In terms of time, the event intensified the degree of severity due to the level of violence and suddenness over a short period of time. There was no planning and, under fire, the group had to respond reactively, obeying the orders of the commander, who quickly realized what was happening and made a controversial, seemingly illogical decision in the eyes of some of his subordinates whose lives were in danger. In this case, the troops' preparation, training and experience were decisive (Gazapo et al. 2015). The attack did not last long and so there was no 'duration' intensifier.

4.3.5 Intensifier—Complexity

The players involved in the attack were the terrorists, the civilian population at the concert, the troops and the families living at the barracks. It was a relatively complex environment, as it involved more than two sets of players who had no idea of the attackers' firepower, possibilities or intentions (who was the enemy, what weapons did they have, what were they trying to do?) (Gazapo et al. 2015).

In the midst of so much uncertainty, with danger to the soldiers' own lives and those of their families, it is easy to understand the difficulty in making a decision

and the importance of a leader who is capable of adapting to the circumstances in seconds. The intensifier 'degree of complexity' was definitely there.

4.4 Response of Adaptive Leadership

Due to the characteristics of each phase, the model recognizes that the leader's response must be adaptable. In the preparation phase, the leader has his own particular style, but he also needs to be effective in the critical phase and he may have to change his style to influence behaviors and even the severity of the situation. The post-event phase requires a more sociable style in order to restore the situation. According to the report, the leader's style was social and empathetic and he involved the families living at the barracks. It was absolutely essential to be incisive and strong, with many of the characteristics of autocratic leadership, especially when ordering the men not to return fire (an unnatural reaction). After the event, however, the commander returned to his own style.

5 Final Considerations

This analysis of a real case of extreme stress experiences by soldiers refers to characteristics, leadership styles and individual and group conduct in the face of a terrorist attack that end angered not only the lives of the troops but particularly those of the civilians on the scene. Is this not the noblest duty of the military?

The lessons learned and real cases analyses are distinctive factors in this study and contribute to the development of leadership. Questions such as the differentiation and clarification of the levels of analysis in the study of leadership are crucial in explaining the variables that impact the success and results achieved.

What leadership styles or combinations are best for situations in which there are different perspectives of the problem, incongruent goals or sudden changes of context? It is clear that an authoritative leadership style is an essential condition for maintaining cohesion when uncertainty, danger and doubts are present. Dominance in extreme contexts signifies determination, resilience, confidence and courage.

Of the different factors that affect military success in extreme contexts, the quality of leadership is one of the most critical. Combat readiness no longer includes just traditional factors of maneuver, firepower and protection; it also involves human factors.

Although civilian matters and psychological operations are important, they are mere appendices to military training. Even if the selection of officers takes account of high standards of social, emotional and cultural intelligence, it is going to take time to change the dominant culture. Although we have some specialists in these areas, we are still in an initial phase of awareness and learning. In order to minimize these needs, Schaner (2008) devised a creative solution, the Human Terrain System

(HTS). This project incorporates social science through a Human Terrain Team (HTT) in the Battle Combat Team (BCT) in order to gather, centralize and produce psycho-cultural and emotional knowledge of relationships with the attitudes and beliefs of the local population.

A functional analysis conducted by Vasilopolous and Swartout (2009) to deal with the new requirements for members of the armed forces states that critical factors are communication (especially influencing and persuading, which are central to the leadership process), critical thought, personal leadership (which includes team building and coaching) and an understanding of the organizational context as an open system (awareness of the outside social community). Individual social and socio-cultural skills are obviously not enough and need to be included in an operational context.

The theoretic approach to complex leadership can help deal with particularly ambiguous and dangerous situations. Nonetheless, approaches focusing on shared and team leadership, which are essential in reducing the leader's excessive intervention, need to be investigated. The ambiguity of situations typical of irregular warfare and counterinsurgency in particular require the development of adaptive leadership. Given that contact with local populations is crucial in finding and gathering intelligence, cultural awareness, empathy and trust are vital in the training of today's leaders and can be real weapons. McFate (2007) states, that psycho-cultural and socio-cultural knowledge is one of a leader's warfare skills.

The uncertainty of what the future of the armed forces entails in terms of new international challenges and terrorism in particular suggests that the ability to adapt, innovate and learn from experience are general skills and must be present in any training model of future generations of military leaders. We need not only warriors, technicians and tacticians but also communicators, negotiators and social scientists to handle asymmetric warfare. Technical preparation is essential but the psycho-social side is decisive.

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Authors Biography

António Palma Rosinha is a military psychologist of the Portuguese Army. He holds a Ph.D. in human resources management and organizational psychology from Lisbon University. He is professor of human resources management, organizational psychology and team leadership at the Military Academy, professor of command and leadership at the Institute of Higher Military Studies (IESM) and deputy director of the Institute of Business Communication. Colonel Rosinha is a researcher at the Psychology Research Center at the University of Lisbon, Research Center of Security and Defence and at the Military Academy Research Center. He is the author of several articles and books and participates in some research projects.

Luís José Sameiro Matias is commander of the Portuguese Navy. He graduated in 1993 from the Naval Academy and has a master in organizational behavior. The dissertation theme was "the mediation effect of justice and commitment in the relation between psychological contract and organizational behaviors". He is currently professor of organizational behavior and leadership at the Institute of Higher Military Studies and teaches the field grade officers course and the joint staff course. Matias is also a researcher at the Research Center of Security and Defense.

Marcos Aguiar de Souza has a Ph.D. in psychology and is currently associate professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. He is interested in techniques of data collection and analysis, the construction and validation of measuring instruments as well as in organizational psychology and studies related to psychological assessment for personnel selection purposes in military contexts; development of leadership and the consequences of the weakness of norms in organizational contexts for worker's health and quality of life, particularly in relation to red tape and anomie.

Part II
Leadership in Extreme Situations and Military Settings

The Role of Short Term Volunteers in Responding to Humanitarian Crises: Lessons from the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

Emily Welty and Matthew Bolton

Abstract Political, social and economic shifts in humanitarian responses to disasters have increased the prominence of short-term volunteers, often working through small, informal and non-governmental channels. Such volunteers offer the potential for a "surge" capacity in crises but are also often under-regulated, poorly trained and know little about the people they claim to help. In this chapter, we first draw on social theorists like Zygmunt Bauman and Michel Agier to argue that this represents a form of neo-liberal—"liquid"—governance that offers only fleeting, fragmented and privatized solutions to collective problems. However, we temper this critique with a review of the literature on short-term "voluntourism" that shows it can have an important pedagogical role, priming volunteers to engage in more long-term solidarity with people in distress. To illustrate our argument, we use ethnographic and participant observation research conducted in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. We show the flaws of many short-term volunteer programs but also highlight efforts to manage them responsibly, as an attempt to cultivate an ethic of solidarity with marginalized communities. We conclude with a list of good practices for leaders of short-term volunteer programs in humanitarian crises.

Keywords Volunteers · Voluntourism · Humanitarianism · Haiti · Earthquake · Liquid modernity

1 Introduction

In the immediate aftermath of the catastrophic 2010 earthquake in Haiti, much of the international response was clustered within the UN Logistics Base (LogBase) located at the Port-au-Prince airport. The UN allowed incoming NGO aid workers from around the world—if they did not have access to the remaining severely depleted housing in the city—to pitch tents on a patch of land at the end of the

E. Welty · M. Bolton (✉)
Pace University, New York, USA
e-mail: mbolton@pace.edu

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runway, where cargo flights landed every few minutes, day and night. Returning to camp each evening revealed an ever-shifting constellation of tents. Conversations in the camp's impromptu "living room"—a circle of crates, logs and the odd chair—required both introductions for newcomers and a 'sending off' for people already headed home. While a few of the camp's residents were NGO staff who planned to stay a while, or return for repeated visits, the vast majority were short-term volunteers, visiting for one or two weeks. Many were doctors, nurses, engineers and architects but most volunteers did not have relevant professional training, experience in humanitarian assistance or language abilities in Creole or French. Many volunteers were affiliated with evangelical and Pentecostal churches, directing their aid to congregations in the affected zone.

In the first few weeks of the emergency, it was hard to be too critical of these "mission trips", because the more established institutions of disaster assistance—UN agencies, bilateral donors and large international NGOs—were so slow to respond and tied up in bureaucratic regulations that restricted their ability to disperse resources or travel in "insecure" areas. The more ad hoc organization of volunteer groups seemed more nimble and responsive to the immediate circumstances. However, over the following months, the preponderance of short term volunteers in Port-au-Prince became more clearly problematic. Epi d'Or, a boulangerie in the suburb of Petionville that managed to escape severe damage during the earthquake and continue to serve good sandwiches, seemed perpetually packed with American teenagers in matching T-shirts, ordering cheeseburgers in English. Volunteers tended to move through the city in large groups, more engrossed in their own conversations and taking photographs of rubble, than interacting with the public they were there to serve. Reports of sloppy work by inexperienced volunteers circulated in the aid community and many Haitians felt unnerved by a sense that their suffering was being treated as a spectacle. NGOs and churches that hosted short-term volunteer groups grumbled about the tremendous investment of leadership, time and resources required, diverting attention away from more urgent programs. The $3000 it took for a volunteer to buy a plane ticket to Port-au-Prince, find housing, food, transportation and translation, was enough to pay the average wages of two Haitian construction workers for an entire year.

The problems with short-term volunteers are part of a broader context of fickle international attention to Haiti's social, economic and political problems. In the year after the 2010 earthquake, Haiti received $3.6 billion in humanitarian assistance ($1.5 billion in private donations), more than double the country's entire annual fiscal budget. However, much of this aid was funneled through a vast complex of NGOs and private contractors, fragmenting systems of accountability and transparency across hundreds of organizations. And the influx of resources did not represent a long-term commitment—and by 2012, the flow of humanitarian assistance had dropped to $126 million ($6.8 million in private donations) (OCHA 2016). Meanwhile, massive dislocations caused by the earthquake persisted, layered upon a long history of social fractures, exploitation and neglect that have made Haiti the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. By 2016, more than 36,000 people in Haiti had been infected with cholera, more than a third of the country

unable to meet basic food needs and some 60,000 continued to live in camps, made homeless by the earthquake six years ago (OCHA 2015).

In this chapter we examine the role of short-term volunteers in disaster assistance, focusing on a case study of Haiti following the 2010 earthquake. We argue that the increasing prominence of short-term volunteers in emergency situations is linked to broader trends of "liquid modernity", in which institutions—such as aid agencies—make few persistent commitments to people in need. However, consistent with some of the academic literature on short-term volunteers, we also find positive examples of organizations that used short-term service learning visits to Haiti as a way to raise consciousness and cultivate relationships of long-term solidarity with the host communities. Our observations are rooted in participant-observation as NGO workers engaged in the Haiti earthquake response between 2010 and 2012. We also draw on experience and lessons learned in training, leading and researching short-term volunteers visiting Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda and the regions of New York City affected by 2012 Superstorm Sandy. The authors are grateful for a generous grant from the Wilson Center for Social Entrepreneurship at Pace University which allowed us to carry out this research.

In the next section we outline the framework for our discussion with a brief review of the concept of "liquid governance" and its applicability to understanding to short-term volunteerism. We also consider how efforts to reconceptualize short-term volunteer trips as exposure visits aimed at building solidarity and raising awareness. Advocacy and political engagement by returning volunteers can help to address, rather than exacerbate, the problems caused by fickle commitments to beneficiaries' rights and entitlements. This is followed by a focused consideration of the role of short-term volunteers in the aftermath of the 2010 Haiti earthquake. We highlight many of the problems with the influx of short-term volunteers, but also highlight positive examples of organizations using service learning trips to build solidarity. We close with a practical conclusion that offers a list of good practices for leading short-term volunteers in extreme situations like the aftermath of a disaster.

2 Short-Term Volunteerism: "Liquid Governance" or Opportunity for Learning and Solidarity?

Aided by cheaper air travel, the privatization of social services and an expanded role for international NGOs, short-term volunteers are playing an increasing role in disaster assistance (Coughlan 2006; Kumaran and Pappas 2011; Kushner 2016). Given the short tenure of their visits—often less than a month—and their engagement in work that could be more efficiently done by paying local people, the academic literature on this phenomenon has often framed such volunteerism as a kind of tourism—or "voluntourism." Wearing (2001, p. 1) defines voluntourists as those "who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake

holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society and environment." While some of these volunteers may be highly skilled individuals engaged in specified missions, such as medical or search and rescue personnel, many are untrained, unaware of local cultural nuances and, in many cases, very young (Stoddard and Rogerson 2004; Galley and Clifton 2004; Ooi and Liang 2010; Jones 2011; Andereck et al. 2012; McLenna 2014; Brondo 2015).

The social theorist Bauman (2000) has raised concerns about how trends of neo-liberal globalization have deregulated and deconstructed more structured social systems in the name of increasing efficiency and speed. An accelerating modernity values the 'exterritorial, volatile and fickle' (p. 121) over the "embodied' and fixed" (p. 115). In this "liquid modernity", as he calls it, "brief encounters replace lasting engagements," enabling "evasion and escape, the substitution of short-term deals and fleeting encounters for lasting commitments, and keeping the option of the 'disappearing act' permanently open" (pp. 122–123). Agier (2011) applies this framework to the study of refugee camps, analyzing humanitarian aid as a form of governance that offers no sustained political commitment of rights and entitlements. While the providers of aid are able to move with ease in and out of the camps—even able to fly across the world to comfortable dwellings—refugees may be stuck in limbo, unable to demand equal access to mobility nor for the aid worker to stay committed to one place. As Bauman (2000, p. 120) put it, "in 'liquid' modernity, it is the elusive, those free to move without notice, who rule." Interpreting short-term volunteers through this lens enables us to interpret short-term volunteerism as a form of "liquid governance"—offering assistance to the vulnerable but ultimately subject to the whims and time constraints of the volunteer. Offering social services is not the ongoing, mundane, day-to-day work of engagement with the beneficiary population, but rather something exotic, exciting and fleeting. It is oriented not toward the genuine improvement of beneficiaries' lives but rather the opportunity of the voluntourist to have a "meaningful" experience.

It is thus not surprising that the scholarly literature on voluntourism, service volunteers and church mission trips identify numerous problems with short-term assignments. The brief encounter—especially if it is poorly-led and focused on work rather than learning—may actually entrench, rather than overcome volunteers' misunderstandings of the context in which they work (e.g. Livermore 2006). In the narratives they share to each other, back home and on social media, voluntourists often exaggerate the heroic nature of what they are doing, which can contribute to a hubris about the potential contribution that someone from an industrialized country can make in a context they do not understand. This projection of the *Volunteering Self* is often constituted at the expense of stories that subtly dehumanize the host community as exotic and/or passive objects of pity (e.g. Howell 2012). Many do not coordinate well with local people, or rely heavily on people who are set up as what Spivak (1988) calls 'native informants'—confident, well-connected interlocutors who know international languages and are expected to speak for whole groups of people (see also Kapoor 2004). In seeing local people more as props in a

heroic drama than encountering them in a humanizing manner, short-term volunteers can contribute to a lack of recognition of disaster-affected communities' rights and entitlements. Cole (2012) has called this the "White-Savior Industrial Complex", which perpetuates narratives "in which Africa serves as a backdrop for white fantasies of conquest and heroism."

This lack of understanding of the local context, and the appropriate role for an outside help, contributes to broader problems of amateur and ad hoc implementation of service projects. Many mission and service learning trips focus on projects—such as in the construction, health, education or water and sanitation sectors—that the volunteers have no professional qualification to conduct. Some scholars have highlighted the tremendous expense of volunteer trips that could be better spent by local organizations. Others point to the logistical complications and often poor health of volunteers unused to the local environment (Montgomery 1993; Ver Beek 2006; McLennan 2014).

Compounding problems with projects conducted by short-term volunteers is a common lack of institutionalized learning and accountability. If beneficiaries dislike how volunteers painted their school, built houses or dug a well, there is no fixed address to which they can take their concern, unless a sending organization returns often to the same community and has established a long-term relationship. Moreover, the turnover in volunteers means that each new volunteer to a community has to start learning from the beginning, rather than building on previous experience in the same context. Carlos Palacios argues that framing short-term projects in the language of development is ultimately detrimental to the voluntourism experience, as volunteers observe the "disconnect between what is expected … and what actually happens during the volunteering practice; mutual intercultural learning is undermined while 'help' continues to be the drive of volunteer tourism practice and theory" (2010, p. 871).

Despite these numerous critiques, many scholars and practitioners believe that short-term service learning can play a positive role, if the focus is on raising awareness of the volunteers, creating an opening to cultivate a longer-term commitment. Many scholars thus conceive of good voluntourists less as providers of useful assistance than students in solidarity. Coghlan's (2006, p. 226) analysis of ecotourism suggests that voluntourists "may develop more environmentally aware attitudes that may lead to sustained long-term support of the conservation programme." Beyond donor cultivation, though, carefully organized short-term exposure trips—particularly when they emphasize learning over service—can offer opportunities for voluntourists to develop empathy and understanding of the host community. Root argues:

> When our mission trips are about doing something, then like good tourists we are free to move on and eventually forget them, for we have done our part and now it is time to move on to another experience…our mission trips should not be about doing anything, but simply about being with people (2008, p. 318).

This can be used as a starting point to encourage advocacy and political engagement supporting the expansion of rights and entitlements to those affected by a

disaster. The experience of solidarity with suffering people may change voluntourists as well as providing reassurance to others that their suffering is not invisible or forgotten. This potential is the intention of the exposure visits of groups like Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams or MADRE which take North Americans to communities under threat and expose them to the structural violence which often stems from the actions or policies of the American and Canadian governments. The organizations expect that tourists return home and advocate for a change in their home governments. Indeed, several researchers have found that trips framed in terms of learning rather than helping are more likely to feel meaningful and appropriate for both hosts and travelers. In evaluating the ability of voluntourist experiences to contribute towards wisdom in individuals, research demonstrates that reflection is the most important factor that can deepen the trip and lend it meaning beyond the immediate experience. Understanding voluntourism as praxis—a continual movement between action and reflection—provides the opportunity for personal transformation that goes beyond ego gratification or commodification (Palacios 2010; Bailey and Russell 2010; Coughlin and Gooch 2011; Zavitz and Butz 2011). By focusing on education, accompaniment and advocacy, short-term visits can be used to increase recognition of and spur agitation for the rights and entitlements of disaster-affected people, rather than entrench the "liquidity" of aid commitments.

3 Short-Term Volunteers Respond to the 2010 Haiti Earthquake

With Haiti so close to the US and Canada and extensive press coverage of the 2010 earthquake, short-term volunteers flocked to Port-au-Prince, especially once commercial airlines resumed direct flights from Miami and New York (Kavanaugh 2010). Our experience and observations in Haiti from 2010–2012 confirmed many of the findings scholars and reflective practitioners have found in other parts of the world with regards to the pitfalls of voluntourism in disaster zones. In previous works, Bolton (2011, 2014) has argued that voluntourism fit into a broader "liquid" approach to Haiti's earthquake reconstruction, "characterized by informal commitments rather than a long-term social contract for human security" (2014, p. 148).

The influx of volunteers put strain on the host communities in numerous ways. In the weeks after the earthquake, there were severe shortages of adequate housing, food, power, communications equipment, transportation and water. As aid workers we encountered competition among humanitarian agencies—in addition to the local residents and businesses—creating shortages and pushing up prices. The sheer quantity of untrained volunteers who were diverting resources that could have been better directed to the professional aid effort—or to the local community—created problems. Increasingly, voluntourists expect to have a way to connect their personal devices (phones, laptops) to the Internet, preferably through a wi-fi connection. In fact, more responsible voluntourism organizations, like Habitat for Humanity,

actually delayed sending volunteers to Haiti in the first few months after the disaster, due to concerns about "logistics and security" (in Kavanaugh 2010). If voluntourists are housed with families, orientation must be provided for the hosts as well as finding multiple families to accommodate groups. While it could be argued that the volunteer groups were creating demand and hiring translators, drivers, hosts and guides—thus injecting cash into the economy—this ultimately was an inefficient means to stimulate demand. A more effective means would have been to funnel money directly to local workers, training programs, and cash or food assistance.

Stephanie Villedrouin, Haiti's Tourism Minister, told the *New York Times* that the Ministry was not promoting voluntourism, because "if an actor comes to Haiti to visit an NGO, it's good for their P.R., not for the country's P.R. Come to Haiti to have a good time. For leisure" (in Lall 2013, p. A11). Indeed, while a voluntourist may inject foreign currency into the environment, leisure tourists may actually spend more money in the local economy. However, Villedrouin's critique extends beyond just which tourists bring more cash to Haiti. Villedrouin is also indicating the importance of the host community's sense of dignity and self-image. Many Haitians do not want their country to be known as a site of devastation or as a destination for "helpers", but rather as a place where one can have a "good time". Even an exoticized and simplified version of Haiti as a playground for wealthy outsiders is preferable to many Haitians than being perceived as a site of charity. Perhaps no one would be more surprised by this conclusion than voluntourists themselves who would surely see the building of luxury hotels as an obscenity in the midst of human suffering and who would likely create a sense of psychological distance from the tourist who would utilize such amenities and their own *Philanthropic Self*.

In speaking with Haitian colleagues and local community members, many expressed to us ambivalence and irritation at being seen by volunteers as a kind of spectacle. We observed as a large group of volunteers—all seated in a truck—disembarked in a community and immediately began taking photos of local people and some making insensitive remarks. They even took pictures of and with children without asking permission of parents or guardians. While we overheard voluntourists often speak about the importance of photos to be able to tell the story of what they had seen back at home, the photos were not obtained with the consent of the subjects and often depicted them in ways that highlighted the abject or exotic, rather than bridging the distance between North Americans and Haitians (see Kaussen 2015; Garland 2015). One NGO worker told a reporter that he stopped accepting volunteers because they "saw themselves as rescuing people … The saddest part for me was seeing how it felt for people in the community to have foreigners come in and ignore the cultural riches" (Elliott 2013).

This distancing emerges from and contributes to a discursive framing of the disaster-affected people as radically *Other* to the voluntourist. In speaking with voluntourists we encountered in airports headed out of Haiti, a common refrain was that they felt "grateful we have it so much better than other people." Initially, this seemed to us an innocuous sentiment, as it indicated that exposure to the

earthquake-affected region had nurtured in volunteers a sense of gratitude. Upon reflection, however, this framing deepens the division between “us” and “them”, “here” and “there”. The voluntourist who expresses gratitude for their own circumstances after exposure to poverty or suffering has not begun to see the Other for their humanity. While gratitude may seem to come out of a place of generosity, there is also a sense in which the tourist is saying “thank God suffering occurs to them and not to me.” This gratitude does not question the root causes of human suffering, examine the inequalities of resource distribution or begin to ask how the circumstances of “over there in Haiti” are connected to the policies and practices of life “over here in America.” The implicit message is that people living “over there” are worthy of our compassion and pity but their suffering remains disconnected from us. Responsible responses to suffering require a move past gratitude and into a new space of subjectivity where those who suffer are not passive, pitiable objects but fully embodied subjects.

The discursive distancing of the heroic, *Volunteering Self* from the abject, disaster-affected *Other* contributed to what we observed as a unsettling disregard for the particularities of the Haiti context. Because volunteering was framed a priori as “doing good” in a place “desperate for help”, there was little sensitivity to the impacts of their work. In fact, we often found short-term volunteers to exhibit a fragile defensiveness when questioned about the efficacy and/or usefulness of their projects (the academic literature on “white fragility” offers useful insight into this tendency in privileged people: see DiAngelo 2011). But unfortunately, many projects conducted by short-term volunteers in Haiti were poorly conceived, designed and implemented. Jacob Kushner, writing in the *New York Times Magazine*, recalled seeing

> …a group of older Christian missionaries in the mountains above Port-au-Prince, struggling with heavy shovels to stir a pile of cement and sand. They were there to build a school alongside a Methodist church. Muscular Haitian masons stood by watching, perplexed and a bit amused at the sight of men and women who had come all the way from the United States to do a mundane construction job … Imagine how many classrooms might have been built if they had donated that money rather than spending it to fly down themselves. Perhaps those Haitian masons could have found weeks of employment with a decent wage. Instead, at least for several days, they were out of a job (Kushner 2016).

Kushner found that many voluntourists building schools did not have any long-term planning “to train and recruit qualified teachers” and that schools struggle to pay their staff. Similarly, Elliott (2013) wrote about the many problems encountered in a house-building project, in which she learned “surprising amount of damage […] can be done with the very best of intentions.” Voluntourists often also bring supplies for distribution which may not be best suited to the local context, such as clothing that is not a high priority. Jobe observed that even when supplies made intuitive sense, such as medical supplies, “random and uncoordinated donations of medication and supplies can rapidly overwhelm local resources in any disaster setting” (2011, p. 4).

It would be unfair to depict all short-term volunteer programs as having relied on inexperienced and unskilled people. We encountered several organizations

specializing in placing highly-skilled professionals—such as doctors, dentists, engineers and architects—in well-designed projects where their abilities were needed. However, incoming volunteers—while undoubtedly very talented—still often lacked the deep contextual knowledge of language, culture, society and politics of Haiti. Jobe (2011, pp. 2–3) also expressed concerns that volunteers' qualifications and abilities were not effectively verified. Some of these organizations had impressive briefing programs and effective administrators and leaders with significant experience in the country (Elliott 2013). This was very helpful in ensuring volunteers were directed and managed effectively. But new groups of volunteers had to learn for themselves the nuances and complexities of their social setting.

As a result, several NGOs established ways to accommodate short-term visits while limiting the disruption to the local community. They framed the trips less in terms of service and volunteering and more around notions of learning, accompaniment and advocacy. The exposure visits required voluntourists not only to observe their surroundings but also understand the political, economic and social complexity which creates natural disasters, conflict and poverty. They tried to help visitors understand how their home context was linked to the community they were visiting, asking questions like: Is the wealth of their home at the expense of the poverty of the visited community? How do the political arrangements of one's home country enable or disable the political conditions in the visited community? How can tourists effectively use their power to advocate for the interests of those they encounter?

MADRE, an international women's rights NGO, worked in partnership with Circle of Health International (COHI) to send delegations of trained maternal health workers to Haiti after the earthquake. Unlike most short-term programs, volunteers were selected who spoke Creole, and MADRE "incorporated the results into our advocacy work at the United Nations to ensure that the health needs of women and infants are met in governments' responses to the earthquake" (MADRE 2010, p. 2). Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)—which has had a long-term presence in Haiti for decades—brought short-term volunteers from many parts of the world to do rubble clearance. In bringing volunteers from other countries in the Global South (as well as the Global North), MCC sought to establish solidarity linkages across the world and challenge stereotypes. Teams were accompanied by Creole-speaking volunteers (many of whom had previously worked for MCC Haiti long-term). The volunteer effort was also coordinated with advocacy efforts in Ottawa, Washington DC and at the UN in New York, calling for changes in relief, immigration and peace and security policy (Bartel and Depp 2010; Espenshade 2011).

Organizers of this type of program explained to us that they saw framing short-term trips around exposure and advocacy (rather than labor or material transfer) as a more intellectually and morally honest proposition. Rather than obscure or attempt to divert the desires of the voluntourist, they attempted to direct voluntourists' curiosity and desire to know. In doing so, they aimed to counteract paternalism, identifying the privilege of the voluntourist directly and seeking to use

it as a resource. Visitors were encouraged to plan specifically how to raise awareness back at home of the situation in Haiti and engage in political advocacy with their governments for better recognition of Haitians' rights and entitlements.

4 Good Practices for Leading Short-Term Volunteers

In their lack of sustained meaningful commitment to reestablishing people's access to rights, entitlements and social services after a disaster, short-term volunteers generally do not make a significant, positive humanitarian contribution to disaster recovery. They may offer a speedier deployment than the institutional humanitarian response in the first few weeks, though are often professionally underequipped to deal with the logistical challenges and psychological strain. Short-term volunteers play into the dynamics of "liquid modernity", offering fleeting encounters with the *Other* rather than sustained attention to helping the vulnerable. In time, beneficiaries are better served by organizations that commit what Farmer (2011) calls "accompaniment"—a long term commitment to a relationship of "cooperation, openness, and humility" with the host community. Nevertheless, the examples of MADRE and MCC demonstrate that volunteer visits can be led in ways that encourage the growth of new understanding and commitments to advocacy and activism in solidarity with the host community. This enables the visit to contribute to a broader political engagement in fighting for the rights and entitlements of disaster-affected people.

In reflecting on our research of and encounters with short-term volunteers, we have identified a series of 12 good practices for leading short-term volunteers in areas facing humanitarian crises. We outline them below in lieu of a conclusion. The practices attempt to manage the extraordinary power and privilege of the voluntourists as they venture into places of profound human suffering. The practices are grouped into three categories: humanizing the encounter, careful planning and implementation, and accountability and integration of learning.

Humanizing the Encounter:
These practices aim to humanize the encounter between the voluntourist and the host community. They establish a focus on deep learning about the context and shaping the discursive framework of the trip to encourage voluntourists to respect the dignity of people in the host community.

1. *Learn and Listen Rather than Do and Tell*: The desire to help, to do something good is a powerful motivation and one that can often compel people into doing something, doing anything that they perceive will alleviate suffering. However, the first altruistic impulse may not be based on the best information. And the people who are the most eager (and even impatient) to help are not the best informed. Before helping, every effort should be made to gather information about the history of the situation. What are the root causes which led to the current circumstances? Is the complex emergency part of an ongoing cycle of

similar events either locally or regionally? Who is affected by the current state of affairs and how are those people engaged in the relief efforts? Who (if anyone) is responsible for the suffering? How could institutional or structural changes prevent this from reoccurring in the future? Pre-trip education is critical. Ample time should be given to considering the history, politics, economics, religious context, identity issues, culture and geography of the trip's destination. Given that many short-term volunteers do not have the skills or time necessary to make a significant difference in the community, voluntourism trips should be reconfigured discursively around "learning" rather than "doing" and "listening" rather than "explaining", "teaching" or "telling". This may seem inconsequential but it affects the voluntourist's expectations—how they imagine the trip ahead of time as well as explain it to their family and friends.

2. *Counter Exoticism and Resist Pity*: Encourage travelers to think about the ways in which the new place is similar to one's home context. This emphasis on continuity humanizes the encounter as well as dampens the tendency towards glamorizing poverty or hardship. Leaders of trips should encourage volunteers to think very carefully about how one's own group and other groups are talked about and notice how frequently terms like "we"/"us" and "they"/"them" are used. The way that the trip is advertised to potential participants communicates powerful messages and shapes expectations. Rather than emphasize exotic locales, adventure or the opportunity to be a superhero, promotional material should thoughtfully describe the opportunities in a framework of learning and mutual transformation. Leaders should also encourage volunteers to see members of the host community not as distant objects of pity, but rather as fully human. Framing encounters and debriefing as a means to build empathy enable a solidarity that goes beyond pity and commits us to act to change the circumstances of disaster-affected people.

Careful Planning and Implementation:

These practices aim to limit the risks of voluntourism's more amateur and ad hoc tendencies. They encourage attention to context, management, linkages with local partners and recruitment of skilled volunteers.

3. *Weigh Local versus Global Travel*: If the primary desire is to be helpful, the single most effective place to help is somewhere one has a deep understanding of the socio-political, economic and cultural identities. This, along with language proficiency, suggests that most people can be most useful directing their efforts close to home. All engagements with marginalized and suffering communities must be done in partnership with local individuals and organizations in the community. Voluntourism organizers should always ask whether local people could better, more efficiently address the identified need that the voluntourists plan to address. Due to the pernicious history of colonialism and missionaries, short term mission trips must exercise particular care and enable local churches to be primarily responsible for setting the agenda and designing the framework of trips. Local communities should be the ones to invite

outsiders in rather than outsiders scrambling to find the best way to experience a new place. The more direction that comes from the host community, the less likely the trip is to present an imposition to those being visited.

4. *Pay Attention to Timing and Duration*: The immediate aftermath of a natural disaster is not a suitable time for bringing in untrained volunteers. The immediate needs of the suffering population should take top priority and resources for food, housing and medical care should not be diverted to support outsiders. Additionally, it is not appropriate to ask local partners or counterparts to provide orientation, logistics or other forms of informational support when they are struggling to manage the direct needs of their own families, friends and communities. Express attentiveness and engagement by spending more time in the location: a week is better than a day, a month is better than a week and three months are better than one.
5. *Appoint Mature, Contextually Aware Leaders*: Skillful leadership of volunteer trips is essential. Due diligence for voluntourism leadership includes both people leading the visitors as well as careful reflection on who to connect with in the host communities. Facilitation should be directed by people with extensive knowledge of the context and are reflexive thinkers who are able to help participants grapple with issues of power and privilege. They must have cultural fluency in the host community as well as technical skills with leading groups. It is critical that the people leading debriefing sessions have experience in helping people process culture shock. Inexperienced leaders risk heightening the distress of individuals in the group if they are not able to identify, address and manage their own feelings and experiences on an ongoing basis. It is difficult to overstate the importance of recognizing how critical local people are to the success of a short-term (or long term) trip. Without local people willing to guide, translate, host and explain, short term trips are likely doomed to failure. It is also important to partner with capable, confident leaders in the host communities, including a variety of voices seeking out the voices of women, youth, elders, disabled people and other often marginalized voices will help to provide a wider picture of the variety of experiences in a new place. Therefore, the needs, convenience and centrality of local people should be affirmed throughout every step of the trip. It is unlikely that a group or individual will be resented for being too appreciative or grateful but local people are often taken for granted or overlooked despite their vital importance.
6. *Send Experts rather than Untrained Volunteers*: Those managing voluntourism should recruit a skilled team if the trip requires work. Sending trained carpenters, construction workers, plumbers, architects or electricians to volunteer their services to build homes, schools or other buildings is almost always a better choice than sending high school students to do the same. Even teaching English as a second language demands that the teacher have teaching skills, not just the ability to speak English. The one danger that trained professionals might face is purporting to have all of the answers immediately rather than listening carefully and assessing the situation first. Professionalization of volunteers may yield better quality work but these volunteers must also not be too

quick to diagnose the problems of others in a way that favors efficiency over relationship building.

7. *Plan Strategies for Advocacy*: One of the more powerful contributions that a voluntourist can make is engaging in advocacy after they return home. Exposure visits meet many of the needs of the voluntourist for cross-cultural exposure, relationships and participation rather than passive observation. Unlike many of the short-term building projects or even trainings, advocacy concretely draws on the best gifts of the voluntourist—the ability to tell a story in a powerful way. Rather than pretend that voluntourists are qualified to teach, build or advise, exposure visits require that the voluntourists listen, ask questions and try to understand. This is a better, more honest description of what most tourists are reasonably capable of doing and may not require as many resources from the host communities. Cultivating a mindset of accompaniment rather than a narrative of traveler as savior is imperative given the ethical demands of interaction with suffering people.

Accountability and Integration of Learning:

8. *Cultivate Appreciation of Complexity*: The short-term nature of these trips makes quick and shallow conclusions tempting and psychologically easy. When one knows that one's time in a new place will be brief, it is frustrating to acknowledge that comprehension of the complexity of contextual socio-economic realities may be impossible. All trips should acknowledge how difficult it is to fully understand a new place and provide the space for participants to ask good questions rather than reinforce the fiction that a short immersion will develop easily into cultural proficiency.
9. *Debrief and Critically Reflect*: The opportunity to reflect and ask difficult questions about how voluntourists are experiencing the new surroundings is crucial. Learning should not be limited to something that happens before travelling but should be integrated throughout the experience. Travelers may want to "make change" but hopefully they will be profoundly changed by the experience as well. The traveler should not believe that the host community is lucky to receive and encounter her/him. A spirit of humility rather than superiority is indispensable to any encounter. Often the voluntourist will not be fully aware of the limits of their understanding (an inability to know what they do not know) until they are immersed in the field. Regular debriefings provide an opportunity for the volunteers to ask questions and share information with one another. Firsthand exposure to human suffering or massive property destruction is fundamentally upsetting and unsettling to our ways of being in and understanding the world. Even the most experienced aid workers report feeling overwhelmed, guilty, disoriented and distressed by their encounters—these feelings can be amplified in the voluntourist with little previous exposure. Disillusionment should be an expected part of the overall experience. Leaders should not try to talk the disillusioned person or group into an uncritical embrace of the situation. The careful leader will acknowledge the ache that

results from the gap between expectations and reality and help to integrate the experience as it is rather than as it was imagined to be. Daily reflections either verbally with a group or written into a journal help participants raise questions, wrestle with uncertainty and think carefully about what they are experiencing.

10. *Build Long Term Relationships with Host Communities*: Voluntourists may be eager to travel to new places and have an insatiable appetite for new experiences, wanting to explore a new horizon every year. However, the best short term trips are those that foster a long term relationship with a given place. Changing the voluntourism/short term mission trip locale each year may satisfy the needs of the participants for new stimulation but it does little to foster equitable, just relationships with the host community. There should be strong feedback mechanisms for the host community to provide honest assessments of the trip and offer suggestions for modifications and improvements. Too often trips are assessed by the travelers (and researchers) but not by the local community. Maintaining contacts between two communities long after the trip ends develops relationships built on trust, familiarity, care and mutuality. Trip participants should seriously consider whether they are willing to dedicate time and energy to future trips to the same place rather than feeding the need for new stimulation and new experiences. It is not enough to have simply the same leadership team escort multiple groups; if relationships are a genuine priority, participants must make repeat trips to the area in order to foster genuine relationships rather than short spectatorships. Inviting the host community to travel to the homes of the travelers (and perhaps helping to provide the financial means for that to happen) is ideal.

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Author Biographies

Emily Welty is assistant professor and director of the Peace and Justice Studies program at Pace University in New York City. She is the co-editor of Occupying Political Science: the Occupy Wall Street Movement from New York City to the World (Palgrave 2013) and co-author of Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East (USIP 2007). She has a PhD from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies.

Matthew Bolton is associate chair of political science and director of the International Disarmament Institute at Pace University in New York City. He has worked as an academic, aid worker and a freelance journalist in 16 countries—including Haiti—and has a PhD in government from the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is author of Foreign Aid and Landmine Clearance (IB Tauris 2010) and co-editor of Occupying Political Science (Palgrave 2013).

Leadership Norms as a Form of Internal (Self-)Control of the Armed Forces

Nadja Douglas

Abstract This chapter discusses the role of leadership norms as a specific form of internal control of the armed forces. To this end, the compatibility between (military) leadership norms and general civilian and societal norms shall be scrutinized and the question raised whether and how military leadership norms are of relevance for civilian control of the armed forces. A special focus will be laid on the multi-ethnic Russian armed forces since the problem of abuse and brutality due to leadership deficiencies, and hence the lack of control, are especially pronounced there. Delineating the traditions of leadership standards and education norms in the Russian military history, a tension between progressive and traditionalist tendencies towards norms of behavior, determined by moral-psychological norms, will be identified. The contemporary phenomenon of ethnic collectives and racial discrimination in the Russian armed forces serves as an example for the importance of civilian control in this sphere. The chapter argues that civilian actors, such as state institutions or societal organizations, regardless of the nature of the political system, should have influence on leadership standards and norms in order to foster internal control of the armed forces. The chapter concludes by drawing implications of leadership norms and control standards for the integration of armed forces with society and society-military relations in general.

Keywords Civilian control · Leadership norms · Military ethics · Russia · Society

1 Introduction

Norms of military leadership inside armed forces are rarely brought into relation with norms of civilian control and ethical values of their societal environments. This chapter argues that this is a shortcoming that needs to be addressed, especially in times of increasingly professional but at the same time more impermeable militaries.

N. Douglas (✉)
Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS), Berlin, Germany
e-mail: nadja.douglas@zois-berlin.de

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Although much literature has been produced on problems of civil-military compatibility and incompatibility[1] in the context of modern democratic societies (see among others Bredow 1986; Vogt 1988; Kernic 2001; Heins and Warburg 2004; Kruse 2009), there has been a concentration mainly on two extremes: first, the idea that the values of the military and society must be totally compatible with those of society (the idea of *Innere Führung*, see section on compatibility of military and societal norms below, is usually invoked in this context), and, second, that such a compatibility is basically impossible or even destructive (Robinson 2015, p. 71). The way military and societal norms interact with each other has been neglected in the extant literature, even less in the focus of military leadership research has been the aspect of internal and self-control of armed forces. What is more, the nature of military and societal norms and their relevance for civilian control in non-democratic contexts has not sufficiently been covered either. This chapter hence engages in an analysis of the role of leadership norms as a specific form of internal (self-)control of the armed forces in the authoritarian context of the Russian Federation.

The first part of the chapter will serve as an introduction to the concept of military leadership norms and their embeddedness in (military) ethics, with an emphasis on historical specificities of the Russian case. In the second part, the compatibility between military and societal norms will be outlined and the relevance of leadership for the internal control of the armed forces demonstrated. The focus will be on historical and ideational references as essential pillars of military socialization and indoctrination. In the subsequent third part, indications will be presented that argue in favor of the existence of a path dependence of leadership and education norms in the Russian armed forces. On the basis of a study of the contemporary problems of ethnic collectives and racial discrimination within the multi-ethnic Russian armed forces, efforts to influence military leadership norms and moral standards by external civilian actors will be outlined. To what degree is there a correspondence or divergence between military ethics determining leadership standards and civilian and societal norms? What implications are there for the integration of armed forces with society and society-military relations in general? Suggestions and answers to these questions will wrap up this chapter.

2 Military Leadership Norms in the Western and Russian Contexts

A multitude of conceptualizations of ‘leadership’ exists in the literature. Northouse (2013), for instance, proposes a synthesis of extant definitions, explaining leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to

[1] The “incompatibility theorem” originally refers to the positivist social theory of Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who first postulated an incompatibility between the military and modern industrialised societies.

achieve a common goal" (2013, p. 5). He expounds the process character by underlining that leadership is not a linear but rather an interactive event, between the leader and the followers who affect each other (ibid., p. 5). The capacity of 'influencing' is hence inherent to all leadership forms and part of the general concept of 'power'. The bottom-line question here is how 'military leadership' can be distinguished from general forms of leadership?

'Military leadership' can be characterized by a strong hierarchy and the unity of military command (Keller 2012, p. 481). In other words, the predominant features of military leadership are hierarchical relationships and a linear system of 'command and obey' (on three different levels: strategic, tactic and operational). These attributes that come along with a strong element of control and degree of isolation from society reveal a close proximity of the military organization to what has also been described by Goffman (1991 [1961]) as 'total institution' (see Keller 2012, p. 483; Apelt 2012, p. 431). In such an institution there is little separation between private and public, between work and leisure and ultimately between soldier and citizen. The individual is deprived of autonomy. Naturally, the ethical basis of leadership within such an institution is a different one compared to the one of civilian society.[2]

'Military ethics',[3] as well as ethics in general, deal with decisions on what is right and what is wrong and by consequence with the prerequisites and criteria for rational and moral human action. The recognition that each (military) action involves not only technical knowledge (which soldiers acquire during their basic military training) but also judgment in order to assess the consequences of certain, especially complex and unexpected situations, is widespread but unfortunately rarely formulated in military curricula. Instead, we find limited, commonplace and often self-referential training documents, produced as part of service regulations by the General Staff or the Ministry of Defence (cf. Lucas 2015, p. xxiv). Yet, moral judgment as well as critical and responsible decision-making are paramount to the choices (military) leaders take in particular situations.

Ethical theories, in recourse to Weber (1987 [1919]), can be divided into two categories: theories that stress the consequences of leaders' actions and decisions ('ethics of responsibility') and theories that emphasize the rules, principles and intentions behind leaders' actions ('ethics of conviction'). In the Western tradition (see Northouse 2013, pp. 424–425), ethical (leadership) theories are divided in terms of teleological (focusing on the 'ends', 'purposes' and 'outcomes' of action), deontological (focusing on the duty character and righteousness of conduct) and virtue-based approaches (assigning certain virtues or qualities to a leader's character). Military ethics and general moral principles also determine military leadership since they lay the basis for the references leaders resort to when exercising influence

[2]In the Russian/Soviet understanding, military leadership is characterized by the complexity of decisions to be taken, involving among others, organisational, party-political, pedagogical, military-tactical, and psychological questions (Barabanshchikov and Fedenko 1981, p. 145).

[3]A distinction is commonly drawn between the individual moral behavior of a serviceman (for example respect for the constitution, national and international humanitarian law standards, etc.) and the role and significance of the military in the societal context (cf. Stadler 2003, p. 9).

on their followers, when shaping the military organization's values and setting goals and standards for themselves. In other words, military leadership is not only responsible for the control of the relations between individual elements and persons but also for shaping the formal structure of the military organization (cf. Keller 2012, p. 478). The predominant military norms and values can vary significantly from army to army and country to country. They are determined by education, indoctrination and specific historical, cultural and ideational references.

Russian ethics, in this regard, has traditionally been dominated by the position of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since time immemorial, the Orthodox Church regarded the defense of the fatherland as a sacred duty. State-military and religious leaders, such as Alexander Nevskii, Dmitrii Donskoi and others, are still honored today for their military bravery in the name of the Church and the fatherland (Pchelintsev 2012, p. 9). Religious-military principles were traditionally virtue-based and upheld during Czarist times (most emblematic during the Napoleonic War, also known as 'Patriotic War of 1812' in Russia) right until the First World War when the Orthodox Church issued not only pastoral letters and spiritual literature for soldiers but also pamphlets on military discipline and ethics (ibid., p. 19).

During Soviet times, Marxist-Leninist ethics moved away from the theory of ideas and religious truths in order to fulfill more of a utilitarian function or objective base for the development of society (Käärinäinen 1996, pp. 3–4). Dominated by party ideology, the ultimate goal was the creation of a "new Soviet man" and communist civilization, set out notably in the twelve moral rules of the so-called 'Moral Code of the Builder of Communism' (cf. Volkogonov 1976, pp. 230–231). In contrast to Western concepts of moral philosophy, Soviet moral norms and rules were characterized by a strong element of individual heteronomy (Käärinäinen 1996, pp. 3–4).

Soviet military ethics accordingly followed the logic of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine with the purpose of preparing soldiers for the moral good of protecting the Socialist fatherland. Soviet military ethics was neither regarded as professional ethics nor as belonging to a special caste, but rather as an expression of moral principles and rules defining the relation between Soviet citizens and their military duty in the service of socialism (see Volkogonov 1976, pp. 13–14).

Even more than a quarter of a century later, certain aspects of Soviet ethics still remain valid in Russian society, albeit deprived of the theoretical foundations and principles of communism. Those responsible for moral education and upbringing (also within the military) are struggling to fill the void. The Russian system of military ethics can hence be characterized today by means of a Soviet-type military doctrine replete with religious and patriotic principles, involving a stylization of the heroic past and reference to the traditions of the Russian nation (love of the fatherland, willingness to defend it with arms). Individual qualities that are based on an ethics of virtue (in form of faith in the oath and the military duty, selflessness and self-sacrifice, military comradeship etc.) are equally stressed.

The religious element was brought to bear when the institution of military chaplaincy was officially introduced to the Russian armed force in 2009. This institution clearly draws on Czarist traditions, with the difference that the Czarist multi-national army, from the mid-19th century onwards, had not only Orthodox chaplains but also

Roman Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Jewish clergymen deployed in the armed forces (Pchelintsev 2012, p. 30). For a long time, in the multi-ethnic Russian armed forces, only Orthodox priests were assigned to military units up to the brigade level. President Medvedev then introduced military chaplains also from the other three traditional faiths (Cadiot 2009). In practice, however, mostly Orthodox priests dominate in the military and are present, for example, during the swearing-in of new recruits. Chaplaincies and so-called 'deputies in charge of education' were re-introduced to the contemporary Russian military, primarily to deal with political and moral education (for more details see section on problems of the multi-ethnic Russian armed forces below). The chaplaincy institution has, however, been criticized for contradicting the principle of the secular Russian state.

3 Compatibility of Military and Societal Norms

While it is the responsibility of policy-makers to respond to the strategic context by ensuring an effective and efficient military organization, the armed services themselves also need to be responsive to social values and, thus, to the society that they are supposed to protect and whose support they need. One of the key challenges is to ensure that a balance is struck between these sometimes competing demands (Kuhlmann and Callaghan 2002, p. 1). In other words, the armed forces must not only theoretically accept the principles of the "primacy of politics", but also show a certain degree of trust and respect for politics and the society on whose behalf they are deployed.[4]

Yet, according to von Bredow (2000), there will always be tension and a discrepancy between a democratically constituted society on the one hand, and a hierarchically structured military on the other. In post-war Germany, the principle of 'inward leadership' (*Innere Führung*[5]) aims to minimize this tension as far as possible (Groß 1998, p. 5). The idea of a 'democratisation of the military'[6] should not be understood as if orders or calls to action be realized by means of democratic majority decisions (Franke 2012, p. 49). This would eventually contradict the principle of 'command and obey'. A 'democratic military' can hence at the utmost

[4]Studies have shown that morale depends upon whether soldiers agree with the overall political goals, for example of a mission. Furthermore, morale is also dependent upon whether soldiers find support from their social (non-military) environment. Only then does horizontal and vertical cohesion come into play (Biehl and Kümmel 2003, p. 251).

[5]There is no explicit definition of *Innere Führung* and "inward leadership" is a rather rough translation. It reflects a unique German norm and concept of inner guidance, leadership and civic education that is geared towards reconciling both the identity of a citizen in uniform and the identity of a soldier within every member of the German armed forces (Reeb and Többicke 2014).

[6]The idea of a 'democratic army', according to the founding father of the concept of *Innere Führung*, Wolf Graf von Baudissin, consists of "the organic integration of the army with the democratic state; the commitment of military leaders to this state and its constitution; the same values for the army and for the civilian realms of the state" (Baudissin 1970, p. 157).

be imagined as the reflection of the day-to-day service and interaction between officers and enlisted soldiers within the armed forces of a modern society (ibid., p. 49). It requires the ‘citizen in uniform’[7] to act always in accordance with the rule of law and the constitution, and, in addition, to cultivate a generally critical and responsible attitude towards orders. The German concept of *Innere Führung*, though a particular case, has nevertheless become a reference point in debates on internal control of the armed forces and military ethics for democratically constituted societies. The particularity of the German debate can, also due to its historical experience of totalitarianism, be ascribed to a reflexive constitutional patriotism that is grounded in a strong position of the legal subject. Thus, the principle of ‘command and obey’ is legally codified and the powers of military leadership clearly restricted in the soldier act (‘Soldatengesetz’).

Military ethics and social values are strongly interconnected and have relevance in terms of the way in which the armed forces are controlled. In the context of theories of military professionalism, a distinction is drawn between ‘external mechanisms of control’ and ‘internal mechanisms of control’. The former implies enforced control from the outside by state institutions, societal organizations, and the general public, and the latter is based on values and standards held by the individual inside the military structure (Larson 1974, p. 65). Internal mechanisms of control include activities that the military utilizes to control itself by ensuring that internal rules (those which are ethically legitimate for the outside world as well) are respected. These mechanisms may be seen from the civilian perspective as the “first layer of control” of the military because they are designed to regulate the conduct of personnel prior to the involvement of external oversight bodies.

4 Leadership Norms and Internal (Self-)Control

In military education programs,[8] practicality is conveyed as moral knowledge. However, moral knowledge cannot simply be taught like technical knowledge. It is centrally concerned with judgments made in the face of uncertainty and implies a particular attitude to risk and a certain degree of self-knowledge (Toiskallio 2003, pp. 105–108). The idea of self-knowledge of military servicemen[9] is hence paramount for the mechanism of internal and self-control in the armed forces.

[7]The concept of the ‘citizen in uniform’ places high demands on leadership principles, i.e. demands on political consciousness, attitudes and behaviour during service.

[8]Under ‘military education’ I understand the shaping of values and attitudes (including morale, cohesion and respect for the political authority, but also the imparting of ethical principles and democratic values). In contrast, ‘military training’ implies the understanding of orders and the preparation for technical tasks and specific missions.

[9]I will refer to ‘serviceman’ or ‘soldier’ as being gender neutral, implying both male and female military personnel. Thus, the generic masculine is used in this text for the purpose of simplification. It equally includes and refers to females.

An important form of self-control, or control from the "bottom up", consists in the right of the soldier to lodge a complaint, for example by taking legal action and going to court if he has experienced a violation of rights or abuse. Complaints and legal redress fulfill the same function as other mechanisms of control: they identify a deviation from norms and rules and, where appropriate, act as a corrective or compensation. Other mechanisms geared towards the protection of military personnel (resorting to the military ombudsman or submitting a petition) are also part of self-control. Every superior who abuses his rights and leadership function must expect his behavior to be scrutinized by his superiors, by the courts or the general public.

Not least of all due to the *sui generis*[10] character of the military and its resultant proximity to Goffman's 'total institution' that was mentioned earlier, is it important, from a civilian and political perspective, to control the power of military leadership (Keller 2012, p. 489). Ethical standards for the military, in combination with constitutional rights and duties and democratic values, should be imparted to and internalized by members of armed forces and regularly scrutinized by civilians. Since military norms are, as mentioned earlier, determined by specific historical, cultural and ideational references, it is hence of crucial importance for civilians to be vigilant in ensuring that these references correspond to general democratic and societal norms and comply with the rule of law. Self-control of the armed forces and accountability mechanisms are thus an essential component of democratic civilian control of armed forces. The impact of military leadership traditions and relevance for civilian and self-control of the armed forces in (semi-)authoritarian contexts have, however, been neglected in respective debates. This is why in the following, the focus will be on the case of the Russian multi-ethnic armed forces.

5 Military Leadership Norms in Post-Soviet Russia

The Russian case suggests itself for a more detailed study of military leadership norms in a non-democratic context since besides a consolidated authoritarian regime, post-Soviet Russia is characterized by a military that has gained notoriety for abuse[11] and a society that has been highly militarized.[12]

[10]The military has a tendency to evade external scrutiny due to the so-called *sui generis* argument. This is linked to a specific (self) understanding of the military as a unique organization which, in order to fulfil its tasks, is eligible for special rights and the principle of secrecy. However, this self-understanding of armed forces impinges upon the fundamental societal and democratic principle of transparency (Dandeker 2001, pp. 34–37).

[11]Continuous incidents of human rights violations, especially against conscripts, repressive recruitment procedures, forced labor and an annual peacetime death rate of 3% (Peredruk 2013) are just a few indicators that illustrate the deficits with regard to leadership standards and the system of internal and external control.

[12]The Russian Federation is regularly ranked among the five most militarised countries in the world (see Bonn International Center for Conversion). The total size of the Russian armed forces (under the Defence Ministry and including other para-military forces as well as reservists) is

5.1 Traditions of Leadership in the Russian Military

Looking back at Russian military history, the constant struggle between more progressive[13] and rather traditionalist tendencies of military leadership have been characteristic throughout.

During the late Czarist times, the military-pedagogical ideas of General Mikhail Dragomirov (1830–1905), who was deeply influenced by Western European positivist thinking at the time, were among the most progressive and widely-read within the Czarist army (Volkogonov 1976, p. 50). In several of his works, among them "Preparation of the forces during peace-time" and "Preparation of the officer", Dragomirov focused particularly on how to educate subordinates without humiliating them (Dragomirov 1956, as quoted in Lishinskii 1995, p. 13). Dragomirov became famous for his principle that a "soldier must not be drilled but educated" in order to turn him into "a conscious combatant" (ibid., p. 13). The spirit of his officer education program is pertinently reflected in these lines: "The officer is not only someone of military rank, but at the same time a public figure; the army is not only a military force, but also a school of the nation, preparing it for public life" (ibid., p. 238). Despite the popularity of Dragomirov's ideas, they did not win support of the more traditionalist-thinking officers under Nikolai I. As a consequence, they went unheeded and were thenceforth not included in the official officer education curriculum.

The "Advice for the young officer" (1900), also called "Catechism for every officer", a booklet by Mikhail Kul'chitskii (1918–1943), was widely read by the Russian officer corps during pre-revolutionary times and went into the 6th edition by 1917. It is worthwhile quoting this guide of military ethics here, for it conveyed explicit respect for human rights and principles of moral behavior: "The officer must respect the human rights of his fellow servicemen, including subordinates. Woe betides the country, if a soldier leaves the military service with a feeling of disgust" (Kul'chitskii 1900, as quoted in Smirnov and Kravtsov 1996, p. 92).

During Soviet times, leadership education was mostly associated with moral-psychological training (recurring drill of Marxist-Leninist principles with appeals to personal encouragement of a virtuous and heroic conduct) of servicemen. In contrast to post-war Germany, for example, where military ethics and political education were linked to each other by the democratic principle (see section on compatibility of military and societal norms), in the Soviet Union, the armed forces

(Footnote 12 continued)

estimated at 3.26 million people, i.e. approximately 2.3% of the Russian population (see International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), The Military Balance 2015, pp. 184–198). About 40 million people out of a total population of 142 million Russians have direct or indirect links to the armed forces and related groups (these people include military personnel as well as members and relatives of service families, employees of military-industrial enterprises, employees of military research institutes and agencies, service pensioners and families of veterans (Sakwa 2008, p. 411).

[13] I define 'progressive' in this context as paying attention to soldier rights and freedoms as well as to military ethics in line with the general social values of society.

were kept in a status of de-politicization. This did not mean that servicemen were isolated from the socio-political context of the country, but emphasis was placed on structural and doctrinal issues, security, defense and foreign policy, and not least of all on Communist political ideology. A striking feature of Soviet military education was how a deliberate interweaving occurred between a system of ideology and *vospitanie*, as a form of moral upbringing (Colton 1984, p. 397). Soviet military theorists argued that the education of the "good soldier" was inseparable from the forming of the "good citizen" and that wars were won by the side that could field the soldier "who is able in the most difficult of conditions to maintain his high moral spirit and will to victory" (Izvestiya 1964, as quoted in Colton 1984, pp. 397–398). To this end, all servicemen were constantly bombarded with information and exhortations of a political nature, most of it administered by the political organs. Officially, the most important goals of military education continued to be the imparting of patriotic feelings, an understanding of the importance of defending the fatherland, and the state's relations with hostile foreign powers and with friendly nations (Lishinskii 1995, p. 81). Transferring the principle of self-education and self-completion of the Soviet citizen (as preached by Lenin) to the Soviet soldier, was therefore one of the most important tasks of the military leadership at the time. It was to be ensured that every serviceman and subordinate acquired an ideational and ideological conviction, thereby fulfilling his obligation towards Soviet society and assuming an active position towards life and a stable attitude towards the act of self-completion (Barabanshchikov and Fedenko 1981, p. 355).

In sum, it can be stated that the idea and the very understanding of ethical leadership have never been absent from the Russian armed forces. As a matter of fact, a considerable part of the Russian officer corps in the 1990s was keen to adapt a progressive concept of leadership and responsibility. Cases have been reported from this period of officer cadres that demonstrated for example open defiance of the participation in doubtful actions of war whose purpose was to suppress politicized elites or people on the territories of former Soviet republics. The attitude of numerous officers with regard to the participation in the war against Chechnya was also reluctant or even adverse (Anisimov 1995, p. 154). Barylski (1998) acknowledged that "the new [Russian] military professionalism valued cohesion and rational and deliberate problem-solving by military experts and considered politics [during the Yeltsin era] a necessary evil at best" (1998, p. 194).

So what prevented progressive Russian military professionalism from prevailing? Until today, there is a path dependence of strong traditionalist forces within the Russian officer corps, perpetuating a system of a hierarchy of norms and an individual heteronomous behavior that values moral-psychological doctrines higher than, for example, the inherently democratic concept of the 'citizen in uniform'.[14] The moral-psychological combat training still plays a dominant role. It involves courage,

[14]There is no equivalent in the Russian language. In Russia, the notion of *voin-grazhdanin* (soldier-citizen) is more common. It dates back to Czarist times and is linked to the idea of the 'armed nation' and the introduction of universal military service in Russia in 1874 (Savinkin 1999, p. 65).

bravery, discipline, responsiveness, resourcefulness, military comradeship and takes up considerably more space in the military curricula and officer education programs (Lishinskii 1995, p. 81). This gives progressive ideas little chance to prevail. One reason for the persistence of these traits of military culture and traditions is that servicemen represent that part of the population that only slowly and with difficulties changes its ethical and ideological disposition (see also Fillipov 2002, p. 132).

5.2 Contemporary Situation

In the context of a global trend and changing security constellation, comprehensive military reforms have been on the agenda of many states. The Russian Federation is no exception in this regard. Renewed efforts to overhaul the encrusted structures of the Russian armed forces have been undertaken between 2008 and 2012 by former Minister of Defense Anatolii Serdyukov. During the course of the reform process unprecedented measures were taken, involving among other things a shift from the territorial mass army of skeleton units, manned by officers and conscripts, to more flexible standing forces, relying principally on contract soldiers and reservists. Moreover, it was decided to gradually increase the number of non-commissioned officers at the expense of a disproportionate number of officers. Furthermore, much emphasis was placed on increasing the number of contract soldiers in order to reduce the dependence on a declining number of conscripts. These reforms—again this is not specific to the Russian case—have merely implied an overhaul of the “material” but not the “human” conditions with regard to making ethical standards and education within the armed forces accountable to contemporary military reality (Douglas 2014, p. 23). On the contrary, the first steps towards a restructuration of the outdated military education program, envisioning the introduction of arts and humanities into military curricular and the imparting of “soft skills” to future officers, was stopped half-way through and partly reversed by Serdyukov’s successor in the Ministry of Defense since 2012, Sergei Shoigu, who decided to keep the traditional Soviet military education system for the time being (Golts 2015, p. 7). According to Golts, it was not by chance that the Russian leadership refrained from carrying out the reform of military education: “If people who were educated, self-reliant and -conscious of their rights had entered the armed forces, they would hardly have been satisfied with the current system, in which an officer is obliged to carry out any order, even if it is a criminal order” (ibid., p. 7). Thus, in today’s Russian armed forces, many of the Soviet legacies concerning moral and political education persist. The military-patriotic education program also remains an important element that runs like a recurrent theme through every aspect of military education.[15] In fact, the demands towards a change of military leadership norms

[15]The system of military-patriotic education is a relic from Soviet times, designed to strengthen the ability of the Soviet Union to defend itself. Introduced in stages from 1968 to the mid-1970s, the

and military ethics in the Russian armed forces have not come 'from above'; instead, constant attempts have been made "from below", from the side of civic and human rights activists that aim to raise attention to the desolate state of discipline and need of a general overhaul of ethical standards and education within the Russian armed forces.

5.3 Problems of Discipline in the Multi-ethnic Russian Armed Forces

Due to the multi-national character of the Russian state, also the armed forces are a national and religious melting pot. The legacy of the Soviet Red Army, however, seems to be a burden today. There were difficulties in living together, discrimination based on ethnic or language differences and educational gaps also back in the Soviet army. Yet, most of the literature confirms that these difficulties were sporadic and came to bear mainly at times of political upheaval (Cadiot 2009). Former Soviet officers deplore the lack of discipline and responsibility by today's military leaders (Interview Dmitrii Pyslar, Organisation "For Human Rights", July 27, 2014).

The Russian military service regulations of 2007 contain inter alia the Internal Service Regulations (regulating all aspects of military life in and outside the barracks) and the Military Disciplinary Order (providing the internal regulatory framework for discipline within the military structure and hierarchy). The disciplinary order ensures that members of the armed forces have clear standards and norms for fulfilling their duty. Article 4 states that military discipline is realized, among other things, by means of "education of moral-psychological, combat qualities and obedience to the commander […], personal responsibility of every serviceman for fulfilling his duties of military service, […] maintenance in the military unit of internal order […] respect for the personal integrity of military servicemen and constant care for them." Article 5 moreover states that commanders and their deputies in charge of education are responsible for discipline in the unit and must "constantly maintain military discipline, demand its observance from subordinates, reward the worthy, and strictly but justly punish the negligent." Article 6, finally stipulates that the commander must "strengthen friendship

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(Footnote 15 continued)

system placed military instructors (*voennye rukovoditeli*)—most of them reserve or retired officers—in secondary and vocational schools to teach military discipline, the use of light weapons, drill and certain technical military skills (Colton 1984, p. 399; Jones 1985, pp. 63–70). It has always been a fundamentally backward-looking programme, an attempt to foster feelings that, for earlier generations, emerged more spontaneously from experience (Colton 1984, p. 400). It was reintroduced in 2010 and enshrined by the order of the Ministries of Defense and Education of 24 February 2010, No. 96/134 and the law "On Education" of 2012. It is also part of the military curriculum of officer and other military training schools and academies as well as university military studies' departments for the education of reserve officers.

between military servicemen of different nationalities, know about the situation of military, [...] immediately rectify violations found and decisively end any actions that can cause damage to the military readiness." It concludes that "the respect towards the personal dignity of servicemen, the concern related to the protection of their rights and social well-being is the most important responsibility of the commander as a superior" (Distsiplinarnyi Ustav Vooruzhennykh Sil Rossiiskoi Federatsii).

In practice, however, military commanders are often incapable or not willing to ensure the fulfillment of disciplinary rules and to exercise internal control of their units. Besides the more commonly known *dedovshchina*,[16] another type of hazing known as *zemlyachestvo* (literally 'territorial association'[17]) exercised by ethnic collectives, has led to a deterioration of conditions and an increase in violence in Russian military barracks today. The phenomenon is tightly linked to general inter-ethnic violence in Russia. Young men from ethnic republics, which are discriminated against within the larger societal context, try to reverse the situation within the barracks and practice collective violence against ethnic Russians. Their logic is one of mutual protection and profit by means of racketeering and extortion (Douglas 2015, p. 22). Many young men from the North Caucasian republics are required to pay in order to join the army as places for them are limited—in contrast to ethnic Russian conscripts who do not pay (in fact, sometimes pay in order not to go). Societal activists monitoring the armed forces in the Russian Federation also speak of everyday xenophobia in Russian barracks (Interview Ella Polyakova, Soldiers' Mothers Organisation St. Petersburg, 13 November 2012). There are several explanatory factors; one is the demographic growth of the southern, predominantly Muslim federal subjects since the 1990s.[18] Military commanders turn a blind eye to these problems since the individual soldier is rarely at the center of their concern and the civilian authorities are equally uninterested in these problems.

Some of the problems have been acknowledged by the authorities, but little is done about them or alternatively rather questionable measures were taken by the military leadership. In the early 2000s, for example, local and ethnic regrouping

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[16]*Dedovshchina* is a term to describe the tradition of barrack violence. It manifests as a form of hazing and brutality exerted by older conscripts (*dedy* = grandfathers) on younger ones (*dukhy* = ghosts). It is a military phenomenon, tolerated by officers if not supported by them as a means of maintaining discipline in the barracks, and is influenced by Russian social, political and economic realities (Daucé and Sieca-Kozlowski 2006, p. 17; Independent NGO Report on Forced Labor in the Russian Army 2012, p. 59).

[17]The self-organisation of soldiers along ethnic lines is actually not a new phenomenon, but dates back to the Second World War.

[18]According to figures from the Moscow Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, 10% of Russian youth today live in the North Caucasus (Chablin 2014). Since the two wars in Chechnya, no more recruits have been drafted from the Chechen Republic. For some time, the numbers of recruits from other republics in the North Caucasus were also reduced, but due to the shortage of conscripts, this measure was revoked.

was promoted as a way to eradicate so-called 'non-statutory relations'.[19] As an experiment, Orthodox units were created and Muslim recruits were separated and sent to non-combat battalions like the *stroibats*[20] (Sieca-Kozlowski 2009).

In 2009, the Ministry of Defense received a large increase in the military budget in order to implement reforms and improve the legal and moral situation in the units. Chaplaincies and political educators were reintegrated into the units in order to provide moral guidance, political education, and relief to soldiers. The argument was that the *zampolits* in particular would have represented a counterweight to the power of military superiors during Soviet times (see also section on leadership norms and ethics in Western and Russian contexts). The political and military leadership thus became convinced that political educators would assist in providing moral guidance and clarification of the main military mission, thereby enhancing unit cohesion. The Ministry of Defense started to follow through on certain reforms, taking military legal action against soldiers who violate the disciplinary order. New conscripts now receive information on their rights and hotline numbers to call in case they need assistance. From the perspective of civilian observers who are in close contact with the armed forces, the revival of the military educators is, however, viewed critically. According to Valentina Mel'nikova, head of the Union of Committees of Soldiers' Mothers Russia, they are mainly responsible for the work with the *kontraktniki* (professional contracted personnel) but cannot be considered 'multipliers of moral principles' (Interview Valentina Mel'nikova, UCSMR, 30 March 2013).

Although the problem of *zemlyachestvo* is officially not recognized (see statement of former Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, RBK, 16 January 2007), civil society and mediators between citizens and state, such as the Russian Human Rights Commissioner, are well aware of the problem and make efforts to find a solution. Thus, the Russian ombudsman (Vladimir Lukin at the time) organized a roundtable in October 2010 to which representatives from both authorities and civil society were invited, with the objective to discuss the problem (see "Citizen and Army", RealArmy.org, 28 October 2010). The conclusion that civic and human rights activists draw from the persistent existence of hazing and abuse in the armed forces is that the transformation of the Russian conscript-based military into a professional all-volunteer force is paramount. They continue to lobby with decision-makers to proceed with the military reform agenda.

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[19]'Non-statutory relations' is the euphemism employed by military officials to describe phenomena of hazing and bullying such as *dedovshchina* and *zemlyashestvo* (Sperling 2009, p. 224, emphasis added).

[20]'Military construction units' are known for harsh working conditions. They have been officially dismantled and abolished in 2006.

6 Implications for the Integration of Armed Forces and Society-Military Relations

As a result of the adversities encountered in the multi-ethnic Russian armed forces, many ethnic Russian recruits leave the army and turn into fierce nationalists. In other words, the armed forces in Russia are a 'school of the nation' in the most pejorative sense of the word. Together with prison culture, military norms continue to infiltrate Russian society. Indeed, many Russians see the armed forces as a mirror of society and vice versa.[21] However, there are also—albeit feeble—opposite tendencies. Civic activists continue to keep a vigilant eye on ongoing developments within the military sphere. As long as problems, such as hazing and abuse, forced labor and forced recruitment exist and continue to thrive, (the problem seems to get worse with an increasing number of Russian foreign deployments), civic activists will not be dissuaded from making efforts to exercise civilian and public control and notably taking influence on military standards, a task they regard as their moral or civic duty.

From numerous interviews conducted by the author between 2012 and 2014 in the Russian regions with civic activists engaged in soldier rights protection and military monitoring, it emerged that most societal actors are united in their conviction that the respectful treatment of soldiers (especially conscripts) and along with that, the norms of military leadership not only matter for the morale and cohesion of the Russian armed forces but for Russian society at large. In fact, their work is geared towards influencing not only the military organisation and the reform process as such, but towards changing Russian society as a whole.

In conclusion, the activities of civilian actors in the politico-military sphere are relevant and indispensable for sound society-military relations. Violence and abuse within the armed forces as well as malpractices and mismanagement of the military are problems all states can be confronted with, regardless of their internal constitution. This is why the permanent engagement of society in the control of armed forces is a matter of concern in both consolidated democracies and authoritarian states. What is called 'democratic spirit' of armed forces in democratic contexts can also be translated into a form of adaptation and integration of the armed forces into and with the non-military society. This integrative function, which implies that what applies to society must to a certain degree also apply to the armed forces, is equally applicable to non-democratic contexts.

Russian military sociologists Serebryannikov and Deryugin establish a link between the elements of military ethics, civilian control and society-military relations that illustrate the above-stated. They define the ultimate purpose of civilian control as "the need to ensure a dignified status of the military person, the containment of any kind of attempt to convert the military serviceman into a mute instrument of the power, fulfilling any discretionary order without reflection" (Serebryannikov and Deryugin

[21]According to a representative opinion poll by VTsIOM, around half of the Russians agree that the military structure mirrors society as a whole, while in 1996 only 25% agreed with this statement (VTsIOM opinion poll. 25 August 2015).

1996, p. 157). From this they conclude that society—thankful for its safety and security—should care about the humaneness of relationships inside the armed forces, ensuring servicemen's rights and liberties (ibid., p. 157).

In sum, ethical leadership and self-control mechanisms serve to regulate the conduct and the organization of the armed forces from the inside. From the societal perspective, these mechanisms represent a "first layer of control" which, in an ideal case, anticipate and comply with possible forms of external control and demands for accountability. Ultimately, they are a reflection of the concordance between civic and military norms and values. The important implication for society-military relations in post-Soviet Russia (but also during other periods of Russian history) is that ironically, it has always been the military that 'educated' society rather than the other way round. Attempts by societal actors to reverse this situation or exert influence on military leadership norms are marginal today but do exist.

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Author Biography

Nadja Douglas is a researcher at the Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS) in Berlin. She will shortly publish her Ph.D. thesis on public control of the armed forces in post-Soviet Russia. Her research interests include peace and conflict studies, human rights and civil-military relations. Prior to her current assignment, she worked as a policy advisor at the German Bundestag and the OSCE.

Cultural Dimensions of Violence in the Military

Maren Tomforde

Abstract The experience of military violence in the ISAF operation is not only something essentially new to the society and the armed forces in Germany but also and particularly to the deployed soldiers. It is the soldiers who have theoretically practiced the use of violence as part of their profession and their service in the Bundeswehr for decades during the Cold War. For the first time since the end of World War II, they have now been forced to actively use violence in extreme situations in Afghanistan. Due to the seriously deteriorating security situation even in northern Afghanistan, ever since 2009 soldiers are no longer mere passive victims of violence during ambushes but are also confronted with having to kill, if necessary. Military leaders have had to lead in combat and take on responsibility for their subordinates and actions in extreme and complex situations. Based on anthropological research on military leaders with combat experience, this paper looks at the special challenges that Bundeswehr superiors have to face surrounding combat situations. It further analyses how operational and combat experiences are interpreted by these commanders and how they have an impact on Bundeswehr culture in theatre as well as at home. It is the military leaders who have served in extreme situations who are now striving for an official recognition of the sociocultural paradigm shift that has taken place during deployment. They do not want their Afghanistan experience to become a 'blueprint' for all further missions, but they do not want to accept unchanged cultural traditions of German armed forces still adhering to values, norms and behavioral patterns developed in Cold War times either.

Keywords Bundeswehr · Combat · Violence · Military leaders · Afghanistan · Cultural change · New traditions · Extreme situations · Anthropology

M. Tomforde (✉)
Staff and Command College of the German Armed Forces, Hamburg, Germany
e-mail: marentomforde@suedsinn.de

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1 Introduction: Leaders Facing the Experience of Violence

It was in Rajlovac near Sarajevo in Bosnia–Herzegovina that I first started to encounter different forms of military leadership in theatre. In 2003, when I visited, as an anthropologist working for the Social Science Research Institute of the German Armed Forces, the German military camp in Rajlovac for the first time, I conducted research on the motivation of Bundeswehr soldiers during deployment. The overall motivation *for* peacekeeping and stabilization missions was relatively high among the troops interviewed as has been the case over the past decade (Biehl 2012). However, motivation *during* this specific mission was at a surprising low. In interviews with soldiers from all ranks, I learned that motivation had dropped so drastically due to a change in command. The German commander of the previous contingent had evaluated the security situation in the area as being quite stable. Accordingly, soldiers were allowed to leave the camp in civilian clothes when off-duty, visit local restaurants or go for a stroll in Sarajevo. The new commander in charge, however, interpreted the security situation—for several reasons—quite differently. He raised the security level from "normal" (no risk or threat of an attack) to "bravo" (increased and predictable threat of attack). In consequence, soldiers could no longer leave the military camp after duty, neither in civilian clothes nor in uniform. Indeed, they were only allowed to leave camp when on duty a special task outside the camp had to be fulfilled. During this contingent, Bundeswehr soldiers were seen so rarely in and around Sarajevo that local people already asked themselves whether the German forces had withdrawn from Bosnia–Herzegovina altogether. The soldiers themselves expressed their frustration over the 'prison-like situation' as they called it by ironically stating that the abbreviation SFOR no longer stood for "Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina", but for "Schöne Ferien ohne Risiko" (nice holidays without a risk).

Having met the commander of the named contingent in Germany before deployment, it was already clear at this stage that the colonel had several major ambitions connected to his SFOR mission: bring back all men (and women) sound and safe after the six months tour, show no weaknesses towards his troops, and, last but not least, to be promoted to the rank of general after deployment. The leader in question did indeed return home with all of his troops unharmed (yet highly frustrated) and was indeed promoted after his tour. Even though, the commander's type of leadership and strife for promotion had been and is highly questionable, it is also quite understandable to some extent when reflecting on a leader's wish to return with all comrades unharmed and to eliminate any risk that could endanger this objective. This paper takes a closer look at German military leaders (mostly in the rank of captains to lieutenant colonels) who deployed to Afghanistan in the years 2007–2014. These leaders were in command at a time in Afghanistan when either ambushes and/or open combat situations were quite frequent. These superiors thus had no way of escaping or avoiding dangerous situations for their troops but rather had to lead them through these as best as they could. The ISAF operation

marks a turning point for the Bundeswehr because, for the first time after the Second World War, it actively participated in combat situations.[1] For the first time, superiors had to take responsibility in situations where injuries and death were imminent, had to debrief their troops after combat and had to face families of wounded or killed soldiers, see also (Naumann 2017).

The aim of this article is to examine these military leaders with combat experience. How do they deal with challenging combat situations and in what regard is their experience in conflict situations different from their troops? Also, how are these commanders changed due to their combat experiences and, in return, how do they challenge or change the organization's culture? Will those experiences of violence remain 'mere' singular impressions that will be soon forgotten or will they have a lasting impact on the Bundeswehr (and its culture) as well as on the organization's cultural memory?

This text will deal with these questions based on empirical research. On the one hand, this article is based on knowledge gained in the course of the last decade through anthropological research on Bundeswehr missions in the Balkans and Afghanistan as well as through lecturing high ranking officers at the Staff and Command College of the German Armed Forces in Hamburg, Germany.[2] Moreover, between 2007 and 2014, I have conducted focus group interviews with operationally experienced soldiers, and in 2013 and 2014, I have conducted 30 half-structured in-depth interviews with soldiers returning from Afghanistan[3] on topics such as operational culture and experiences of violence. This is not an official research project on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Defense.

After a presentation of research data and methods of this article, anthropological perspectives on culture and violence as the most important terms for analysis are discussed. Then the new experience of being in combat and of having to use of force against 'the' enemy is examined and several dimensions of military leadership in combat are scrutinized. Direct citations from hour-long interviews with combat experienced commanders allow a clear view of events in theatre and their interpretation by the interviewees. The analysis of these interpretations and cultural meanings leads us to the finding that combat experiences have become part of operational culture in theatre and as such also have an influence on Bundeswehr culture in general. In the conclusion, it is shown that commanders with combat

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[1]Combat is generally understood as a brief armed confrontation between hostile forces. During the mission in Afghanistan, the term combat was sometimes interpreted more widely when it came to awarding the combat medal, because this medal is also awarded for having suffered terroristic or military violence under very high personal danger. For example, passengers of a vehicle that drove over an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) and was damaged in the process would also earn the service medal "combat" (interview with Captain 26, Afg. 2012).

[2]For publications see e.g. Tomforde (2009, 2013, 2015a b).

[3]The expression 'soldiers returning from Afghanistan' has been used intentionally in this context, because not all interview partners see themselves as veterans (Sussebach 2014).

experience who will form the future elite[4] of the German armed forces are arguing for an official recognition of these cultural changes that form part of a 'professionalized' and internationally renowned Bundeswehr today.

2 Research Data: Talking to the 'Future Elite'

As the collection of data for this paper was not part of an official research project by the German Armed Forces, I asked for volunteers among officers known to me through my lectures at the Staff and Command College of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg, Germany. My interview partners agreed to answer my questions on their mission experiences at times when they were off duty.[5] In most cases, the interviews lasted for two hours or more as the officers had a lot to narrate once they had started to talk and reflect their mission(s) in Afghanistan. It was not unusual for the officers to name further potential conversation partners. I was also directly contacted by soldiers themselves who had heard of my research project and wished to be interviewed. My conversation partners were mostly male officers between the ages of 30 and 50 and were mainly in the ranks of first lieutenant, captain, major and lieutenant colonels. Only few women[6] with combat experience could be interviewed. My study has a clear bias: I did not talk to the 18–30 year old enlisted soldiers and sergeants who mainly participated directly in combat situations in Afghanistan.[7] Instead, my study focuses on the military leaders. Officers with

[4]For a critical analysis of former Bundeswehr elites and their disposition to the use of force, see Schmidt 2015.

[5]At this point I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the soldiers who have supported my research project and allowed me valuable insights into their experiences, sociocultural practices, emotions and thoughts.

[6]During research, I have met only few women with combat experience. Also, female soldiers rarely serve in the so-called protection companies outside the camps that were most heavily involved in combat situations. For example in 2010, more than two thirds of the female soldiers of the 22nd contingent in Afghanistan performed supporting functions and thus mainly served within the camp. Langer et al. (2011, p. 12), however, were able to ascertain in the course of an empirical study in Afghanistan in 2010 that a gender-specific difference between men and women with combat experience cannot be statistically proven. According to them, both groups display a similar willingness to use violence themselves after a prior exposure to violence. In other words, the data suggest that "the real physical experience of military violence tends to erase gender-specific effects of socialization" (Langer et al. 2011, p. 15). This result was also supported by my male conversation partners who were unable to detect any gender-specific differences during combat. For an excellent and comprehensive book on women in NATO military forces, see Obradovic (2014).

[7]For further accounts and insight views of combat see Koelbl (2011, 2014) and Würich and Scheffer (2014), Brinkmann et al. (2013) and Brinkmann and Hoppe (2010). Apart from scientific analyses, a broad range of documentations, reports, photo exhibitions, documentaries and movies, radio features, theatre plays and even Graphic Novels have been created about the mission in Afghanistan. Taking a closer look at these different approaches to the mission/war in Afghanistan would be worth a separate research project.

operational and combat experience who are in their early/mid-thirties today are the ones who will have a major influence on the Bundeswehr and its system of orientation and values over the next years and decades. With regard to Bundeswehr culture and especially to the question as to what extent the experiences of violence will change the Bundeswehr in sociocultural terms, an analysis of the future elite will thus provide vital insights:

> The study of elites provides a useful focus for addressing a range of core anthropological and sociological concerns including language and power; leadership and authority; status and hierarchy; ideology and consciousness; social identities and boundary-maintenance; power relations, social structure and social change (Shore 2002, p. 9).

In the course of this article, the interviewees' names have been anonymized and details about the deployment location, the time frame of the mission or about the unit have been deliberately omitted. A research project in the context of war deals with the sometimes sensitive, often highly personal and intimate experiences with violence. All interviewees were guaranteed absolute anonymity prior to the beginning of the interviews.[8] Therefore, any information about the soldiers which could be used by insiders to identify and compromise the interviewees had to be omitted.

3 Anthropological Perspectives on Culture and Violence

If we want to go beyond simply looking at narratives of violence of leaders with combat experience and if we want to analyze the long-term effect of these experiences on the organization and its culture, we need to clarify how we use the concepts "culture" and "violence" in the context of this article.

In anthropology, concepts of uniformity, overall validity and determinacy of culture—ideas pronounced frequently in theoretical texts in the context of functionalism and structuralism until the middle of the 20th century—have been replaced by concepts of culture which focus on process and practices (Geertz 1987 [1973]). Cultural change takes place when cultural elements are being produced, reproduced and transformed by social actors. For example, cultures of a group of immigrants, of a port city or of an army are being constantly generated, adapted and implicitly negotiated. They are the result of human interaction with their natural and social environment and can be observed in the form of languages, belief systems and other structural elements. Culture is thus always the result of human action. However, members of a society are not just the 'producers' of this culture; they are also at the same time its 'carriers' (and in most cases unconsciously so), which

[8]The interview passages quoted in this text have been edited slightly in order to remove empty phrases that disturb the reading flow, unless they contribute anything essential to the meaning of the respective statement. However, I have tried to repeat the soldiers' expressions as accurately as possible.

means they practice culture and pass it on (Tyrrell 2000, p. 86). As will be shown below, experiences of violence by military leaders in Afghanistan are central to the process of cultural transformation within the German Armed Forces (see also Mannitz 2013).

3.1 'Violence in Our Minds'

Let us take a look at anthropological perspectives on violence before analyzing experiences of use of force in the military context. Being a complex phenomenon, violence is always also influenced by culture. It takes place "in our minds" (cf. Schröder and Schmidt 2001) and it is there that it gains its significance. In order to obtain a differentiated and holistic perspective on violence, different forms of this ambivalent phenomenon must be examined and compared with each other. Anthropological field research in violent *settings* allows us to focus on the cognitive aspects of violence by examining statements and narrations about experiences of violence (Weiss and Six-Hohenbalken 2011, p. 3, cf. Collins 2011; Ajimer and Abbink 2000). Violence is being *redefined* by all those involved, in order to understand and give meaning to it. Therefore, violence is never meaningless. Instead, it is a vital part of our human existence, and as a cultural product, it also has a creative dimension (Whitehead 2004; Schmidt and Schröder 2001). Sociocultural anthropology provides us with an approach to violence that depends on the respective context. Violence and the corresponding experiences are always embedded in broader symbolic contexts. Violence originates on the different cognitive and practical levels of a society and should therefore be examined and understood in the "contested space of intersubjectivity" (Jackson 2002, p. 39). Soldiers, including military leaders, also interpret their experiences of violence and pass them on to others in different ways as will be demonstrated below.

In this article, the use of violence and its interpretation by Bundeswehr officers who, during an operation, are perpetrators as well as victims of violence, will be analyzed from an internal point of view. The minimalistic interpretation of violence as a sheer bodily *force* which can be used to inflict injury will be employed in this text because the focus will 'only' lie on the "targeted direct physical injury of others" (cf. Nunner-Winkler 2004, p. 26) during military operations.

4 The New Experience: Being in Combat and Killing 'the' Enemy

Since the beginning of the Bundeswehr 'peacekeeping' and 'peacebuilding' operations abroad in 1990, subcultural tendencies have developed in the operational areas which were strengthened with every new contingent and every new operation.

Especially the mission in Afghanistan contributed to a further consolidation of this specific operational culture. Three reasons can be stated here: (1) the long duration (2002–2014) of the mission and the high number of deployed soldiers (with contingent limits of up to 5350 soldiers), (2) the geographical distance to Afghanistan and its cultural differences and (3) the combat experience. In Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr soldiers had to leave the 'training space' of the Cold War and had to be able to fight—not only with the aim of not having to fight[9]—but in order to be able to survive actual combat situations. Subsequently we will take a look at how this qualitatively new experience of violence is being interpreted, endowed with meaning and passed on to others by military leaders interviewed.[10]

At the beginning of my half-structured interviews, most of the officers—without being asked—very accurately named the number of combat situations and IED attacks they were confronted with during their deployments. Apparently, combat situations and IEDs are special markers of their deployments which are being remembered and communicated to others.

> I took part in 8 gunfire exchanges and we recovered 17 IEDs (Captain 30, Afg. 2010).

Being asked whether they also name the precise number of firefights and ambushes when talking to each other, or whether they talk about these combat experiences at all, most of the soldiers stated that they hardly ever mentioned these experiences on the day-to-day basis. *Insiders* would know from the mention of the contingent, the location of deployment and the range of tasks what the other had done and seen on the operation without having to talk about it in detail. This means soldiers with combat experience do not have to talk about it because the 'general data' of their deployment already include this information. However, having combat experience does not imply that this individual is automatically more respected among his[11] comrades. Instead, my interview partners seem to deal with combat experience in a differentiated manner. They look very carefully to ascertain the 'quality' of a certain combat situation and to see how each of the soldiers was involved and how they dealt with it afterwards. In 2009, I conducted the first few interviews about experiences of violence during the mission in Afghanistan (see also Caforio 2013). First group discussions about deteriorating security conditions, however, had already been conducted as of 2007. At first, the officers were lost for words when it came to describing the experience of violence. Instead, they paraphrased the killing of the enemy: the enemy was "wiped out", "crushed", "sent to Nirvana", but not "killed" (see also de Libero 2014; Apelt 2009). Only since 2010 have military leaders started to talk openly and directly about killing—at first, this even lead to shock and

[9]"Be able to fight so that you do not have to fight" was the motto of an 'army of peace' which mainly concentrated on deterrence after the Second World War (see also Hellmann 2015).

[10]We will not look at leadership models here or at basic issues for leaders as this has been done in other publications with much scrutiny (see e.g. Haas et al. 2012; Keller 2012; Taylor et al. 2008; Roghmann and Soeder 1968).

[11]For the purpose of simplification, the generic masculine is used in this text; however, it equally refers to women.

confusion among officers without operational experience. The 'Good Friday fighting' of April 2010 marks a turning point in this respect. What started in September 2009 with the bombing of the two tank trucks in Kunduz now became obvious for everybody in the Good Friday fighting and could no longer be denied: In Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr actively participates in combat situations and also kills people. In the next part, some of the most important dimensions of these combat experiences will be examined by way of example.

5 Dimensions of Leadership in Combat

It is especially at the beginning of an operation, that fear of combat situations, of injury and death are intense. The leaders' fear of losing one of the men seems to be greater than the fear of getting injured themselves (King 2013). Comradeship helps to deal with this fear and to bear with the hardships of an operation and challenging combat experiences. In my interviews, comradeship is mostly described as the most precious asset and as a kind of social security (see also Focken 2013, p. 74; Koelbl 2011).

> Comrades are important partners whom you can talk to. After a fight, they are the ones you can trust absolutely. When there's been an attack, I have to think about what I should tell my wife at home. My comrades, on the other hand, have been there themselves or at least they know what it's like out there. What we've been through together binds us to each other but it also separates us from those who stayed at home, from our families (First lieutenant 8, Afg. 2009).

> After an attack, the *debriefing* is essential. But we must not just concentrate on the 'victims', the shooters. The superiors/leaders who had to bear the responsibility also have to receive special attention. […] It's especially difficult for a superior officer to bear responsibility in dangerous situations and then to make the right decisions. […] When you've survived a fighting or an attack together, the differences between the ranks are disappearing. Every single one of the comrades plays an important role. Being able to rely on each other, that is true comradeship (First lieutenant 10, Afg. 2009).

Apart from the central value of comradeship, the above-mentioned quote displays an interesting military perspective: In the *debriefing* after a fight, the shooters are defined as victims who are in need of special attention. Although fighting is part of the military's main business, the soldiers are apparently aware of the fact that the actual use of weapons must not take place without discussion and personal assistance by comrades and leaders afterwards. Soldiers who have killed another person are more likely than others to come home traumatized (cf. Zimmermann 2014). Images of combat situations can always 'bubble up', as well as questions about the sense and legitimacy of killing in particular and of the whole operation in general. After a fight, soldiers do not always know if they really have killed someone or not. This not-knowing can lead to equally irritating feelings of guilt and shame as with being sure to have shot somebody. However, "most of the soldiers handle the experience of violence well. As they say, 'We are soldiers'. However, it depends on the superiors, whether they talk a lot to the soldiers after a fight and take care of dissociation" (interview with Dr. Zimmermann, head of the Psychotrauma Centre at

the Bundeswehr Hospital in Berlin, June 10, 2011). Another aspect that helps to endure extreme situations is the soldiers' humor (Ben-Ari and Sion 2005), very common in the Bundeswehr as well as in other Armed Forces: "You twitched when the bullet passed by your ear, you wimp" (Captain 30, Afg. 2010). This is a humorous way to deal with the fact that the comrade could have been hit just as likely. Because he was neither injured nor killed, they can joke about it. Every soldier who spent time outside the camps in Northern Afghanistan during the last years was somehow confronted with IEDs.

One officer told me that, as company commander, at the end of a contingent—sort of as part of his farewell ritual—he had the 'honor' of deactivating the last booby trap they had detected. As demanded by the omnipresent soldiers' humor, immediately after the deactivation a second IED detonated—the soldiers had not told their commander anything about this second booby trap and thus gave him quite a shock. The soldiers' humor can have a relaxing effect in tense situations, bypass boundaries between ranks, soldiers and commanders and at the same time confirm values such as bravery, courage and masculinity.

During combat and/or an ambush, the military leader has a high level of responsibility for his comrades. This responsibility sometimes weighs heavily on the superior before, during and even after a mission (see also Cantwell 2015). A lieutenant colonel described the following situation that stayed with him during the whole time of deployment in Afghanistan:

> When the day of departure came and all my soldiers came to the barracks to board the bus to the airport, one of the mothers came up to me, gave me a rose and said 'Promise me to bring my boy home safe and sound.' I promised, of course, what else could I have done in that situation? However, this promise burdened me during the whole mission—luckily I was able to keep it (Lt. Colonel 03, Afg 2009).

Consequently, superior officers do not so much fear for their own lives but for the lives of their subordinates:

> In combat and being afraid to die? Bringing the other guys home safe and sound and living up to the responsibility as a leader is more important than the fear for your own survival (Major 18, Afg. 2011).

Whenever possible, a so-called *debriefing* is usually conducted by the military leaders after a combat situation. Apart from tactical and operational aspects, personal feelings are also addressed—the direct superior has a special responsibility with regard to his subordinates in this respect. Not only does he have to ensure during a fight that his soldiers are being led through the combat situation successfully; he also has to bear in mind his soldiers' mental wellbeing after the fight. During the interviews, it became very obvious that the superiors take this responsibility seriously and that it sometimes weighs heavily on them:

> After we had run into this ambush with no way out and I had no idea what to do, how to move forward or back, and I also had no idea how to get my men out safe and sound, I just wanted to quit and give up everything. Even afterwards, for several weeks I had been thinking about flying home. I felt as if I had failed my men, even though everybody reassured me that this wasn't the case. That still haunts me many years later. (Captain 30, Afg. 2010)

As we can see, the interviewed military leaders take the responsibility they have for their subordinates very seriously. The wellbeing of their troops is their highest concern. When injuries or even death occur, superiors have to sometimes deal with a sense of failure or even guilt. As commanders, they are entrusted with the soldiers' lives. If something happens to one of the comrades, more often than not officers report that they had the feeling of having failed them and their families. However, as leaders they rarely allow themselves to exhibit these feelings of self-doubt and remorse. To be credible superiors, they need to convey the image of being strong and responsible, which mostly entails putting one's own emotions on hold at least for the time of deployment. Unless commanders have comrades of equal or similar rank whom they can confide in, they mostly have to bear the pressures of responsibility for the lives of others as well as the stress of always controlling one's own emotions for the sake of the subordinates by themselves. One high ranking officer (Afg. 2010) recounts accordingly:

> After some of my men were killed, I had to be strong. I *had* to believe that they did not die in vain but that their death had contributed to something meaningful. I did not want to be weak or a self-absorbed whiner but, still, I was torturing myself with all of these evil thoughts. Returning home, I felt how this heavy weight of responsibility was lifted from my shoulders. I could not talk to anyone about these feelings or thoughts, not even to my wife. This is something I keep very deep inside of me.

Being a military leader, it is not easy to show weaknesses—the higher the rank, the more difficult it seems to share these emotions with comrades and even with family and friends. Many interview partners underlined that upon their return home, they did not talk much about their feelings, as partners, close relatives or friends could mostly not relate to the situations they have been through in theatre. Even when returning to their barracks in their home bases, soldiers with combat experience get the feeling that they have to fight for understanding and recognition among their comrades. Due to their combat experience, they have changed while their home environment seems disinclined to adapt to these new circumstances.

> There are approximately 5,000 of us who have combat experience. We have special experiences, needs and questions. We bring turmoil into the Armed Forces and openly ask: 'What does it mean today to be a soldier?' But the military is reluctant to deal with these questions, although we should not to fall back into old habits. Probably we need more time so that a general change in thinking can take place. More generals and colonels need operational or even combat experience. That's the only way things can truly change. That will take time. In the meantime, we ask: Don't we need new heroes? Shouldn't we name barracks after fallen staff sergeants rather than after Rommel? (Major 24, April 9, 2014).

This citation clearly underlines that soldiers with combat experience have changed, have different priorities, needs and questions than comrades without this very particular knowledge. Their fight for life in extreme situations and all of the challenges connected to it has become part of their self-perception and soldierly identity. Due to an emerging 'military mission culture' they challenge structures, norms and behavioral patterns in the Bundeswehr at home. My interview partners no longer want to accept a Bundeswehr culture developed during Cold War times that has little to do with the reality they encounter during deployment. And as the

'future elite' of the Armed Forces some of them consciously and openly criticize this old organizational culture and fight for change through addressing this imbalance e.g. in speeches, articles or books (see e.g. Bohnert and Reitstetter 2014; Zimmermann 2014).

6 Operational Culture: Breaking with Old Rules While Increasing Professionalization

How have the operations abroad changed the Bundeswehr—not only in structural but also in cultural term? In various Bundeswehr operations abroad, by flexibly adapting to the particular conditions and requirements on site, soldiers have developed behaviors, patterns of thought and interpretation systems which led to the development of a specific operational culture for all contingents and areas of operation, regardless of time and place. At first sight, this might just refer to a laxer interpretation of service regulations or to informal practices such as wearing badges on the uniform which are principally subject to approval, building hidden pool and beach bar facilities between or on top of containers or purchasing additional, not officially provided uniform parts from so-called military shops. However, when taking a closer look, it becomes clear that these altered practices do not only temporarily soften the rules and adapt them to ever changing (framework) conditions in conflict areas. Rather, the sociocultural practices developed in areas of operation in the long run also influence traditional military structures and change them in the sense of the duality of structure and agency proclaimed by Anthony Giddens. Giddens' theory of structuration (1986) states that individual actions and social structures are closely connected and that they can influence each other. Subsequently, military structures are also the medium as well as the result of actions performed by individuals. As far as the development of an operation-specific Bundeswehr culture is concerned, this means: The longer the missions continue and the more soldiers are deployed, the more operation-specific behavioral patterns are developed. These practices are not only changing military structures in operational areas but in the long run will do the same in Germany. What does this mean in particular and what concrete examples for operation-specific patterns of interpretation and orientation can be mentioned? Every operational and conflict area is characterized by specific framework conditions such as the prevailing conflicts, the political systems, the variety of actors and regional particularities as well as by many other specific challenges. Standardized processes and inflexible adherence to rules which were created in Germany in a different socio-cultural and organizational military context such as in times of national defense can render fulfillment of directives on site extremely difficult. In order to be able to deal with particular circumstances and challenges during an operation, troops and in many cases also superior officers and commanders introduce and accept interim solutions or render regulations more flexible. The most obvious example in this context is making changes to the uniform during deployment. Operational soldiers do not only wear *badges*

specifically created for their unit in order to create a sense of identity, although wearing badges is not officially approved. Especially in Afghanistan, they also add privately purchased equipment and uniform parts to their officially provided uniform, sometimes paying up to several hundred Euros. Soldiers of all ranks, including military leaders, accept these high costs, and not just because e.g. individualized footwear suitable for use in desert conditions or bags and special jackets for weapons "which have been ergonomically adapted to your body and may save your life" (interview with Major 13, Afg. 2011). When talking to officers with combat experience, it became clear that this special kind of equipment is also used to symbolically create the 'inner circle of fighters'. Of course, it is highly disputed among soldiers whether the officially provided equipment would not also fulfill local requirements. Especially fighting units did and do not share this opinion and have therefore professionalized and individually adapted their uniforms by privately purchasing additional items. According to some of my interview partners, there are also soldiers who mainly work within the camps and headquarters and who have made their uniforms 'fit for combat', too, by purchasing additional equipment. In this case, the desire to be part of the 'inner circle of soldiers with combat experience' comes before the necessity to adapt one's uniform to special local conditions. Not all soldiers, especially military leaders in Germany, simply accept this flexible enhancement of the uniform which also symbolically represents the softening of other rules in operational areas. Processes of cultural change must always be negotiated, and when it comes to major changes that are perceived as being too extensive, some individuals may react defensively. The following quotes illustrate how the operation-specific flexible use of the dress code meets with particular resistance from superiors in Germany who have no operational experience themselves.

> Well, now that we're back in Germany, everyone pays special attention to the dress again. It's always been like this: Those who can't do anything, can do uniform. But there's no going back. The operations have changed the Bundeswehr, they have made it more flexible. And that's a good thing. You can't stop it, even if some superiors would be happy to do so (LTC 02, Afg. 2010).

And a major who had been company commander in Kunduz states:

> I've always told my men: 'I don't care if you wear pink skirts as long as you fulfill your duties.' I no longer care about the dress at all; what's important for me is a soldier's performance. In the past, the higher ranks passed their experience down to the junior ranks. If that's how it is, then that's how it is. But now we have corporals who have been deployed in Afghanistan and who know a lot more about the situation on the ground. For some, this new kind of professionalism, also displayed by teams, is very hard to accept. I also think, if my superior officer is not competent enough, why should I serve him? For me, unconditional service doesn't exist anymore. Of course, we're touching a sore spot here. In the past, no one would have dared to think and say such things (Major 24, Afg. 2010).

Rules and norms are being made more flexible and are adapted to the specific local challenges—whereas military discipline and hierarchies, the heart of the military profession and therefore difficult to change and to negotiate, are being maintained as interviewed soldiers always stress. Yet, traditional roles are no longer applied as rigidly as in the past. "These days, in an operation it's 'substance first, then

appearance'; in the past, it used to be 'appearance first, then substance'" (Major 24, Afg. 2010).

This focus on qualification can result in a loss of distance between the different rank categories so that soldiers with special capabilities are bestowed with roles and prestige which do not always equal their rank. Meanwhile, the fact that officially assigned positions are overshadowed by individual capabilities has become characteristic of a professionalized Bundeswehr in theatre. Especially in extremely unsafe situations in Afghanistan, flexible, sensitive and considerate action was required, thereby breaking with rigid structures. American sociologist Remi Hajjar states with regard to the US military: "(T)he US military's emergent post-modern culture helps the force to conduct a rising array of unique missions marked by 'gray areas', contradictions, and ambiguities that reflect the increasingly volatile world in which the military operates and the fluid roles the organization must shoulder" (Hajjar 2014, p. 122). Contrary to earlier opinions (see e.g. Wiesendahl 2010), it is not the 'unreflecting fighter' who forms the soldiers' identity when they have to deal with an increase in combat experiences, but the 'professional operational soldier' who is a fighter as well as a socioculturally competent citizen and a diplomat in uniform at the same time (see Warburg 2010; Haltiner and Kümmel 2008). For example, a major who participated in the heavy Good Friday fighting in Isa Khel, south of Kunduz, in April 2010, when three German soldiers were killed and eight were injured, pointed out:

> This operation was a highly intensive experience which contributed to the professionalization of the army. It was the best and the most awful time of my life. [–] Now I know: The more fighting, the less important it is to have the image of a fighter. Instead, what counts is experience, direct communication and concentrating on the essentials. […] We are nothing special, we know that we make mistakes, too. Now we concentrate on the little things in life" (Major 24, Afg. 2010).

The so-called Good Friday fighting in Kunduz marks a turning point for the Bundeswehr because, for the first time after the Second World War, German soldiers actively participated in combat and suffered severe losses. In spite of these losses, the event also creates a sense of identity as it was the first big combat experience. Beyond the actual operation, this event continues to be of particular importance for the soldiers and has become a key element of the cultural memory of the 'new' Bundeswehr as an operational army. The young leaders whom I have interviewed play a central role in keeping this cultural memory alive and in pushing for a transformation of their organization that incorporates their lessons learned in extreme situations.

7 Conclusion

To sum up, experiences of violence by military leaders in Afghanistan are vital to the still ongoing and negotiated process of cultural change within the German Armed Forces. The officers I have interviewed are part of an operational culture that

is clearly characterized by a flexible adaptation to complex framework conditions as well as by questioning traditional concepts of 'serving' and 'commanding', established roles, authorities, plans and ideas. So just like in other western oriented armed forces, the Bundeswehr soldiers are developing into military personnel who, apart from key military capabilities, acquire further competencies in order to deal with the multiple challenges of sometimes very disparate operational areas. Among mission experienced soldiers, operation-specific patterns of action and interpretation as well as behaviors have been developed, far from 'patterns of national defense activities' related to the Cold War scenario. Forming part of the soldiers' collective memory, this knowledge is passed on, remembered and kept available as ritual enactments, narrations, countless pictures, self-made movies, songs, paraphernalia, tattoos and operation-specific training across individual contingents and operational areas. Systems of orientation and interpretation in an operational culture enable the soldiers to adapt to ever changing framework conditions in different mission areas and to face the respective challenges. Step by step, the Bundeswehr is developing into an operational army, even though not all individual members of the organization have personally performed this transformation yet. Also, sociocultural transformation does not take place as a linear process but instead involves debates, controversies and sometimes oppositional ideas about the future of the German Armed Forces.

Tendencies towards an operational culture have been even more strengthened by the long and intensive ISAF mission. Operation-specific particularities and collective experiences were no longer limited to the Navy or a certain operation but were passed on among all the individual services as structures of knowledge and behavior from one country of operations to the next, and from one contingent to the next. These collective, typecast structures of knowledge and behavior which have developed in the Bundeswehr due to the multiple operational experiences are now used for the purpose of collective processes of interpretation in (un)known scenarios and have become an important part of the soldierly identity as the interviews with the officers have partly highlighted. These interpretative patterns have long ceased to be valid only in the country of deployment. Because of the number and intensity of the ISAF experiences in particular, their impact also unfolds within the Bundeswehr in Germany. And it is the military leaders who have served in extreme situations who are now striving for an official recognition of the sociocultural paradigm shift that has taken place in theatre. They do not want their Afghanistan experience to become a 'blueprint' for all further missions, but they do not want to go back to mere 'command and blind obedience' neither as they frame cultural traits of the 'old' Bundeswehr.

In conclusion, three important points should be noted: First of all, after the end of the cold war and as part of the transformation of the armed forces, political and military leaders not only in Germany, but also in other Western oriented countries demanded a 'polyvalent soldier' or rather a *peacekeeping diplomat* with the corresponding *soft skills* (Kümmel 2012). This type of soldier with various competencies who is not only able to fight but also to protect, to support and to act as a mediator, as demanded by a Bundeswehr slogan, has long ceased to exist only on

paper or in directives. On the contrary, the soldiers and especially military leaders had to adopt many of these competencies or improve existing capabilities when they were deployed, in order to be able to deal with the multiple challenges of operational conditions in cooperation with international comrades and civilian partners. At the beginning of the reconstruction of the armed forces, not all soldiers were thrilled with the prospect of now also having to train 'soft' competencies apart from the military, identity creating capabilities. In the years 2003–2006 I still heard many (older) officers say: "This is no longer my Bundeswehr." Younger soldiers and also superiors, however, regard missions abroad and the corresponding competencies and challenges as an integral part of the image of their profession and of their soldierly self-perception. They are no longer 'just' being socialized into the 'old Bundeswehr culture' but for some time also into an army shaped by operational culture. Secondly, these operation-specific cultural patterns of interpretation which now exist in the Bundeswehr have, in my opinion, during the years of heated fighting in Afghanistan not led to the emergence of 'dull fighters' far from every moral conscience. Instead, a professionalized soldier has emerged who must be able to fight in order to survive difficult and dangerous operational scenarios. Even if 'only' approximately 5000 Bundeswehr soldiers have actively participated in combat situations—this new combat experience has become an important part of the cultural memory of the Bundeswehr. By now, even soldiers without operational experience know that the training they receive truly enables individuals to survive combat situations. Ever since the combat experiences of the years 2010/2011, Bundeswehr soldiers have 'arrived' as comrades on an equal footing in the international context, and have managed to liberate themselves from the partly prevalent former image of an 'outsider' army of 'shirkers' who only serve in quiet regions. The third point is also closely connected to this emancipation of the soldiers. Combat experiences which influence not only individuals but, moreover, structures and processes of knowledge and also the soldierly self-perception are the operational culture's 'center of gravity'. As unsettling as experiences of violence may be in that particular moment, for many soldiers, the confrontation with violence is only part of a more complex experience during a mission and in the time afterwards. And experiences of violence are not per se bad or unsettling/traumatizing; they are part of the military business of an organization that outwardly exercises the state's monopoly on violence. Even if Parliament will not deploy any more soldiers in kinetic operations during the next years and beyond, the combat experiences gathered in Afghanistan will continue to have a significant impact, as a vital part of the collective memory. In Afghanistan, soldiers had the opportunity to not only practice their main military tasks and to emancipate themselves as equal partners in an international context. Instead of shying away from taking responsibility for subordinates and ones actions—like the colonel in Bosnia–Herzegovina had still done—military leaders like platoon and company commanders have taken on the challenge of the extreme situations encountered in Afghanistan and have turned into professional soldiers. Calls for an official acknowledgment of the soldiers fallen in Afghanistan, maybe even by naming barracks after dead soldiers, is one example of how these leaders would like to officially fill what is perceived as the Bundeswehr's

'void of tradition' with new contents and cultural patterns of interpretation to which they and their comrades have a current connection. The future will tell if this works out and what 'cultural long term effects' the experiences in Afghanistan will indeed have for the German armed forces.

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Author Biography

Maren Tomforde received her Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Hamburg in 2005. For her thesis, she carried out research in Thailand (1999–2002) on "cultural spatiality". In 2003–2007 she worked as senior research associate at the Social Research Institute of the German Armed Forces and conducted anthropological research on German peacekeeping missions. Since March 2007, she has been senior lecturer in sociocultural anthropology at the Staff and Command College of the German Armed Forces in Hamburg. Apart from lecturing at the College, she carries out research on diverse topics related to civil-military relations and peace and conflict studies. In addition, since 2015, Maren Tomforde has been an honorary fellow at the Department of Anthropology at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

Fighting for Strangers? Military Duty in Contemporary War

Lisa Ekman

Abstract This chapter explores the concept of military duty in the context of contemporary war. It focuses on the recent developments in the normative and strategic frameworks of Western military operations, which emphasize that mission effectiveness is largely dependent on the security and wellbeing of the local population. This has seemingly stretched the traditional notion of military duty, which is to master and apply organized military force to achieve political objectives and defeat the enemy on the battlefield. Based on empirical insights from the U.S. military and its recent missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the chapter argues that this development has created tensions between political and military understandings of duty, as well as between organizational and individual notions of duty within the U.S. military. Conflicting notions of military duty hold important policy implications to both domestic civil-military relations and U.S. military power abroad because they challenge the integrity of political objectives and threaten military cohesion and unity of effort with regard to the management of local populations during war.

Keywords Military duty · U.S. military · Armed intervention · Peace operations · R2P · Contemporary war · Western forces · Armed forces · Local populations

The core duty of Western armed forces is to serve and protect the nation state and its people. This fundamental obligation has shaped existing military organizations and their institutions, cultures, and identities for generations. Nevertheless, new conflicts and security threats have broadened the objectives, tasks, and scope of the military profession. Consequently, Western armed forces have recently mainly been preoccupied with military missions in support of foreign states and populations affected by armed conflict and humanitarian crisis.[1] In the context of these military

[1]In September 2015, more than 150,000 military personnel were deployed to peace operations worldwide (Center for International Peace Operations 2015).

L. Ekman (✉)
Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden
e-mail: lisa.ekman@pcr.uu.se

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interventions, local populations are widely identified as important actors, as viable and legitimate peace and security is believed to ultimately depend on their support. However, after two decades of largely unsuccessful military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, the utility of Western armed forces to promote nation-building and protect civilian populations abroad is debated. Some argue that military engagement with the local population is merely a strategic means to gather more intelligence and improve force protection, rather than address the needs of the local population. Conversely, others claim that military assistance puts civilians at risk of retaliatory attacks, while also posing a significant threat to military personnel in return for limited strategic gains.

Complementary to existing scholarly and policy debates on the ethics and efficacy of recent 'population-oriented' military interventions, the main purpose of this chapter is to critically reflect on what I refer to as an expansion of military duty in the context of contemporary wars. More specifically, it asks: how do Western armed forces understand their new obligations toward foreign populations? To begin to explore this issue further, the recent experiences of the U.S. military in Afghanistan and Iraq provide a suitable entry point, as U.S—led counterinsurgency campaigns proclaimed to support the development of local security and legitimate host state governance 'by, with, and through' the local population. Moreover, the experiences of the U.S. military are likely to resonate with those of other Western armed forces also involved in these recent military interventions.

Drawing on previous empirical findings on the U.S. military, I argue that contemporary mission objectives of nation-building, democratization, and civilian protection stand in conflict with the U.S. military organization's prevalent understanding of duty, namely combat effectiveness. I maintain that the case of the U.S. military illustrates a key dilemma for contemporary Western civil-military relations: political leadership increasingly pushes for a more expansive interpretation of military duty to include obligations toward the local population, while military organizations remain dependent upon fostering bonds of solidarity within the military organization to achieve military effectiveness (cf. Olsthoorn 2013; Käihkö 2016). Moreover, I argue that high political expectations on military forces have created multiple and, at times, conflicting understandings of duty *within* the U.S. military organization, as service members tend to vary in their views on, and approaches to, the local population. The lack of a common understanding of military duty yields important policy implications considering the possible negative impact on political objectives, as well as military cohesion and unity of effort with regard to the management of the local population—a relationship of crucial importance to strategic, operational, and tactical levels of military operations. When militaries prioritize strategic gains and the safety of service members at the expense of the local population, it is not only detrimental to those immediately affected, but it also endangers the legitimacy of the overall mission (Etzioni 2006; Francis et al. 2012; Allen and Flynn 2013). For instance, the strategic use of airstrikes in Afghanistan generated a vast increase in civilian deaths, which stood in stark contrast to the proclaimed political objective to serve in the best interest of the local

population (Human Rights Watch 2008).[2] Since Western armed forces are intended to function as an extension of political leadership, their subordination to political objectives is a fundamental aspect of national civil-military relations. At the same time, military leadership is responsible for ensuring that the armed forces successfully protect the country, as well as protecting the welfare of military units and individual military members (Feaver 1996). As the complex settings of recent military interventions create new demands and challenges to both political and military leadership, political and military understandings of duty, at times, appear to stand in opposition to one another.

Next, I present the traditional notion of military duty in existing literature followed by a brief outline of recent developments toward a norm in international policy of a military responsibility to protect. Thereafter, I discuss my two main arguments in light of empirical findings on the U.S. military in Afghanistan and Iraq, which indicate that although the U.S. military organization's official notion of duty changed over time, it did not create a unified understanding of duty among its service members. In conclusion, I reflect on the importance of reconciling Western military organizations' prevalent stance on duty with current political demands, and the possible implications for future military interventions.

1 The Concept of Military Duty

In various organizational settings, the existence of a set of shared ideals provides individuals with a meaningful frame of reference that interacts with, and shapes, behavior. Moral judgment constitutes an important part of this process, whereby individuals "assess the values, norms and interests that are at stake in a given situation" and "adequately estimate the consequences of action, in particular for the people who are affected by these actions" (Verweij et al. 2007, p. 19). Relatedly, the common usage of the word *duty* chiefly refers to an "[a]ction, or an act, that is due in the way of moral or legal obligation; that which one ought or is bound to do" (Oxford English Dictionary 2016). Although military oaths come in many forms, they commonly stress "loyalty to a head of state (UK Army and Marines), constitution (US Army), republic and people (Bundeswehr) or king, laws and military law (Netherlands Armed Forces)" (Olsthoorn et al. 2013, p. 82). However, "[t]he people at the receiving end, for instance the local population are not included" (ibid., p. 82). This chapter explores this claim further and broadly defines military duty as the sense of obligation or loyalty toward certain actors (both individuals and

[2]This is not to say that political expectations on military duty toward foreign populations are necessarily clear-cut. For instance, Western political leaders tend to place operational caveats upon national troop contributions to international military operations and allocate extensive resources to force protection, even though such actions tend to favor the safety of military personnel over the local population. Relatedly, studies have shown that Western populations, in general, care less about foreign civilian war casualties than about their own national military losses (Shaw 2005).

organizations) or principles in the context of war. As such, it proposes that the sense of duty may consist of multiple and perhaps conflicting allegiances within or outside of the military organization.

In the growing literature on civil-military relations and the military profession, the duty of Western armed forces is widely defined by the obligation to achieve the missions assigned to them through national political and military leadership. Historically, this duty has mainly revolved around fighting and winning the nation's wars. To this end, service members are trained and socialized into a collective military identity of acting as 'armed servants' to the state and the military organization (Coll et al. 2012; Olsthoorn 2013). This process includes instilling certain common ethical values and principles that serve to inform individual and collective decision-making and behavior (Sorely 1986). A shared understanding of duty within the military organization is believed to strengthen the interpersonal bonds, or camaraderie, between different military units and service members (Snider 2008). The sense of duty toward fellow brothers-in-arms is viewed as an important component of the overall morale, discipline, and resilience of armed forces during war. As such, it is widely considered as a pivotal factor to generate military cohesion and unity of effort, which are both deemed necessary for combat effectiveness (Käihkö 2016). Thus, a collective sense of duty is important both at the organizational and individual levels of the armed forces because it supports the military organization to perform its main function: to master and apply organized military force to achieve political objectives (Serena 2011).

1.1 An Emerging Military Duty Toward Local Populations

Dating back to the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia, it has been considered unlawful to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states, especially with the use of military force. After the end of WWII, the principle of non-intervention was reaffirmed with the establishment of the UN Charter, which still constitutes the main legal basis for peaceful international relations. Nevertheless, the end of the Cold War came to spur an unprecedented increase of international military intervention in civil wars. Following the international community's repeated failures to end human atrocities in places such as Rwanda and Srebrenica, the right to intervene in the protection of foreign populations at risk gained increasing foothold in international policy. In particular, NATO's military intervention in Kosovo in 1999 constituted the immediate backdrop to the emergence of an international norm of a Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The norm goes beyond the *right* of states to protect people beyond their borders by arguing the case for an international *duty* to intervene and, if necessary, use military force to protect people living in 'failed' states (Bellamy 2009, 2011; Glanville 2012). As a result, since 1999, there are a growing number of UN Security Council Resolutions that explicitly include measures of civilian protection in the context of international military intervention (Hultman 2013).

Following this relatively recent dimension of moral responsibility in the realm of international relations, the growing political momentum to take action has also generated new roles and obligations for Western armed forces. In addition to conventional combat operations, military professionals are now expected to perform a wide array of noncombat tasks to end crises and conflicts abroad. Thus, expectations on Western militaries appear to have moved closer to Janowitz's notion of a 'constabulary force', namely a force that "is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations rather than victory" (1960, p. 418). Janowitz did, however, caution that a diplomatic turn of the military profession could lead to an 'identity crisis' among military professionals because they generally view "police activities as less prestigeful and less honorable tasks" (ibid., p. 420). In line with his prediction, several studies have since suggested that military personnel face a number of new professional and ethical challenges during 'noncombat' peace operations or military deployments to areas with low levels of armed conflict. For instance, some military personnel have been found to struggle with noncombat tasks and civilian protection, as it entails stepping outside of the familiar 'warrior' mindset of destroying the enemy and protecting fellow service members (Miller and Moskos 1995). This seems especially difficult if the security situation in the host state deteriorates and there is an escalation in armed conflict. Conversely, internal tensions also appear to surface for some service members between their own 'humanitarian' concerns and the prevalent warrior identity of the military profession. Military medics, in particular, have been found to suffer from what is referred to as the 'dual loyalty problem', namely tensions caused by the existence of twofold professional and ethical obligations toward fellow service members, as well as the local population (Olsthoorn et al. 2013, p. 83). From one point of view, caring for the medical needs of the local population leads to a conflict of interest because it limits the capacity to care for wounded military personnel. At the same time, helping civilians can also demonstrate goodwill on behalf of deployed military forces, which could amount to better intelligence and cooperation from the local population. Consequently, it could lead to more effective military operations and improved safety for military personnel (ibid.).

In sum, the new objectives and tasks of contemporary military interventions have put the conventional notion of military duty as combat effectiveness on its head by proclaiming to support principles of liberalism, democracy, and human rights, rather than military victory and national strategic interests. Even though military organizations are responsible for imposing certain cautionary standards and procedures to prevent military personnel from putting themselves and others at risk without due cause, it is difficult to argue against the need to ensure that internationalized military intervention actually meets its stated objectives: to protect the local population and support stability, reconstruction and development in the host state. If external military forces consider these political objectives as less important than safeguarding interpersonal loyalties and traditional ethical codes internal to the military organization, armed intervention becomes an ineffective means to achieve political objectives (Olsthoorn 2013).

2 Multiple Views on U.S. Military Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan

The ethical motto of 'Duty, Honor and Country' is taught at the United States Military Academy at West Point. The words were made famous by General Douglas MacArthur (1962), as they are said to capture the time-honored ideals of not only the officer corps, but also the U.S. military organization (Ambrose 1999). The traditional meaning of the motto is closely tied to combat effectiveness and the duty to protect the U.S. constitution, the American people, and fellow service members (Sorely III 1986). The current U.S. military oaths and codes of conduct continue to reinforce this understanding of military duty, while leaving out the ethical and political obligations of military forces toward foreign populations (Perez 2012; Olsthoorn 2013). Considering that the U.S. military has a long history of unconventional military interventions abroad and working 'by, with, and through' the local population, including stability and reconstruction operations in Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America, the lack of formal organizational reflection on the duty toward foreign populations may appear surprising (Davidson 2010; Glanville 2012; Arielli and Collins 2013). However, the U.S. military is known to have treated unconventional operations as 'second-tier' missions (Ucko 2008, p. 291). Particularly following military defeat in Vietnam, the U.S. military organization demonstrated widespread reluctance to conduct unconventional operations. For decades, the military organization allocated limited resources to the development of doctrine, training, or institutional preparation for such operations. Instead, conventional high-intensity warfare—the 'American way of war' (Weigley 1973)—was reestablished as the U.S. military's main priority; a decision reaffirmed after military victory in the first Gulf War in 1991.

Illustrative of my first argument, when U.S. military forces deployed to Afghanistan, and later Iraq, they did so in a largely conventional manner. Yet, despite the merit of initial combat operations and the initiation of a post-war political process, local instability and violence continued to spread. All the while, political and public expectations on the U.S. military grew more ambitious and mission objectives became increasingly couched in a political rhetoric of liberation, nation-building, and democracy. As the security situation continued to deteriorate, it became increasingly apparent that the U.S. conventional military approach had failed to curb the rise of an insurgency. True to form, the U.S. military proceeded to address its evident lack of progress in a conventional fashion by developing new doctrine, only this time addressing unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency operations. Military doctrine, and field manuals in particular, are designed to provide the military organization with a shared conceptual framework on how to fight, and win, the nation's wars (Høiback 2011; Serena 2011). This was the first time the U.S. Army and Marine Corps had jointly produced a field manual and FM 3–24 Counterinsurgency quickly came to exert significant influence on U.S. military operations, as it was made the lead doctrine in Iraq, and later also in Afghanistan. In a previous study, I found that the manual challenged a number of conventional 'truths' of warfare (Karlborg 2015b).

Expanding on the traditional notion of military duty defined as combat effectiveness, the field manual advocated a duty toward the local population and nascent host-state authorities. To this end, U.S. forces were expected to not only win the war on the battlefield, but also engage with local communities through different outreach projects aimed at strengthening the capability and legitimacy of local authorities. They were expected to seize the 'human terrain'—the trust and support of the local population—to achieve mission success. In this regard, the field manual pointed out the risks associated with attrition warfare—an overreliance on firepower—due to the high costs to civilian lives. The manual, nevertheless, embodied assumptions that were highly conventional in nature, such as U.S. forces would, ultimately, achieve mission effectiveness. If U.S. forces would follow the new guidelines and excel at implementing unconventional military operations in the host nation, they had the power to achieve legitimate and sustainable sociopolitical change.

However, the U.S. military forces that were expected to conduct these unconventional military operations were educated, trained, and socialized by a highly conventional U.S. military organization that taught them to have confidence in the power of applying organized military force to successfully attain national strategic objectives. Thus, the institutional mindset and organizational structure and leadership of the U.S. military, including defense spending, planning processes, acquisition systems, reward systems, as well as military education and training exercises, continued to prioritize combat operations over non-combat tasks (Ucko 2008; Serena 2011). Needless to say, the envisioned transition from a predominantly combat-oriented mission to more 'population-oriented' operations did not proceed according to plan. In Afghanistan, the transition proved the most problematic, as U.S. military forces struggled with numerous challenges and setbacks in what became, to date, the longest war in U.S. history.

Resultantly, when FM 3–24 was revised in 2014, the once confident outlook on U.S. military power to exert influence through unconventional operations appeared to have drastically changed. The previous focus on U.S. military leadership in the host nation and the objective to build local legitimacy was now depicted as an intangible and possibly unrealistic task for U.S. forces. Instead, at best, U.S. forces were expected to be able to strengthen an already existing local capacity and willingness to end armed conflict. Thus, it was no longer the principal duty of U.S. forces to create legitimate host-state governance, but mainly the responsibility of the host state and its population. I argued that the revised manual was conveniently published at a time when domestic support for U.S. military engagements abroad was at an all time low. Despite the rapidly deteriorating security situation in Iraq in the aftermath of U.S. withdrawal, U.S. forces were preparing to leave a still politically and militarily unstable Afghanistan. I argued that the revised notion of military duty served three main purposes: firstly, to justify the ensuing withdrawal of U.S. forces to the broader military organization; secondly, to direct responsibility (and blame) for the limited accomplishments of the U.S. military onto U.S. political

leadership and host state authorities; and, thirdly, to caution against the use of U.S. forces for similar military operations in the future (Karlborg 2015b).

As previously pointed out, organizational-level factors such as military doctrine, institutions, training, and culture appear to matter to the decision-making and behavior of military forces. Addressing my second question as to how individual U.S. service members responded to these changes in the top-down, organizational expectations of military duty, my previous work on U.S. Army officers with past deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq suggested that U.S. forces were conditioned by the military organization to prioritize conventional aspects of the missions, mainly combat operations, at the expense of noncombat tasks (Karlborg 2015a). As a result, early on, U.S. military forces appear to have shown limited concern for their engagements with the local Afghan and Iraqi populations. In general, they described a lack of concern for both the consequences of combat operations on the local population, and how local actors might influence and affect U.S. military operations.

However, organizational factors cannot alone explain why U.S. military personnel had different outlooks on duty and chose to engage with the Iraqi and Afghan populations in different ways during their deployments. Such variation rather suggests that part of the explanation exists at the micro or individual level of analysis. Based on my work on U.S. Army officers, I found that the sense of military duty does not appear to be a 'fixed' understanding, but rather a dynamic construct influenced by personal experiences from both pre-deployment military training and socialization, as well as experiences from the field (Karlborg 2015a). Thus, despite being conditioned by the military organization in certain ways, service members were not predetermined to adopt either a 'warrior' or 'humanitarian' mindset during mission deployment. Relatedly, previous studies on U.S. military personnel have suggested that service members with high exposure to combat during deployment are, in general, less empathic toward the needs of the local population, as well as less inclined to take risks to protect them (Castro and McGurk 2007). Conversely, service members with low exposure to violence have been found to take a more protective approach toward the local population (Miller and Moskos 1995). Expanding on previous findings, I argued that to better understand the ways in which U.S. military personnel engaged with the local population, it is necessary to study how different factors at both the organizational and individual levels of analysis interact. In particular, I stressed the importance of personal experiences of face-to-face contact with the local population during mission deployment. In line with the premises of the contact hypothesis, I argued that the frequency of contact with local citizens—under certain conditions—will lead to greater familiarity with the customs, norms, and attitudes of the 'other'. In turn, this could help reduce prejudice and improve personal opinions about the local population, thereby bolstering a personal sense of duty toward them (Karlborg 2015a). My results suggested that the frequency, context, and nature of face-to-face contact with Iraq and Afghan citizens made U.S. forces either more or less prone to develop a sense of duty toward them.

In support of my second argument, different personal experiences of interaction during deployment appeared to generate multiple and, at times, conflicting understandings among U.S. service members in regard to their obligations toward the local population. By the end of their deployments, it appears that many U.S. service members came to reevaluate their initial stance on the local population. Many service members had come to the conclusion that nurturing local relationships was a necessity to achieve any sustainable results in the local mission setting. Beyond recognizing the instrumental value of establishing local ties, it also appeared that personal contact of more informal nature—characterized by perceived common interests and mutual dependency—strengthened the emotional bond with members of the local population. Accordingly, the relationships that were considered the most valuable were those associated with a positive interdependence. Particularly, U.S. forces appeared to have developed a sense of solidarity with the people they encountered the most, and with whom their interaction resembled that of a partnership, namely local Iraqi and Afghan counterparts and interpreters. Such relationships had required that U.S. forces—who were vastly superior in regard to financial resources and military capacity—adapted to the needs, customs, and capabilities of the local population. Conversely, other U.S. service members had not prioritized the needs of the local population, and kept a largely defensive posture toward citizens of the host state. Although service members who are reluctant to engage with the local population were thought to exist in all military ranks and branches, they were perceived as more commonly found among those who had been deployed to areas with high levels of armed conflict. Thus, regardless of other circumstances, the factor of armed conflict tended to make U.S. service members more inclined to limit their interaction with the local population and instead focus on implementing combat-oriented aspects of the mission (Karlborg 2015a). This clearly illustrates the difficulty of shouldering different noncombat roles in an operational context that is defined, first and foremost, by its precarious dynamics.

Overall, however, it appeared that many service members came to revise their initial stance on the local population and the mission at hand because of their personal experiences of contact with local citizens. For instance, over time, the U.S. Army officers described growing increasingly critical toward U.S. political objectives of nation-building and democratization. In the local context, particularly in Afghanistan, efforts to push changes onto the local population seemed to make a bad situation worse. For example, the U.S. mission to eradicate Afghan poppy cultivation ruined the livelihood of many local house-holds, which only served to increase local resentment towards U.S. forces and the Afghan state (ibid.). In response to the contradictions between how political leadership and the military organization defined duty and perceived local realities, the U.S. Army officers described having adopted an essentially pragmatic approach, whereby they came to accept certain outcomes simply because they appeared more locally sustainable. Thus, reluctantly, some U.S. forces adapted to what they found to be a lower level of professionalism to better accommodate the perceived long-term benefit to the local population (ibid.).

The broader military organization, however, does not encourage pragmatism of this sort for a number of reasons. The nature of the military profession entails considerable security risks. In wartime, the military organization is obligated to ensure that military personnel have sufficient training, support, and resources to minimize these risks. In this regard, unpredictability is an element of military operations that must be limited, not encouraged, as it is believed to increase the security risks facing individual service members and the overall mission. To this end, maintaining a clear chain of command and obedience to military leadership across the ranks—promoting military cohesion and unity of effort—is believed necessary to achieve both combat effectiveness and force protection.

Somewhat contrary to this belief, it is interesting to note that my findings on U.S. officers in Afghanistan and Iraq suggest that service members who adapted the mission to the local context and the needs of the local population—with or without the support of their commanders—were viewed to have been more effective at relationship-building at the local level. Thus, the decision to step outside of the mission framework and assigned tasks to instead focus on the issues viewed as most pressing to the local host community was perceived to have made troops both more effective and safe. More specifically, the changes that they helped bring about—however minimal—were viewed as more locally legitimate and sustainable because they focused on the needs of local citizens rather than the ambitious strategic objectives at the national level.

Yet, this seemingly increased sense of duty toward the local population did not, in fact, replace the widely held notion that U.S. service members' principal duty was toward fellow brothers-in-arms. However, the understanding of what it would require to fulfill this obligation had markedly changed as a result of deployment. Initially, the importance of mastering combat skills and killing the enemy was partly confirmed due to the precarious nature of the areas of operation. Over time, it nevertheless became evident that combat alone was not sufficient to keep fellow military forces safe. With accrued experiences from deployment and different forms of contact with the local population, the understanding of this duty seems to have expanded to include the combination of both combat and noncombat skills—and the capacity to perform a delicate balance between the two. For example, it was underscored that the U.S. service members who were willing and able to not only fight when necessary, but also establish functioning partnerships with the local population were perceived to have been the most effective. Conversely, military units that maintained a solely robust posture and displayed unwillingness to listen and adapt to their local counterparts or the surrounding population were perceived as a liability to the safety of deployed personnel.

Hence, the officers' understanding of the highly interrelated concepts of military effectiveness, professionalism, and duty came to expand and change in ways that increasingly recognized the necessity of properly managing the relationship with the local population.

3 Conclusion

For the past two decades, Western armed forces have been deployed to implement political calls to save people at risk around the world. The wellbeing of the host population today constitutes both a normative concern and a strategic objective. However, recent Western 'population-centric' military engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan have been largely unsuccessful. In this chapter, I have argued that part of the problem is the incompatibility between the notion of military duty promoted by Western political leadership and the sense of duty fostered by military leadership and the norms, cultures and institutions of the military organization.

The lack of a unified vision for military duty is problematic, as it seems to have generated widespread unwillingness among Western states to jointly deploy ground forces to protect civilians in a number of precarious conflict zones. However, with the escalation of armed conflict in places such as Syria and the recent wave of refugee flows and various targeted terrorist attacks across the United States and Europe, international policy debates continue to stress the interconnectedness of humanitarian disasters abroad and threats against vital national interests and security. Thus, it appears that contemporary and future wars will, most likely, continue to be fought 'amongst the people', whether Western states and armed forces care to fight in them, or not.

In terms of national civil-military relations, it is central to the U.S. military organization, as well as other Western armed forces, to address the matter of multiple and conflicting views on military duty. The lack of a shared understanding of duty that aligns with assigned political objectives constitutes a serious problem because it undermines civilian control of the armed forces, while also posing a number of internal challenges to the military organization, mainly pertaining to matters of cohesion and unity of effort. I propose that an important first step in consolidating different understandings of military duty is to increase institutional support and resources for military education and training in noncombat skills, particularly methods of conflict management. For instance, my previous findings on U.S. forces suggest that Western armed forces should be prepared to manage tensions that arise between mission objectives and the political will of the host nation and its population (Karlborg 2015b). When conflicts of this nature occur between actors who are supposed to be partners and allies, they most likely cannot be fruitfully resolved through the use of armed force. Instead, my previous research indicates that military professionals who seek out to find common ground during interpersonal conflict situations and employ a wider repertoire of noncombat methods are more likely to win the support of the local population, and thereby more likely to be effective at facilitating positive and sustainable change in the host nation (Karlborg 2015a).

To the majority of deployed military forces presently engaged in noncombat operations around the globe, such as small-scale peace-keeping and humanitarian missions (Olsthoorn 2013), it is especially relevant to increase institutional training, support and resources in noncombat skills and methods. In fact, the current

tendency among Western states to principally assign ground forces a supportive role and (officially) noncombat tasks, such as recruiting, training, and mentoring local state and non-state actors,[3] emphasizes the necessity to prepare military forces to actively engage in relationship-building with local partners to achieve political objectives in the host nation.

Ultimately, I maintain that political expectations of effective partnerships and collaborations between deployed military forces and local actors must be accompanied by sufficient institutional change in the norms, cultures, and institutions of Western military organizations. Nevertheless, promoting institutional reform of the military organization warrants the following question: what kind of professional and ethical duty toward foreign populations can reasonably be expected from Western armed forces in contemporary international peacemaking? Based on my previous findings, I argue that the development of a collective sense of duty toward host-nation state and non-state actors—including the civilian population—constitutes a complex yet crucial dimension of present-day military professionalism and effectiveness. Over the next years, I expect that accumulated experiences of 'non-combat' and 'supportive' military engagements will eventually prompt Western political and military leadership to engage in extensive critical reflection on, and evaluation of, the merits of adopting a wider notion of military duty toward foreign populations at risk.

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Author Biography

Lisa Ekman (formerly Karlborg) has written extensively on the relationship between external military forces and local host populations, including publications in *Civil War, International Peacekeeping, Small Wars & Insurgencies* and *Studies in Conflict* and *Terrorism*. Her doctoral dissertation *Enforcing Legitimacy* (Karlborg 2015) is largely based on fieldwork and interviews with U.S. military and Afghan citizens. Dr. Ekman is currently based at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, where she conducts a postdoctoral research project entitled "Soldiers for Humanity: Military Duty to Protect Host Populations in the Context of Peace Operations".

Social Navigation and the Emergence of Leadership: Tactical Command in the IDF Ground Forces in the Second Lebanon War

Ophir Weinshall Shachar, Henrietta Cons Ponte and Eyal Ben-Ari

Abstract Based on a conceptual framework for analyzing social navigation, this article suggests looking at military leadership in processual terms: at how leadership is something that emerges in situations marked by continuous trial and error not only between commanders and subordinates but between them and a host of other significant others all within the changing social environment of the immediate circumstances of battle and the wider organizational backdrop. We show how leadership involves the socially situated rationales involved in leading people in the context of war. There are two reasons for using the case of this war. First, times of crisis are fruitful points within which to examine organizations. A sudden move between modes of military action means that many of the taken-for-granted characteristics of the military are suddenly much more visible. Second, the social and cultural contexts of war-making have changed with new emphases on force protection and casualty aversion and the transparency of military to external monitoring so that this case is a good example through which to examine how developments impinge on leadership. The study is based on interviews with thirty-six Israeli commanders—between the levels of platoon and battalions—that participated in combat in the Second Lebanon War.

Keywords Military leadership · War · Emergence · Leadership · Organizational environment

O.W. Shachar
Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

H.C. Ponte · E. Ben-Ari (✉)
Kinneret Institute for Society, Security and Peace, Kinneret, Israel
e-mail: feba@netvision.net.il

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> You understand that you have a lot of freedom of action… You understand that in order to do things right, it's really important that you understand what's going on and what your role is within what is happening… Now when they don't define your mission, and [senior commanders] didn't define it…In short, you have a lot of freedom of action and the weight of the responsibility is much heavier (Battalion commander, artillery).

> When we went up to the Golan [to train before entry into Lebanon] a tank driver started talking to his commander "I'm afraid of going in; I don't want to go in."… and then the tank commander came to me and I said that he'll go in and it'll be OK and all through those four days it became stronger and stronger. And the soldier constantly came to me and cried a bit and then his parents started phoning me, saying he is afraid to go in and that I shouldn't let him go in… And it grew stronger and stronger and then he asks for a mental health officer… OK so he is afraid, I'm afraid, everyone is afraid (Company commander, armor).

These passages are taken from interviews with Israeli tactical commanders who participated in the Second Lebanon War of 2006. The two excerpts underline the issues we address in this article: how do we conceptualize situations in which leaders have to make sense of their environment, negotiate their goals and targets, and present a face of certainty to their subordinates?

To answer these questions we suggest that a conceptual framework based on the analytical metaphor of social navigation (Johnson-Hanks 2002; Vigh 2006, p. 11) may help understand how leadership is something that emerges in situations of continuing uncertainty and is actually characterized by continuous trial and error and by self-discovery. The metaphor centers on the ways in which agents seek to draw and actualize their life-trajectories in order to increase their social possibilities and life-chances in a shifting (and sometimes volatile) social environment. In our case, we refer both to the socially situated rationales involved in leading people in the context of war and to leadership as a project of 'becoming' in a terrain of conflict. Utilizing the concept of social navigation, we focus on how commanders and officers creatively emerge within multiple and uncertain time-lines. In other words, we look at how leaders develop as part of the dynamics of the units they are embedded within but go beyond the processual approaches developed during the past two decades to explicate how leadership as an emergent state is linked to wider social and organizational circumstances.

1 The Second Lebanon War and Methods

There are two reasons for using the case of the Second Lebanon War (2006) for our investigation. First, times of crisis are fruitful points within which to examine organizations. A sudden move between modes of military action means that many of the taken-for-granted characteristics of the military—assumptions, modes of action, nascent schisms—are suddenly much more visible. Second, the social and cultural contexts of war-making have changed with new emphases such as force protection and casualty aversion or the transparency of military to external

monitoring taking pride of place. Hence, the War is a good case through which to examine these developments as they impinge on leadership.

Data for this study were derived from interviews with thirty-six commanders—between the levels of platoon and battalions—that participated in combat in the Second Lebanon War. The interviews were held between November 2006 and March 2007 and based on an open-ended set of questions addressed to every one of the informants. The questions entailed explorations of key events, the dilemmas commanders encountered, and the interactions between the actors involved.

2 Scholarly Approaches to Leadership

Northouse (2006, p. 3) suggests that the contemporary consensus among scholars is that leadership centers on four main themes: it is a process, involves influence, occurs in a group context, and entails goal attainment. In the classic perspective individual leaders took center stage and scholars assumed that it is possible to identify key leadership characteristics (Bolden 2004, p. 9). While a later approach shifted the focus to what leaders do (Hersey and Blanchard 1977) another perspective contended that leader traits or behaviors are not equally effective under all circumstances but depend on situational contingencies (Fiedler and Garcia 1987). Such conceptualizations, we now understand, did not do justice to the more processual aspects of leadership and subsequent approaches have introduced more interactional perspectives. For instance, Shamir et al. (1993; also Shamir 1991; Shamir et al. 2000b) offered a theory of how leader behaviors activate the self-concept of followers. Yet later theories of organizational leadership—for example those focusing on "transformational" leadership (Bass 1985; Sashkin 1988)—emphasized the role of leaders as providing meaning for organizational members, and underscored leader behaviors as role modeling and articulation of a value-based vision for the organization.

A parallel theoretical theory of distributed leadership argued that rather than viewing leadership practice through a narrow psychological lens centered on a leader's knowledge and skills, it should be defined in regard to the interaction of leaders, followers and situations (Bennet et al. 2003). Rather than leadership arising out of the individual, in other words, distributed leadership highlights leadership as an emergent property of a network of interacting individuals centered on concertive action. In this manner, distributed leadership suggests an openness of the boundaries of leadership (Bennet et al. 2003, p. 7). But this perspective still tends to focus on actors and dynamics within one organization. A complementary approach, developed by Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), critiques the basis of many theories of leadership in rational, bureaucratic models to suggest moving towards complexity theory: a model of leadership in contexts of uncertain, dynamically changing networks of informally interacting agents (that often include actors in an organization's environment). Like distributed leadership, the emphasis is on seeing leadership as embedded in a complex interplay of interacting forces. In all then, recent

approaches are processual, envisage leadership as involving sense-making and direction-giving, and see leaders as identified on the basis of their relationship to others (Bolden 2004, p. 13).

But what is still missing is a conceptualization of how processual elements within organization are linked to issues of agency, changing environments, and micro-macro links. A perspective rooted in neo-institutional theory provided by Ogawa and Bossert (1995, p. 50) tries to answer some of these challenges. It suggests that leadership "lies in the system of relations among incumbents of roles" and that the "interact, not the act" becomes the basic building block or organizational leadership: Interaction is the medium through which resources are deployed and influence is exerted. Thus this approach proposes shifting the focus to the ways in which organizations with unclear goals—especially those entities outside the business sector—seek to maintain organizational survival by answering expectations in their environment centered on legitimacy. Thus a major aspect of leadership has to do with how interactions between leaders and followers engage external, extra-organizational expectations and demands. This insight illuminates the ways in which external organizational features should be seen as part and parcel of the process by which leadership emerges.

Turning to the military, the relevant scholarly literature on leadership at the tactical level has clearly delineated the main processes it involves: coping with crises, grappling with emotions, building trust, disciplining, creating meaning, and maintaining morale and cohesion. Surely then, one could argue the emphasis in at least some of this kind of literature is processual. But from our perspective, the challenge involves more than adding a series of verbs to theories of leadership such as negotiating, inventing, or cooperating. Nor is it just a matter of underscoring how tactical leadership involves carrying out these things under conditions of extreme stress and danger (Kolditz 2007). Rather the challenge is to conceptualize the connections and interactions between commanders and their significant others *and* the links between the local environment within which commanders find themselves and their wider contexts. It is here that the metaphor of social navigation may be useful since as Vigh (2006, p. 12) explains, navigation should be understood as taking place within an environment and a terrain:

> Where the concept of social environment lets us analytically approach the fact that our social worlds are understood from within, the concept of terrain points our attention towards a continuously unfolding topography. Taken together, the two concepts succeed in referring to the social forces surrounding our lives as being at times a non-transparent social topography, at other times fluid and in continual movement and at yet other times volatile and explosive.

The concept of navigation has advantages in understanding social action first because it illuminates how agents simultaneously navigate the immediate and the imagined. We concurrently plot trajectories, plan strategies and actually move towards a telos (an "objective" that itself may constantly change) (Vigh 2006, pp. 13–14). Second, navigation takes into account social change and unstable social fields. Thus, we all navigate but the intensity of our navigational efforts depends on

the speed and volatility of social change. Social navigation accordingly involves detours, unwilling displacement, losing our way, and redrawing tactics and trajectories.

In our study, we delineate how specific encounters centered on leadership are embedded in the structure and culture of military units that, in turn, are embedded in the wider institutional domain of the military, and which are themselves embedded within wider social trends and processes. Shamir et al. (2000a, p. 68) develop this insight by noting that while the organizational literature has devoted a great deal of interest to how leaders create and maintain organizational cultures relatively little has been given to the other direction of influence: the impact of organizational cultures on leadership patterns.

> [B]ecause cultures consist of shared mental models, they are more likely to influence the leader behaviors that are considered legitimate and desirable in the culture (i.e., the way leaders are perceived by their superiors, colleagues, and subordinates), the interpretations and attributions people make to leader behaviors, and people's reactions to certain leadership styles or patterns.

These understandings suggest that we pay attention to the ways in which leadership during the Second Lebanon War is related to the shared mental models that commanders and troops "carried with them" and to how these, in turn, are embedded in wider organizational and institutional contexts. In this respect, social navigation is not another metaphor for agency but rather designates the interface between agency and social forces and underscores the links between the micro-macro levels. In this way it allows us to delineate more clearly what these social forces represent and how leadership emerges out of the meeting of these very forces.

3 Creating Reality—Managing Emotions

The metaphor often used to characterize the first stage of the ground campaign in the Second Lebanon War was one of 'changing diskettes' suggesting a switch between different schemas for awarding meaning. For some officers this adjustment began with technical preparations:

> In the meantime we get organized; we have to organize the equipment… It's bags, and carriers for grenades… Things we only heard about in theory but never actually saw since we don't work with them [in the territories]…Who works with such carriers today [in policing activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories]? And it's carriers for anti-tank missiles and a lot, a lot of explosives… Suddenly they give us LOW [anti-tank] missiles and not even one soldier ever shot one. I never shot one (Platoon commander, Nahal infantry).

Another interviewee invoked a different image:

> You arrive from the Shomron area [in the Palestinian Territories] where everything is pastoral, nice, beautiful, great weather and everything is really nice and quiet and you arrive

> into the hell that is Kiryat Shemona [an Israeli town bordering Lebanon]. Artillery is being fired like crazy, we shoot, they return fire, we return again and as I arrive a crazy volley of Katyusha rockets lands… Everything around gives one a heavy feeling that there is a war here (Deputy company commander, Paratroopers).

This last passage underscores a recurrent theme in our interviews: the difference between armed encounters in the Occupied Territories and the reality of the Second Lebanon War. The import of these passages is that for troops the cognitive move at the beginning of the Second Lebanon War was between schemas of conflict. Concretely, Israeli commanders found an incongruity between a schema of policing in the Occupied Territories—that is, the experience immediately available to them—and a schema of an "imagined" conventional or textbook war against an armed foe. Thus the move into Lebanon was more than a simple shift, on the individual and organizational levels, from garrison into battle. Rather it involved multiple processes of sense-making based on using individual and organizational memory (based on doctrine, military lore and mythology and training) in the actual process of learning in the field.

The meeting points between the different schemas of armed action—policing and combat—forced the commanders to create new links, interpretations and practices through a constant cognitive conciliation between them, and through a complex set of interactions they participated in with a variety of significant others (subordinates, seniors, and other actors). In effect, the above passages attest to the meeting point between what they knew (the immediate situation) and what they did not know but imagined (combat) (Vigh 2006). In the terms used here, commanders had to concurrently navigate the immediate circumstances of fighting and imagined scenarios of battle. There was an individual, organizational and institutional telos to their actions—in the sense of an overall purpose in defeating Hisbullah—but it was full of uncertainty.

But what did leading consist of? Ford (1999, p. 480) argues that organizational change agents (leaders) "construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct existing realities so as to bring about different performances. Since constructed realities provide the context in which people act and interact, shifting these realities opens new possibilities for action and the realization of new orders of results." Concepts in the leadership literature such as "framing" and "frame alignment" (Shamir et al. 1993) refer to leaders' influence on meanings given to events by other people. Through such influence leaders motivate others, reinforce collective ties, and direct collective action.

> In the evening I brief the whole company using a large map about what's going to be our mission … This happens two days after a tank from another battalion hit an IED and the battalion commander and a few other soldiers were wounded and a tank gunner was killed. And this was ten days after a tank from yet another battalion completely disappeared from an explosive device and a rocket that hit a tank and cut off the two legs of a tank gunner. They hear about these things; know about them. And I am presenting our mission and how we're supposed to enter and move in and where we have to get to; and all sorts of questions begin to be raised like whether there are explosive devices there (Company commander, Armor).

As this passage intimates, the construction of organizational reality involves *both* cognitive framing and managing emotions (Connelly and Gooty 2015) and unfolds in a manner that is uncertain for tactical leaders. The scholarly literature on transformational leadership emphasizes the coupling of actions, emotions and cognitions as a basis for motivating organizational action. Within the acute context of battles, the link between these three elements seems to be even more important. But again, *how* do they do carry this linkage out?

Impression Management. One common example provided by our informants involved impression management towards subordinates:

> I always rode up front. I couldn't tell someone from another team to ride in front of me… I couldn't look someone in the eye and send him. It began the first time when he asked about the IED and I said that I would lead. This is not correct in terms of doctrine but I couldn't send people [ahead of me] (Company commander, Armor).

Accordingly a commander's decision where to physically place himself carries cognitive, emotional and motivational messages. In other words, this is not only a tactical decision centered on command and control since positioning in relation to the unit itself resonates with (and is based on) schemas of military leaders as initiators, guides, and as individuals willing to take risks like soldiers under their command. The following example demonstrates how subordinates see such behaviors. A team leader in the paratroopers' special forces typically recounts "I must say that our Brigade commander was with us all the time throughout the war. He was also with us in the choppers and in the bushes and in [two Lebanese towns]. So on the tactical level everyone was satisfied." Shamir et al. (2000b) suggest that organizational cultures are not only created by leaders but actually create leadership patterns:

> [B]ecause cultures consist of shared mental models, they are more likely to influence leader behaviors that are considered legitimate and desirable in the culture (i.e., the way leaders are perceived by their superiors, colleagues, and subordinates), the interpretations and attributions people make to leader behaviors, and people's reactions to certain leadership styles or patterns.

The peculiarly Israeli version of the model underlying the self-appraisal of commanders (and their appraisal by others) centers on the image of "After me" implying setting a personal example, seeking engagement with the armed enemy, sticking to one's mission and making sure soldiers do not take unnecessary risks (Ben-Ari 1998). While one could find analogous characterizations in other military establishments, from a theoretical point of view it is this specific imagined model of leadership that undergirds the thinking and behavior of commanders in the Israeli ground forces and that is used by them to navigate specific circumstances.

Talking. The following passage underscores the importance of verbal exchanges:

> The deputy battalion commander is lying there wounded; the whole battalion is broken and now I have to go out and talk to the company. Now I have to go and face them, and how

can I talk to them when the whole battalion is destroyed. I myself am broken-up because my friend was killed and then I breathe in and talk to them as though nothing has happened and that this is the mission and that we're the support force and we'll wait there as though nothing has happened. I then understood that I have to transmit a message of 'business as usual', I have to transmit that everything is OK because if they see even a bit of apprehension or doubt on my part… no one will move… (Company commander, scouts company, Armor).

The emerging anxieties of the troops prompted questions that commanders had to grapple with: "And at some stage, we talked to all of the soldiers and gave them the picture of the battle. And that was the first time they understood that they are in a war. Also because we were being fired upon all of the time" (Team commander, special forces). Under conditions of turbulent environments and crises, leaders have to provide the mental models and frameworks to coordinate the behavior of organizational members (Shamir 1997). However, the need for framing in combat extends beyond issues of coordination since it must apply to more fundamental issues of purpose and meaning. A deputy company commander in the paratroopers recalled framing the Second Lebanon War in historical terms:

And that same soldier began to ask questions: 'Why from here? Why are we going in there?' And then he said that he can't go in because he has a friend from the armored corps who was killed … So I talked to him and explained… People are killed because this is a war. All of the time I told them to look back at the [first] war in Lebanon and that there were almost 400 dead in the first two days of the fighting.

And:

At the beginning the feeling was that things were going OK, after we identified and took down three terrorists; the feeling was very good. After there were some [company] soldiers killed it was a shitty feeling. One of the most important things is to talk to the soldiers, to tell them what we've gone through, to explain what we've achieved. In the end when you say 'Listen, we succeeded in taking down eight terrorists'… Then they suddenly say 'Ah, we really did more than we thought'… And it makes it easier for them to cope with the situation (Company commander, Armor).

Mutual energizing. At the same time, we occasionally found evidence that processes linking emotion, cognition and motivation involved mutual effects rather than the relative uni-directionality implied in some of the scholarly literature:

What they always teach us is that the commander comes to the forces under his command and provides his subordinates power and energies. I learned that this was bullshit. What really happens is an amazing process that I really felt. Maybe I'm too sensitive to my surroundings but really an exchange of energies… I mean, I come to the company commander – and he was relatively new and he had to establish his command while being at war. Now he feels a little lonely and I also feel the same thing and I come to him and we exchange energies and we are filled; it's as though something pumps us up … and both of us are strengthened…
Both of us are together in this situation, not alone (Battalion Commander, Artillery Corps).

4 Invention and Emergence

Going back to the metaphor of navigation, we found numerous examples of how leaders constantly invented new concepts, roles and structures in order to successfully deal with the situations they found their units within, to navigate in the emerging terrain. A primary example involved creating new ad hoc, amalgamated frameworks like linking infantry, armor and engineering units for specific purposes. The move to such amalgamated structures is the outcome of the need for versatile military units. As a consequence, military commanders often find themselves "in charge" of newly created units not permanently under their formal authority but seconded to them for one mission. Such novel situations, in turn, open up a new organizational terrain within which commanders navigate:

> It's really clear what the tanks and infantry can do and then the engineers arrive and they have their armored vehicles and they are not so used to them. They know how to lead a column but a bit more than that … it's not really clear how you join with them. I was with the deputy company commander of the engineers and I thought of doing something in one way and he thought it should be done in another way. I really didn't feel that I am commanding the same force (Company commander, Armor).

"New" units and frameworks—not envisaged by formal doctrine—are created out of answers to problems that commanders are suddenly faced with but, in turn, create their own difficulties with which they have to deal.

To be sure, these actions reflect individual attributes like initiative or creativity but they can also be seen as the impromptu discovery and invention by leaders of new roles or practices. To use an image from Ford (1999, p. 487), leadership in this kind of frame is like experimental theatre or improvisational jazz where the script (music) is being written while it is being performed. Take the following instance in which the commander of an artillery battalion "invents" a role for himself and for his unit through cooperation with other officers in his unit:

> You understand that you have a lot of freedom of action… that it's really important to understand what is going on and what's your role within what's happening… Now when they don't define your mission… I had to define a mission for myself that I thought relevant to how I understood the situation… And the fact that I don't have targets, to go and say 'Hey, I have to do something. I have to bring targets.'
> And then we said, let's make a situational appraisal at the battalion level and we carried out one everyday. We also had two brainstorming sessions… because I understood that I have to fill a gap here… At the beginning I tried obtaining targets from the [Northern] Command and then from the division but we didn't receive anything… And from then until the end of the war we went everywhere… We went to the brigades, went to the divisions, we got to the general staff… And we worked with the whole world and got ourselves into various organizational forums (Battalion commander, artillery).

The process of creating a new role for this artillery battalion involved multiple processes of liaison and negotiation with significant organizational others. But the commander's leadership does not only involve his personal initiative. Rather the interactions between him and other officers exemplify distributed leadership as "an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals"

(Bennet et al. 2003, p. 7) as in the brainstorming sessions and actions that ensued in their wake. As the battalion commander explained:

> Part of the problem is that brigade and battalion commanders are used to ongoing activities in [the Palestinian Territories] where they are constantly told what to do. There is very high control over what happens… But this didn't suit the situation here [in the War]… Here suddenly your space for authority and responsibility widens and no one tells you this. That is, no one comes to you and says 'Listen, there is a war going on… In effect, the chaos of the war created a situation where there was a feeling of autonomy that was good for checking boundaries and creating…

The new circumstances of the war, then, opened up possibilities for commanders in terms of an emerging organizational terrain.

5 Emergent Environments, New Terrain

We now move to how leadership at the tactical level is linked to changes in the social and cultural circumstances of Israel taking place over the past decades. It is crucial to take these wider environments into account since they shape the very terrain in which tactical leaders navigate. One of the most significant developments in regard to contemporary warfare waged by the industrial democracies is the emphasis on casualty aversion (Ben-Ari 2005). While we came across examples of commanders' awareness of the danger of casualties to Lebanese civilians, more often we encountered instances of casualty aversion on the Israeli side. A paratroop platoon commander:

> Even the act of seeking engagement with the enemy is problematic because everyone was afraid that a soldier would be kidnapped. So they created all sorts of procedures to protect the soldiers. And the whole element of seeking active engagement, they in effect took it away. OK, 'Don't go near the fence so that there won't be a kidnapping'; as if it's so simple.

This man is fully aware of what has become a major concern of senior commanders and politicians in Israel. Kidnapped soldiers are turned by adversaries into resources in public relations and negotiations. This kind of consideration which was central in the Occupied Territories—and ironically caused the Second Lebanon War—thus has become part and parcel of a new schema of combat. Ironically, such dangers are related to wider social processes marked by the emergence of families of soldiers as central political actors in and around military service and war-making.

No less important in the context of the Israeli military are relations with soldiers' families. One commander observed:

> It was on Saturday, we left [Lebanon] on Friday evening, and on Saturday all of the parents arrived [at the camp in Israel's north]. It was like a 'happening' at the camp while Katyusha rockets were flying left and right… I understood that if we don't permit parents to come visit then they would come anyway… We were afraid mainly that the parents would suddenly present us with dilemmas that we couldn't handle, like a mother would suddenly

> say that she's not willing for her son to enter [Lebanon] or parents that would kidnap their child and take him home (Deputy Battalion Commander, Golani infantry).

This passage exemplifies the changed relations between commanders and parents of conscripts (Lomsky-Feder and Ben-Ari 2000). Parents, in other words, have become part of the set of constraints that commanders of the IDF must now navigate in combat.

The changed alignment of the Israeli military with families of soldiers is coupled, in turn, with the emergence of psychological practices for managing soldiers (Lomsky-Feder and Ben-Ari 2008). We refer not to the involvement of commanders in maintaining motivation or providing support but to the much wider expansion of psychological discourses guiding behavior in industrial societies. An armored platoon commander:

> He wasn't functioning, wasn't doing his work…
> Q: Why did you send him to prison?
> Because he refused to enter [Lebanon]. At the beginning I didn't deal with this in a disciplinary mode because [I thought that] maybe he really had panic attacks and I sent him to the mental health officer. And the mental health officer saw him and when I phoned up to ask about his assessment, he said he was operational … Here everyone's afraid: the tank commanders, the company commander and also the platoon commander. And if just anybody who doesn't want to go in doesn't, then it will simply open up a huge and dangerous situation.

Military leaders no longer depend only on authority, professional expertise or tactical ability. They have a familiarity with the norms of their social environment, namely psychological models of behavior—notice the commander's reference to panic attacks. In terms of our conceptual framework, relations with family members and mental health officers and the use of popular psychological models have emerged over the past decades to become part of the terrain within which military commanders must navigate and often provide the frames of meaning through which they interact with actors in the military's environment.

But there is more here. If in conventional wars commanders had a near monopoly over information that was often circumvented by rumors, in today's digitized societies, they compete with multiple sources of information. The following example underscores how such developments pose dilemmas for discipline and military hierarchy:

> Everyone has some kind of link to a person that has been killed… That night when the helicopter crashed and when the tankists were killed… When I returned a call [to a close friend] she didn't answer. So I was sure that something had happened to her because she lives in the north of Israel and it turned out that her brother was killed… And I had a platoon commander that suddenly woke crying in the middle of the night because a friend of his in the reserves was killed… He was woken at five o'clock in the morning and someone was sure that he knew. Someone from home let him know… I went down to the company commander's place and I sort of glanced at the television and saw the names of those killed and there was someone who had been a soldier in our company. It was crazy to see his name (Deputy company commander, Paratroopers).

More broadly, new kinds of media-mediated sources of information present alternative structures to military authority:

> You just hear that [a military reporter for a national television channel] said this and that… There was this absurd situation in the helicopter… On the way to the helicopter you hear [the reporter] and he says that this is the biggest airborne mission ever to take place in Lebanon. It's not comprehensible, amazing. When we were in Maroun-a-Ras they talked about Bint-Jubeil and said that we conquered it. I don't know how he knew about Bint-Jubeil. I look out the window: Bint-Jubeil. We conquered it? Maybe next week. In short there were absurd things going on (Team commander, special unit, Paratroopers).

Similarly:

> So we went in and the next day we went into Bint-Jubeil and the guys had seen it on TV and it frightened them… There were those who were afraid; those that talked; those that talked less… There were those who disobeyed orders… In short it really harmed the morale seeing that (Platoon commander, Nahal infantry).

In the classic case, because the combat leader's role involves a prism through which knowledge, interpretation and commands flow towards troops he clarifies or clouds the cognitive picture of battle for subordinates. But when knowledge is available to everyone then the commander contends with other sources and his/her position as a source of knowledge is weakened. Along these lines, the very environments within which Israeli commanders operate have changed. Casualty aversion, new openness to the media, psychological discourses and changed relations with families—broad historical and interrelated processes that evolved over the past three decades—now present in themselves emerging constraints on the actions of military commanders. They have become part of the social environment within which they navigate.

6 Conclusion

We contend that leadership is something that emerges out of interactions with multiple actors in a dynamic environment shaped by social and cultural circumstances. The process of emergence results from ongoing interactions with a variety of others. To these interactions military leaders bring various resources such as organizational positioning and authority, personal skills, or previous experience. Focusing on how commanders develop and discover their roles involves examining the cognitive schemas they use to interpret reality, structure their relationships with others, and identify limitations and possibilities within a process of social navigation. The metaphor of social navigation, then, adds an element of processual development over time to the analysis of leadership. But social navigation allows us to go beyond previous models to ask about how leadership also entails imaginations of the environment based on organizational memory, military heritage and formal doctrine and how these imaginaries are used to make sense of the reality facing individuals and may themselves change.

The agency of actors underscores how wider structures constrain the behavior of leaders but also change themselves. Along these lines our model can be linked to the new scholarly literature with its emphasis on such characteristics as organizational networks, fluidity, fracturability and looseness implying that it is difficult to

predict processes of change and emergence. The wider picture then is of leadership as an open-ended project that is constantly taking place. Military leaders and commanders are projects that while often having a general trajectory are (always) unfinished in the sense that in the model we are putting forth, individuals constantly and continually change both because circumstances constantly change and because the individuals themselves constantly alter.

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Authors Biography

Ophir Weinshall Shachar is a Ph.D. student at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Her subject of interest and research is leadership, military leadership, social networks, and educational environments. Ophir received her B.A. in international relations and M. A. in sociology and organizational behavior from the Hebrew University as well. In the past, Ophir served as head of the research section of the IDF School of Leadership Development and as head of the Organizational Research Section of IDF Technology and Logistics Branch.

Henrietta Cons Ponte has an M.Sc in behavioral science from Tel Aviv University. She worked for many years as a senior researcher in the Israel Defense Forces both at the Behavioral Sciences Center and at the IDF School of Leadership Development. In the latter institution she carried out studies of various aspects of leadership among units of the Israeli army. Her subjects of interest in research include: leadership in the context of complex environments, understanding the role of social perception and narratives in low intensity conflict, unbalanced and complex conflicts, and the implementation of organizational changes in large military army units.

Eyal Ben-Ari was professor at the department of sociology and anthropology of the Hebrew University and is now director of the Kinneret Institute for Society, Security and Peace. He has done research in Israel, Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong on white-collar communities, early childhood education, the Japanese community in Singapore and the armed forces of the industrial democracies. Among his books are *Body Projects in Japanese Childcare* (1997), *Mastering Soldiers: Conflict, Emotions and the Enemy in an Israeli Military Unit* (1998), and (with Zev Lehrer, Uzi Ben-Shalom and Ariel Vainer) *Rethinking Contemporary Warfare: A Sociological View of the Al-Aqsa Intifada* (2010).

Leadership in Extreme Situations: Case Study of an Indonesian Special Forces Soldier During the Boxing Day Tsunami

Eri Radityawara Hidayat and Rachmad Puji Susetyo

Abstract The Boxing Day tsunami of 2004 devastated the conflict-torn province of Aceh on the most western tip of the Indonesian archipelago. At that time, the Indonesian government deployed thousands of soldiers to neutralize an armed separatist movement. Through qualitative research, this article discusses the story of an Indonesian Army's Special Forces (Komando Pasukan Khusus or Kopassus) Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) who was able to emerge as a leader in an extreme situation in which the formal military and civilian leaders became non-existent. He was also able to show effective leadership by leading coastal tsunami survivors, among them the families of enemy combatants, to relative safety in the mountain and organized a functioning system during the critical period when help was still out of reach. Important findings related to the topic of leadership in extreme situations show that appropriate traits and values which are further enhanced with the right trainings and field experiences are important predictors of successful leadership in extreme situations. Further research should focus on the necessary traits related to leadership in extreme situations. In addition, a competency framework that incorporates effective leadership behaviors in extreme situations should also be explored further. Finally, future formulation of military leadership doctrine should also consider a more comprehensive approach that covers extreme situations where the military personnel might have to take over certain civilian roles.

Keywords Aceh · Tsunami · Leadership · Extreme situation · Indonesian national army · Kopassus · TNI · Special forces

The views expressed in this chapter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Indonesian National Defense Forces or the Indonesian National Army.

E.R. Hidayat (✉)
Indonesian Army and Indonesian Defense University, Jakarta, Indonesia
e-mail: eri.hidayat@idu.ac.id

R.P. Susetyo
Indonesian Army, Jakarta, Indonesia

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1 Introduction

The province of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (subsequently refered to as Aceh) on the most Western tip of the Indonesian archipelago, lies on the Island of Sumatra on 2°–6° Northern latitude and 95°–98° Eastern longitude, bordering the Malacca Strait on its northern and eastern seaboard, the Indian Ocean on its western seaboard, and the Province of North Sumatra on its southern landmass (see Fig. 1: Map of Aceh) (Pusat Sejarah TNI 2006, p. 9). The Boxing Day earthquake and the ensuing tsunami of 2004 that occured on Monday morning, at exactly 7:58 Western Indonesian Time on December 26th, 2004, devastated the Aceh region the most, as the epicenter lies 20 km deep in the Indian Ocean, on 2.90° Northern Latitude and 95.60° Eastern Longitude, about 149 km south of the city of Meulaboh, the capital of the West Aceh Regency of the Aceh province (Pusat Sejarah TNI 2006, pp. 61–66). The 9.3 Richter scale earthquake was the largest earthquake in the past

Fig. 1 Map of Aceh (Copyright for the map of Aceh is held by the directorate of topography, Indonesian National Army (Direktorat Topografi Angkatan Darat)) (Direktorat Topografi Angkatan Darat 2015)

40 years, with shocks and tremors felt in many parts of Indonesia, the west coast of Malaysia, Thailand, the east coast of India, Sri Lanka and even the east coast of Africa (Reddy et al. 2009; Sinadinovsk 2006). The duration of the earthquake was also the longest known in earthquake history, lasting approximately 10 min (normal to moderate earthquakes would last only a few seconds) (Moore and Ritchie 2014).

This natural disaster was also considered as one of the biggest fatal disasters known to mankind, with approximately 275,000 people killed in fourteen countries across two continents bordering the Indian Ocean (BCOM 2016). More deaths occured in Indonesia than in any other country. The Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia registered the death-toll in the province of Aceh and North Sumatera at 105,262 (Nasir 2012). Most of the casualties came from the city of Meulaboh on the West Coast of Aceh and the capital city of Banda Aceh on the tip of Sumatra island. However, the exact number of deaths in Aceh might never be known, because many parts of the province remained isolated even after reconstruction works started.

The proud and fiercely independent people of Aceh have been waging wars against outside forces since colonial times, and it became the last area to be controlled by the colonial powers (Baikoeni and Oishi 2015, p. 21). Under the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, when the British ceded their colonial dominions on Sumatra to the Dutch, they mentioned Aceh as one of their possessions, although in reality they had no actual control over Aceh (Webster 1998). In fact, later on, starting in 1873, the Dutch were forced to conduct many military campaigns to subdue Aceh in four decades to no avail, with Dutch soldiers controlling only the coastal areas (Reid 2006, p. 100). The so called ‘Aceh war’ only ended in 1914 after about 100,000 Acehnese and 16,000 Dutch soldiers lost their lives (Reid 2005, p. 339).

When the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed its independence from the Netherlands on August 17th, 1945, Aceh as a former Dutch colony also became part of the republic. Aceh is the place where Islam first came to Indonesia in the 7th century and as such the Islamic identity of the Acehnese is much stronger compared to the more eclectic nature of Islam practiced by most Indonesians (Basri 2010, pp. 182–183). Problems started to occur when in 1950, the province of Aceh was amalgamated into the North Sumatra province, disappointing the Acehnese political elites who felt that their previous heroism against the Dutch colonialists was unaccounted for, and subsequently used an Islamic identity to wage a separatist movement against the central government (Dinas Sejarah Angkatan Darat 2015, pp. 97–100).[1]

[1]The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, an archipelago of more than 19,000 island in the southeast of Asia, had more than 250 million inhabitants who descended from over 200 native ethnic groups and races, with distinctly different languages and religions (see Vickers 2005, p. 1). Unlike the Aceh province, which is exclusively Islamic in nature, the demography of North Sumatra is quite diverse in terms of ethnicities and religions, with substantial non-Muslim adherents. As such, the merging of Aceh and the North Sumatra province would not be helpful in creating an Islamic identity for the Acehnese.

Subsequently, on September 20th, 1953, the Darul Islam movement started its rebellion against the central government, led by Teungku Daud Beureueh, a former charismatic Islamic preacher who became Aceh's military governor after Indonesia became independent from the Dutch (Dinas Sejarah Angkatan Darat 2015, pp. 101–102). On May 13th, 1962, however, Daud Beureuh returned to the Indonesian camp after the Indonesian armed forces or the TNI (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*) were able to pacify the region and the central government offered Beureueh the chance to implement Islamic Sharia laws in Aceh, as long as it did not contravene Indonesian laws and constitutions (Dinas Sejarah Angkatan Darat 2015, pp. 131–132). Yet the seeds of separatism in Aceh have been planted and on December 4th, 1976, the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, or more frequently known as GAM) was proclaimed by Teungku Hasan Muhammad di Tiro, an Acehnese aristocrat, who rightly or wrongly believed that the central government was unjust in exploiting the resources-rich province, and as a consequence, starting from that day, considered any relationship with the Republic of Indonesia as null and void (Dinas Sejarah Angkatan Darat 2015, pp. 139–140).

As can be expected, the movement then escalated into armed conflict, and both the TNI and GAM soon increased the number of their combatans, causing a loss of lives within GAM, the TNI and the civilian population (Putranto 2009).[2] At the time of the tsunami, even though the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Indonesia and the GAM for the cessation of hostilities had been signed, the long standing armed conflict between the two combatans was not yet over. Out of this tragedy, however, one could find stories of the heroism of ordinary people, government soldiers and armed rebels.

Considering the background condition of Aceh at the time of the Boxing Day Tsunami, it would be interesting to know what kind of leadership can emerge in such situations, as research in this area is still very limited. This paper will discuss the profile of a Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) from the Indonesian Special Forces (or Kopassus—*Komando Pasukan Khusus*), who showed remarkable leadership in extreme conditions. Primary data collection was done by adapting the qualitative method of conducting interviews with Kopassus members and civilian survivors who used to live in the area, while secondary data were obtained from published materials about Kopassus and the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004.

2 Natural Disaster in the Midst of a Peacemaking Effort

With the advent of the reformation era of 1998 after the fall of General Suharto's New Order government, the Indonesian central government attempted new initiatives to start the peace process between GAM and the Indonesian government. These efforts culminated in the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement

[2]About 15,000 lives were lost in the three decades of armed conflict between the TNI and GAM.

(COHA), on December 9th, 2002 which regulates the demilitarization process of both GAM and the TNI in Aceh (Miller 2009, p. 121). Naturally, it was not easy to end a conflict that has been running for such a long time and it was against this background that the Aceh province was hit by the now famous Boxing Day tsunami.

The tsunami did not spare TNI soldiers and GAM combatans, as both sides suffered heavy casualties from the natural disaster (Haseman 2011, p. 325). Ultimately this condition smoothened the negotiations and talks between the leadership of GAM and the Indonesian government, resulting in the signing of a peace agreement on the 15th of August of 2005 (Miller 2009, p. 159). This peace initiative was facilitated by the Crisis Management Initiative led by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, hence it was called the Helsinki Agreement (Miller 2009, pp. 158–159). As of today peace has prevailed in Aceh, and following local elections, former GAM members were able to win the highest seats in the province, including the post of governors, mayors and parliaments (Jones 2015, p. 142).

Prior to the tsunami, TNI soldiers who were deployed to Aceh did not have an easy task, particularly the soldiers from Kopassus who not only had to interact with the local people on a daily basis, but also with armed members of GAM. One such soldier was Sergeant NT, a Kopassus NCO who was assigned as the vice commander of the Teunom post, a Forward Operating Base (FOB) in a small coastal district with a population of about 18,000 in the *Aceh Jaya* Regency.[3] It was during the calamity that he was able to show his quality as a Kopassus soldier, acting beyond the call of duty by leading the victims of the tsunami in the Teunom area to safety. As a Kopassus soldier, he was able to think clearly and made decisive and accurate judgments, even though he was physically exhausted, under tremendous psychological pressure, and at the limit of human capability to survive.

Sgt. NT was a Kopassus soldier who has done many combat tours in several conflict areas of Indonesia. During his deployment as a Kopassus NCO in Aceh in 2004, he was appointed as the vice commander of the Teunom post, a remote area far from Meulaboh, the largest city in the region and the capital of West Aceh. Prior to the tsunami, the district of Teunom is one of the conflict areas with very high intensity of armed incursions by GAM. Accordingly, considering the difficulty in performing their tasks, the placement of soldiers in this area was based on their maturity, competencies and experiences. Their main mission was to support and achieve peace in the region, so during their deployment in the area, they have to be able to win the hearts and minds of the people in their area of responsibility.

Of course it was not easy for TNI soldiers to create peace in Aceh, considering that the conflict has occured for a long time and claimed lots of lives from both sides. The desire for revenge not only existed between TNI soldiers and GAM combatans, but also spread to their families and the local people. Consequently TNI soldiers must be able to use unconventional methods in order to create rapport and

[3]In Indonesia, a province is divided into several regencies, and each regency is then subdivided further into several districts.

befriend GAM combatants and the local people who supported them. And it was for this reason that the Teunom Kopassus post was established. In fact, prior to the tsunami, the deployment of Kopassus soldiers in the area was showing significant results, and they were able to achieve the goals set by their higher commands.

For example, in one instance, Sgt. NT was able to help deliver the baby of a GAM combatant's wife. He was hoping that this humanitarian approach could open the eyes of the GAM combatant on the intention of the TNI, which was to create peace in Aceh. Actually, this approach has produced tangible results, as a GAM commander was so moved by Sgt. NT's action, that he was willing to establish contact with Kopassus soldiers assigned to the Teunom post. Of course this was considered a significant development, as it has been quite a long time since the last time TNI soldiers and GAM members could communicate in a civilized manner without pointing their guns at each other.

3 The Aceh Tsunami

On the morning of December 26th, 2004, the people of Aceh were just starting their daily routine when a very violent earthquake shook the ground. Sgt. NT saw utility poles fall to the ground and the electric cables collided to produce a thundering sound. According to him,

> whoever was standing on the ground would be staggering and felt dizzy. And then there was a very weird phenomenon, in which the shoreline receded dramatically for about 2 km. Some people looked very happy as they were able to pick the fish and shrimps very easily.

As a person who was born and grew up in the coastal area of South Sulawesi, Sgt. NT was knowledgeable enough to realize the frightening effect of a tsunami. Consequently, he immediately told the people to go as far away as possible from the sea, while saving his own sidearm and three rifles belonging to himself and two of his colleagues who were away from the post. After desperately screaming at them to go with him, unfortunately however, those people were not willing to follow him, and only a handful were willing to run from the sea with him. Yet only a few hundred metres inland, Sgt. NT already saw a column of very large black waves heading ashore. Even though it was a bit late, he immediately decided to stop at a relatively high tree and climbed it. The tree however did not give full protection for him from the powerful waves, and in seconds he was covered with debris and seaweed, and finally was taken away by the waves as the tree was uprooted from the ground.

Subsequently he just rode the wave until he found a coconut tree high enough for him to be above the water. While exhausted and feeling physically weak, from his position, Sgt. NT could see many people floating on the water asking for help, including the company commander of the paramilitary police (*Brigade Mobil* or Brimob), the Teunom Police chief and several local people that he had befriended. However, he could do nothing as his life was also in danger.

While water was rising very fast, after fifteen minutes it also quickly receded. After the water was gone, the land was filled with vast quantities of garbage and debris and the villages were flattened. Amongst the ruins, Sgt. NT found the bodies of the Brimob Company commander with three of his members and the body of the Teunom District Police chief. The body of the chief of Teunom District was also found with his family inside his car. Apparently, they tried to run away but failed. Sgt. NT also found many people still hanging on large tree tops unwilling to go down as they were still traumatized. As vice commander of the Teunom post, Sgt. NT tried to find his colleagues and found all of them were safe except his commander who is still classified as missing even until today. According to him,

> checking the safety of your comrades is an important duty that a leader must carry out, especially in times of danger, so that we can determine the next step that must be taken with the remaining comrades.

4 Decisive Action in Times of Emergency

After the water had completely gone, chaos erupted as the people started to panic because now they realized that not only had they lost members of their family, but they had also lost their belongings and had no place to stay nor food to eat. People started to only think about themselves, in short, every man or woman for him or herself. Sgt. NT and his subordinates started to persuade the people to immediately leave the area and go to higher ground in the mountain which was not affected by the tsunami. After reaching the feet of the mountain, they immediately lead the people to build emergency shelters by utilizing the materials available in the area.

At that time, most government officials who lived in the coastal areas were already dead and there were no civilian leaders in the mountain area who could take charge. Sgt. NT realized that this situation could not be allowed to go on indefinitely, so he told his subordinates that as Kopassus soldiers they had to be able to persuade the people who lived in the mountains to be willing to accept and help the victims of the tsunami from the coastal areas who were much more in number. But this was no easy task. In fact, according to J., a restaurant owner near the beach, who survived the initial tsunami and went along with Sgt. NT to higher ground, several GAM combatants actually camped in the mountainous area not far from the location of Sgt. NT's group. This is J.'s account of what happened at that time:

> When GAM saw people were running to the mountain, in the beginning, they thought Indonesia was attacked by another country, as they did not know that a tsunami happened in the coastal area. They were still very suspicious of us, but after all of us screamed 'tsunami', they just joined us and tried to find members of their family. Afterwards, TNI soldiers, policemen, GAM combatants, and civilians gathered around together without barriers, with GAM combatants reunited with their surviving family members. The next day, people were just milling around, wondering what had happened to their fate. For breakfast, people were just eating what they had with them, and many did not eat at all, as no one had yet organized them.

Through his leadership, however, the people who had previously only thought about themselves, were finally willing to unite and help each other, especially those who needed the most such as the young, the old and the injured.

In the first two weeks after the tsunami, the condition did not improve very much, as outside help did not come to the Teunom area. This is quite understandable as Teunom is very isolated and all the roads, telephone and powers lines and water pipes were all destroyed. In fact, one report (statemaster.com 2016) stated that

> Teunom, a town in the *Aceh Barat* (West Aceh) district of the special territory (daerah istimewa) of Aceh on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, with a population of about 18,000, was reported to [have] been damaged so severely that it vanished completely leaving only scattered shards of concrete as a result of the tsunami produced by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake. Officials estimate 8000 of the 18,000 population are dead.

As a consequence of these conditions, it was only natural that the survivors thought only of themselves and were not willing to share basic necessities such as food, as no one could be sure when the situation would return to normal. At the same time, all of the tsunami victims, including the Kopassus soldiers, had only the clothes they were wearing. However, the difference between the soldiers and the civilians was that the soldiers strove to change the situation by taking the initiative to help the victims and trying to rebuild the people's lives in order to lessen their suffering. The soldiers realized the importance of finding the right approach to avoid more casualties and changed the attitude of the mountain people who were not affected by the tsunami and initially showed indifference towards the coastal community.

5 Becoming a Leader in Times of Crisis

Realizing the post-tsunami circumstances in which the affected people needed immediate help, since communication and transport links to Teunom were simply cut off, Kopassus members, led by Sgt. NT, immediately took control. The team assumed that the Teunom Post Commander perished with the tsunami, along with the whole command post building and all of the equipment inside. With only the clothing that they wore, the team took leadership control in all aspects of the people's daily life, whether in terms of security, governance or social issues. Sgt. NT commented:

> As difficult as my men's condition as Kopassus soldiers is, they only lost their belongings and our post which has been razed to the ground, but we have not lost our families as is the case for the local people. We are lucky that our image as Kopassus soldiers in the Teunom area in general is ok… Consequently, we should be able to lead the locals so that they can continue living on a daily basis until more help comes.

With his leadership, Sgt. NT and his team were able to effectively organize the local people, including the families of GAM combatants who at that time were

having conflicts with the security apparatus deployed in Aceh, especially in the Teunom area. This is what J. had to say on how Sgt. NT organized the people:

> On the third day, after all the food was gone, Sgt. NT started to gather his men and a few civilians who were known to him and were considered by him as having some sort of influence such as shop owners, etc., including myself. Sgt. NT stated that we have to organize ourselves. So we gathered the people in front of the Lhok Guci Primary School and told them that a public kitchen would be established at the school. In addition, children, pregnant women and old people would stay there as well. Since Sgt. NT was still afraid of the people who were affiliated with GAM, we then asked 20 men whom we trusted to do the cooking tasks, as Sgt. NT did not want the food to be poisoned by GAM. So, only those 20 cooks could enter the kitchen. Sgt. NT then asked the rest to be organized into 15 groups, each consisting of around 200 to 300 persons. For each group, Sgt. NT appointed someone whom he knew as the head of the group. For the food distribution, each group sent their head to pick up the food for their group with the available plates or big leaves in accordance with the number of people in their group.

They then started to organize the people in the mountain to gather the available foodstock and rationed it so that everyone had enough to eat. Fortunately, those who were not affected by the tsunami were willing to help and share the limited food. They were willing to share their livestock, such as cows and buffaloes, or coconuts. Predicting there would be chaos if the Kopassus team did not devise a rule on how to live, Sgt. NT started to make several rules to be obeyed by all people in the area, and enforced by his subordinates.

Initially, they agreed to give food first to children and old people, because prior to the intervention of the Kopassus soldiers, the weak were not able to compete with the more able-bodied persons in getting the food. Next, they agreed that instead of just serving rice, the rice stock should be made into porridge to provide more servings and conserve the limited rice stock. Then Sgt. NT and his team taught all of the able-bodied men about edible food in the jungle on the mountain and asked them to look for food in the area, such as tubers, bananas and other fruit and plants. Finally, after the rice stock was depleted, Sgt. NT and his team decided that babies and small children could eat the remaining food stock, while adults were only allowed to eat food from the jungle.

For the Kopassus soldiers, finding food was not a big problem because they were trained in survival techniques. However, as TNI soldiers who were imbued in the territorial doctrine, they were duty bound to aid the people around their command post.[4] Therefore, even though Sgt. NT and his team could have simply left the area to seek help, they felt that they had to do something for the people. In addition, since members of the Teunom Command Post were able to establish good rapport with the locals, when Sgt. NT and his colleagues took control of the situation,

[4]The territorial doctrine stated that TNI soldiers must be able to build, maintain, improve and stabilize the relationship between the TNI and the people in the territory that they are deployed in so that the soldiers and the people can become one (or in TNI jargon, "manunggal"). This doctrine is the legacy of Indonesia's War of Independence, in which the TNI, who at that time faced the technologically superior Dutch colonial forces, had to create a defensive doctrine in the form of guerrila warfare, hence the territorial doctrine (Hidayat 2013, pp. 120–122).

no one objected to this, including the families of GAM members. Sgt. NT himself admitted he had never studied disaster management before and did not know the theoretical aspects of it. However, he used his intuition to lead and organize the people, both victims of the tsunami and those who were not affected by it, so that they could continue their daily lives. And through their previous humanitarian approach, he was able to gain the trust of the people so that they were willing to be led by him.

6 The Opening of Communication Lines

Ten days after the tsunami, the Teunom area was still isolated in terms of lines of communication and transportation to the outside world. As food supply became almost non existent, Sgt. NT then told every head of the group to ask the members of their group who were brave enough to go to the coast and see what happened. Afterwards, the group went to the coast, yet they saw no sign of life. However, they found a motor boat still tied to a dock and a drum full of petrol floating nearby. Since all land transportations were not accessible, Sg. NT then asked four of them to go by sea to the nearest large city which is Meulaboh, about 70 km south of Teunom.[5] These four were led by S. who headed a local fisherman's association, with J. the restaurateur, DS a Kopassus member and HP, a local politician as members.

Although Meulaboh was also cut off from the outside world, and conditions were as bad as in Teunom, since it is a relatively big city, they found that there were many survivors, and in the end, they could take whatever food stocks were given by the survivors of Meulaboh. After one week, however, the limited food supply started to dwindle and Sgt. NT asked the group to go to Calang, the capital of the Aceh Jaya Regency about 50 km north of Teunom. Unfortunately, they were not so lucky this time, as Calang is a much smaller city compared to Meulaboh, and it was as completely destroyed as Teunom. However, they were able to find a group of TNI soldiers who still had plentiful military field rations (MER or Meal, Ready-to-Eat) which they shared with the Teunom group. The group then returned to Teunom with the limited MERs, and Sgt. NT and the team started to ration the limited MERs amongst the people.

Fortunately, this condition started to improve when the USS Abraham Lincoln was able to anchor on the west coast of Aceh (US Naval War College 2007, p. 60). A helicopter flew from the ship to bring food supplies and a news reporter from

[5]Not only have all land transportation systems been disrupted on the west coast of Aceh, port infrastructure from Meulaboh to Lhok Nga on the northern tip of the Aceh province has been destroyed as well (see map), making it impossible for large relief ships to berth (Pusat Sejarah TNI 2005, pp. 55–56).

Metro TV (similar to CNN) to Teunom. Sgt. NT then used this opportunity to inform the outside world of the situation in Teunom. Thus his Kopassus colleagues who had previously thought that he was missing or dead, learned that he was actually still alive. Sgt. NT was able not only to lead the local people to safety, but had also managed to organize their life together and survive as a group.

When the helicopter was about to return to Banda Aceh, Sgt. NT asked to go along, with the intention of reporting directly to the TNI leadership on the condition of the Kopassus command post. Initially however, the helicopter crew refused to do this because at that time, Aceh was still a conflict area, and the United States did not want to be seen as biased by transporting a member of the TNI (US Naval War College 2007, pp. 36–37).[6] After hard negotiation however, the helicopter crew was willing to take Sgt. NT, on condition that they be allowed to watch over him at gunpoint like a military prisoner. After reaching Banda Aceh, Sgt. NT immediately informed his commander of the latest situation faced by Kopasus members, especially on the loss of personnel and equipment, the condition of the Teunom command post and the local people, and asked for further instructions.

Afterwards, Sgt. NT requested to be permitted to continue taking care of the people in the Teunom area. He was certain that with the opening of information on the condition of Teunom, help would soon come to the area. Therefore, Sgt. NT decided to immediately return to Teunom so that he could help with the distribution of aid in order to reach all those in need. With the absence of government officials in the area, he realized only he and his team represented some sort of authority and without rules and order, he was sure chaos would ensue and it would be a case of everyone for themselves. Once he reached Teunom, Sgt. NT found two volunteer groups that had started to distribute aid. However, as he predicted, the people were fighting over it, as they had not had proper food for the past two weeks.

In a leaderless situation like this, where things were starting to get out of control, Sgt. NT and his team again took control of the situation. He ordered his team to organize the distribution based on age and need, and let the local people eat first, while his team ate last. In addition, he also considered his main duty as a vice commander of the Kopassus post was to ensure that the peace agreement could be implemented. Therefore, he also tried very hard to rebuild his command post. Since the Commander of the Teunom Post was considered as missing in action, the TNI leadership then appointed Sgt. NT officially as the Commander of the Post.

[6]As noted in the US Naval War College report (2007, pp. 36–37), “throughout the humanitarian mission, U.S. forces dealt with force protection on an ongoing basis… In Indonesia, to avoid similar problems with the Free Aceh Movement (the *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, or GAM), the U.S. government promised that troops would not set up base camps on Indonesian territory but would remain sea based … All of these sensitivities were assuaged by keeping the majority of U.S. forces offshore on board ship. Nonetheless, it was the ongoing insurgency in Aceh that made force protection a top priority. A cease-fire had been declared on 27 December, but during early January there were reports of open fighting between government forces and insurgents from the Free Aceh Movement, blocking a relief convoy for eight hours.”

7 Creating Peace in Aceh

The loss of the Teunom Post Commander forced Sgt. NT to take over the role as Commander. Of course this role switching was not an easy task for an NCO like him. However, as in any military organization, all Kopassus members have been trained to take over the role of the next higher position in the chain of command, if the job holder became incapacitated. Based on his latest performance, the TNI leadership decided not to find a replacement for the Teunom post commander but instead appointed Sgt. NT. The trust that the leadership put on Sgt. NT was of course justifiable. Not only was he able to lead his men, but he was also able to gain the trust of the local Teunom people and organize them.

Apart from organizing aid, Sgt. NT also received another order in which he was asked to use the momentum to provide a humanitarian approach to GAM family members who joined the emergency camp. The Aceh conflict had been going on for such a long time that it was not easy to create trust between GAM and the TNI. It was hoped that an indirect personal approach towards them would touch the hearts and minds of GAM members who were againts the TNI. This approach proved to be effective in post-tsunami Aceh, as GAM members no longer conducted ambushes as had been the case previously. This condition certainly made the task easier for TNI members to concentrate on helping the local people and distributing the aid. And this in turn enabled both the TNI and GAM to build the needed trust.

In fact, after the tsunami, the TNI, together with the National Police (Polri), former GAM combatants and the local people started to rebuild Aceh both physically and mentally. It was clear that in times of need, it was easier for everyone to work together so that they could try to end the suffering caused by the tsunami. At that time, substantial aid also came to Aceh, both internationally and also from all over Indonesia. Many NGOs and foreign institutions also came to Aceh to help the tsunami victims. Sgt. NT and his team, together with police officers from the Teunom area, then used this opportunity to start reconciliation with GAM members. Even though he was only an NCO who happened to be a post commander, he did not feel inferior in coordinating and negotiating with his working partners such as the police and local government officials at the district level and former GAM leaders in the area.

Without doubt, the additional task that Sgt. NT undertook was not an easy one. However, by the end of his posting in Teunom as a post commander, he had accomplished the mission of achieving peace in the area. As an example, he was able to persuade the local leadership of GAM to come down from their base in the mountain and talk with government officials. Undoubtedly, this was the result of his action in helping the victims of the tsunami regardless of whether they were GAM family members or not. Therefore, in a sense, although the tsunami created tremendous havoc and caused unimaginable sufferings, it was also a blessing in disguise in that it offered the opportunity and space to create peace in Aceh.

8 The Indonesian Kopassus

In general, anyone can become a leader, at least a leader of the people in his or her community or family. In an extreme situation however, sometimes a person is forced to make decisions that he or she cannot imagine or even contemplate taking. Learning from the story of Sgt. NT in the Aceh tsunami saga, one can see that a person does not have to be of high rank or hold a high office position. Anyone can become a leader, and one can also see that a Special Forces NCO under extreme duress could take over command and then organize a motley crew of local people including sympathizers and family members of an armed separatist group, to a position of relative safety.

The case of a Kopassus NCO leading ordinary people to do extraordinary things is actually not a very strange thing. This is due to the fact that Kopassus soldiers have been trained to anticipate and face the most extreme conditions. A Kopassus soldier must be able to make a quick and accurate decision when under duress and suffering from fatigue. With the many missions in conflict areas that Kopassus soldiers have experienced, they became used to work under pressure, even in conditions that could endanger their lives. If fact, their training prepares them to always find a solution to the problem, so that they were conditioned to make decisions quickly and accurately. Even though his rank was only an NCO, it is clear that Sgt. NT, as a senior Kopassus NCO who has been deployed in many conflict areas, was able to utilize his previous training and experience.

There is one thing in a mission that Kopassus soldiers hold dearly, which is that mission accomplishment is the ultimate goal, and anything should be sacrificed, even their lives, in order to achieve it. The problem of course is how to implement it, as not all that one must do during deployment can be taught during pre-deployment training. Conversely, there are many new things for which a Kopassus soldier has not yet formally been trained, but which must suddenly and immediately be dealt with. Therefore, maturity and experience that was gained in many different operational situations will be very useful as a reference for decision-making. Since the state has entrusted Kopassus to be deployed in specially designed assignments, Kopassus soldiers have received more opportunities in comparison to soldiers from other units in developing their leadership and decision-making skills. This in turn has enabled Kopassus soldiers to become wiser in difficult decision-making situations, involving not only their internal capacity to deal with adverse situations, but also to influence the external environments.

9 Soldier for All Seasons

Kopassus soldiers receive training modules as part of their pre-deployment training, with materials tailored to the characteristics specific to the operational area and the mission that must be accomplished by them. Consequently, they must undergo

simulations that were created to be as close as possible to the situations that might be faced by them, including the most extreme examples. This is to ensure that the soldiers will be ready when similar situations arise. With higher training standards and higher goal expectations as compared to ordinary soldiers, Kopassus soldiers are expected to have a greater readiness when faced with changing dynamics, especially those involving quick decision-making in abnormal conditions.

Since Kopassus units will only be deployed for selected missions with strategic value, every Kopassus soldier must be ready for these kinds of tasks. Any mission with strategic value will most certainly be hard to accomplish, which means that excellent preparation must be carried out. Consequently, Kopassus soldiers must be trained continiously to perform in conditions of hardship, so that it was often found that what was considered by ordinary soldiers to be hard training, was regarded by Kopassus soldiers as normal.

One important question is how can leaders be created who show initiative and have the ability to innovate in a critical situation? Sgt. NT is an example of how an NCO suddenly could become a leader who was able to motivate ordinary people to carry out extraordinary feats in an extreme situation. The authors believe that habits formed through repeated simulations and field experiences can build these competencies, which in turn enable Kopassus soldiers to lead in extreme conditions. Basically, any Kopassus soldier can do this if they are trained to do so. In the case of Sgt. NT, one can say that his effective leadership might be due to his various trainings from enlisted soldier to NCO level, operational experiences both at Kopassus and field deployments, and more importantly the doctrine that a Kopassus soldier should never give up in any condition. However, the question is: was Sgt. NT born to lead? Or was his performance the result of his previous training and experiences in previous deployments?

10 The Making of a Kopassus Soldier

The creation of a Kopassus soldier starts with a campaign by Kopassus recruiters at regional infantry regiments all over Indonesia to find the best applicants from the ranks of regular TNI soldiers. Basically they will look for officers below the age of 35 and both NCOs and enlisted soldiers under 27 years of age, who have para qualification, are interested in joining Kopassus, have an excellent appraisal report, and are recommended by their commanding officer (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 35). Since Kopassus recruiters always emphasize the hardship that a Kopassus soldier will endure throughout their career, the motivation to join is a very important determining factor. There were cases where out of 600 enlisted soldiers, only one or two soldiers were interested in joining Kopassus (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, pp. 40–41). When the recruiting team has enough candidates, the recruits will then undergo a battery of tests, including medical check, psychological screening, fitness test and academic examination.

A would-be Kopassus soldier must be healthy, possess an ideal posture, reach top physical fitness levels, be able to swim and not be afraid of heights. The recruit must achieve an above average intelligence test score, be emotionally stable, highly adaptable to new environments, show strong interest and motivation to become a special forces soldier, have a high degree of self confidence, be able to work effectively under pressure, be creative, able to live frugally, and can make quick and accurate decisions, have a strong willpower and work with controlled aggression (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 46; Kopassus 2000, pp. 142–146). Those who pass the test will then be sent to the Kopassus Training Command at Batujajar near Bandung, the capital of West Java province. Each year, exactly 150 trainees consisting of 100 enlisted men, 30 NCOs and 20 officers, will try their luck at becoming a Kopassus soldier (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 47).

In order to win the Kopassus badge, a regular TNI soldier must endure a 7-month long, grueling commando training and will be indoctrinated with Kopassus values (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, pp. 51–52). In addition to the various competencies building exercises to become a Kopassus soldier, near the end of the training, recruits must participate in a 500 km long march from the mountain to the sea to prepare themselves for swamp and sea training. At all times trainees must also attend physical fitness training which includes knife-throwing, long marches, military swimming, tactical swimming, endurance swimming, mountaineering, and martial arts. In addition, officers and NCOs must also learn how to apply their skills in field leadership.

During the whole training period, recruits are only given two sets of camouflage uniforms which are practically permanently wet during training, and they are also constantly deprived of sleep. In addition, the trainees are not allowed to communicate with their families until training is over, nor are they given any days off. A knock-out system is enforced by which trainees who fail any test are returned to their original units. Furthermore, tests continuously take place and observations are made by the instructors in order to determine whether a recruit should be sent home or can continue the commando training to become a Kopassus member.

As a unit with the motto "*Brave, Rightful and Successful*," Kopassus is a unique structure in which equality and teamwork are paramount (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 33). As experienced by both authors, during training sessions, an officer can be reprimanded and punished by a lower rank instructor as training discipline is the norm in any Kopassus training center, regardless of rank and position. Another uniqueness of Kopassus is that their members are always trained to think "out of the box." As a combat unit that has borrowed unconventional warfare doctrine from the East, West and non-aligned countries, Kopassus has been able to test and continuously reformulate this blended doctrine when it was deployed to quell the various separatist movements in many parts of Indonesia (Conboy 2003, pp. v–vi). The ultimate objective of Kopassus training is to create a one-man army which can be deployed behind enemy lines, so that this army can achieve impossible tasks from destroying the enemy's rear base to making opposing forces shake hands and make peace (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 34).

Once trainees have passed all the tests and received the coveted Red Berets of the Kopassus, they will then have to take specialized courses, each lasting about eight weeks (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 74). There are 28 courses that have been developed by Kopassus that will make a TNI soldier a truly special forces soldier such as mountain climbing, combat free fall, sharpshooting, jungle warfare, demolition, combat diving, electronic warfare or medical courses (Kopassus 1998, p. 141). Once they have finished these courses, they will then have to apply to join the operational units. To do so, again, they have to pass a selection procedure consisting of psychological, medical and fitness tests and other military capability tests (Santosa and Natanegara 2009, p. 75; Kopassus 1998, p. 141). After passing all of these tests, candidates will complete a 6-month course in which they will be trained in a condition where they will be deprived of sleep, yet they must be able to think and act coherently under extreme pressure. In addition, in line with the reformation era that ended the authoritarian government of General Suharto in 1998, the Kopassus training curriculum also includes courses on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law which every Kopassus soldier must complete (Kopassus 2000, pp. 116–117).

In line with the Indonesian Army's Transformation Program, currently the Psychological Service of the Indonesian Army (*Dinas Psikologi Angkatan Darat* or Dispsiad), in cooperation with other Indonesian Army units (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Darat* or TNI AD), is developing a competency framework for assessing and developing Indonesian soldiers (Hidayat and Tjahjono 2014, pp. 163–164). With this framework, different army units will be responsible for implementing assessment and development programs. For instance, each corps and branch is responsible for the technical competencies, Dispsiad is responsible for the behavioural competencies and psychological dimensions, and the Mental Guidance Service of the army (*Dinas Pembinaan Mental Angkatan Darat* or Disbintalad) is responsible for the values-based competencies. In the future, all training and development programs, including Kopassus' selection and training programs will have to be based on similar competency frameworks. The following is an example of the competency framework for TNI AD's field commanders (Fig. 2).

11 Lessons Learned from the Leadership of Sgt. NT

The story of Sgt. NT's skill in leading his Kopassus team and the people of Teunom to safety, survival and recovery during the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004 provides invaluable lessons for scholars and leadership trainers and practitioners. Although formulating an exhaustive list based on scientific research is beyond the realm of this chapter, the authors have attempted to draw up the following list of lessons learned about leadership under extreme conditions based on the story of Sgt. NT as follows.

Although research by Chan et al. (2011) did not specifically discuss leadership in extreme situations, it showed that traits, including ability traits such as intelligence

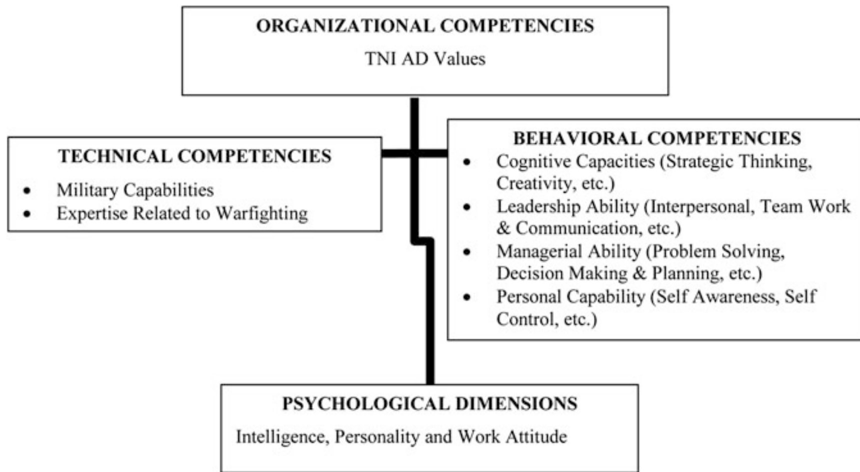

Fig. 2 Competency framework of TNI AD field commanders (Hidayat and Tjahjono 2014, pp. 163–164)

level, and personality traits such as extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience and emotional stability, plus values and motivation, can become strong predictors of leadership emergence (Chan et al. 2011, pp. 97–98).[7] The Kopassus selection process for new members included psychological tests related to these aspects. Undoubtedly, this might be the best explanation why Sgt. NT, a Kopassus soldier with the rank of a mere NCO, could emerge as a leader under the circumstances that he faced in Teunom. Consequently, the lessons from the story of Sgt. NT showed that military leadership selection process should still utilize psychological tools to select the best candidates. In relation to this article's topic, the challenge is of course to find the necessary traits that will help a soldier emerge as a leader in an extreme situation.

It is important to note however that "emerging" leadership is not the same as "effective" leadership. A person who emerges as a leader in a critical situation does not necessarily mean that he will be able to show effective leadership. Chan et al. (2011, pp. 6–8) also found that leadership effectiveness, as defined by the achievements of task performance outcome or "results" and the ethical ways of how the results were obtained, is much influenced by the behavior of the leader. Undoubtedly, Sgt. NT's previous training and operational experiences shaped his behavior, which then contributed to his ability to perform under duress. In terms of leadership task behavior, research by Hidayat (2005) found that since the last decade, many behavioral scientists and military practitioners from various armed forces in Europe, Asia and North America opted to develop behavioral based

[7]Leader emergence refers to "whether an individual is viewed as a leader by others." See also Judge et al. (2002, p. 767).

leadership competency models that were designed based on the organization's vision, mission and operational environment that their armed forces operate (Hidayat 2005, p. 2). Related to this, Chan et al. (2011, pp. 102–108) found that modern military leadership development concepts relied on competency models in which formal courses, training and job assignments were developed and planned systematically in accordance with the competencies framework. Further research is worthwhile to develop competency frameworks that can prepare military leaders so that they can perform in extreme situations.

The environmental landscape for military operations has changed dramatically over the past decade. At the moment, any military engagement, especially those that involve Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) also require a "comprehensive approach" in which the division between civilian and military tasks is no longer as rigid as Samuel Huntington in his seminal book, *The Soldier and the State*, proposed during the era of conventional warfare (Hidayat 2005, pp. 115–116). In fact, Octavian (2012, p. 156) argued that, "globalization has blurred the borders of 'what is civilian' and 'what is military'." From the story of Sgt. NT, we can see that in times of disaster, when civilian apparatus no longer exists, a military leader can be expected to perform a whole range of non-military duties. As such, MOOTW doctrine must be revised and reformulated to adopt this reality.

12 Conclusion

In conclusion, there is still very little research on military leadership in extreme situations, yet it is very important for scientists and practitioners to find the ideal profile of military leaders who can perform well under duress. This article is concerned with the kinds of leadership that emerged in an extreme situation, namely the Boxing Day tsunami in Aceh. It then discusses the story of Sgt. NT, a Kopassus soldier who was able to lead coastal survivors from the Boxing Day tsunami that devastated Aceh into relative safety in the mountain area. He was able to lead the people in the area who lost their leaders, their families and their belongings due to the tsunami, and then motivated them to face the uncertain future.

Lessons learned from his fate suggest that he was able to do that because he possessed the appropriate traits and values, and underwent the right training and experiences. These findings are consistent with previous research on emerging and effective leadership. Only the right people who have been trained and experienced leadership in similar hardship conditions will emerge as leaders when needed. Since previous studies did not specifically address the concept of leadership in extreme situations, finding the right traits that are necessary for mission success in such conditions should become the next research topic in this area. In addition, since effective leadership was found to be based on the behavior of the person, further research on leadership competency models that can be used to assess and develop military leaders should also become a new agenda for topics on leadership in extreme conditions.

Lastly, findings from this article also show that operational doctrine that strictly separates the role of the military and civilians can hinder performances in times of an extreme crisis where the civilian infrastructure completely collapses. Consequently, leadership doctrine must also be developed so that it can reflect today's reality, which includes the implementation of a more comprehensive approach that can address the issue of leadership in extreme conditions.

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Author Biographies

Eri Radityawara Hidayat is currently the head of the Psychological Selection and Classification of the Indonesian Army and is also a lecturer at the Indonesian Defense University. He holds a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Indonesia. During his doctorate studies, he became a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University, New York. A graduate of the Indonesian Defence Forces Officer's School in 1990, he attended the Army Command and Staff School in 2006, and the Netherlands Defence Course in 2008. Colonel Hidayat earned his combat parachutist badge from the Indonesian Army's Special Forces Training Center and is a Harry Greer awardee from the International Military Testing Association for his contribution to military psychology.

Rachmad Puji Susetyo is currently the vice intelligence assistant to the commanding general of the Indonesian Army's Special Forces. As an infantry officer, he once served as a Special Forces battalion commander. He has a Bachelor in social sciences from the University of Gadjah Mada and a master of defense studies from the University of Indonesia. A graduate of the Indonesian Defence Forces Officer's School in 1995, Lieutenant Colonel Susetyo attended the Army Command and Staff School in 2010. He has also served as the executive officer for scientific expeditions (Ekspedisi NKRI) which explore Indonesia's remote areas.

Constructing ‘Crisis Events’ in Military Contexts—An Israeli Perspective

Carmit Padan

Abstract The present research is based on three case studies among infantry units in the IDF. It uses sensemaking processes in order to examine the way military leaders construct ‘crisis events’. The research findings indicate that ‘crisis events’ in the military context are a subjective matter. It shows that commanders use three criteria for defining a ‘crisis event’: function, control and organizational order. The definition of the constructed ‘event’ differs between commanders depending on their position and role: whereas platoon commanders and company commanders define the ‘events’ examined in the research as ‘crisis events’, battalion commanders and brigade commanders define the different ‘events’ as ‘skirmishes’. These findings suggest that the way commanders construct their definitions of a ‘crisis event’ is a manifestation of the intensity of their organizational embeddedness in the organization implying that different intensities of organizational embeddedness shape the definition that commanders construct in relation to a given ‘event’. These findings strengthen the argument that the contested nature of organizational meanings exists not only in ‘civilian’ organizations but also in military ones.

Keywords Leadership · Military leadership · Sensemaking · Sensegiving · Social construction · Organizational embeddedness · Israel Defense Forces

C. Padan (✉)
Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel
e-mail: padan23@gmail.com

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1 Introduction

The question that this chapter seeks to address is how commanders in different positions and roles construct unique definitions of the same given event, defining some of them as 'crisis events'.[1] In order to examine this question the current research uses sensemaking processes. An examination of this process in military contexts will help to better understand sensemaking processes concerning operational events and at the same time will help to develop a comprehensive analysis of the way military units function during and after 'crisis events'. As such this chapter does three things: first, it examines how commanders, in their role as military leaders, construct a definition of a 'crisis event' in a military context; second, it typifies the process of sensemaking as constructed by commanders in three 'crisis events'; third, the chapter goes beyond most sensemaking literature in two ways: first, whereas existing literature tends to perceive sensemaking as resulting from leaders in high positions driving and controlling the process (e.g. Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991; Gioia et al. 1994), this chapter examines leaders in different hierarchical positions. Second, whereas existing literature tends to see sensemaking processes in military organizations as a monolithic process (e.g. Leedom 2004; Bartone 2005, Barton 2008; Ben-Shalom et al. 2011; Ben-Shalom and Glicksohn 2013), this chapter exposes sensemaking to be a more multidimensional process. The multifaceted nature of the process is reflected in the definitions commanders apply to the same event. This examination will show that the contested nature of organizational meanings exists not only in 'civilian' organizations (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 79) but also in military ones, where it tends to be assumed that senior commanders are the ones who provide meaning to different events and situations because of the hierarchical nature of the organization.

Empirically, the chapter focuses on the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) as a case study and specifies on infantry units in the IDF. The chapter is based on a previous research (Padan, forthcoming) claiming that military leaders construct the management of 'crisis events' in infantry units in the IDF by creating organizational order. Organizational order is constructed through emotional management and organizational practices. This process enables military leaders to construct a specific version of 'reality', thereby reframing 'crisis events' to 'orderly' operational events.

Another method leaders use in order to construct a specific version of 'reality' can be exemplified in the way leaders define a 'crisis event' that occurred within a unit they are a part of as well as have a responsibility to command and manage. This is based on the argument first introduced by Berger and Luckman (1966) that

[1]In the Israeli military context military engagements such as skirmish, offence, attack, infiltration etc. are defined as 'events' or 'operational events' (in Hebrew: "eroua mivtzaee"). These definitions do not correlate with any doctrinal official categories of combat but signify an Israeli military contextualized definition, which by itself reflect a construction of 'reality'. The current research examines the construction of 'crisis events' which are 'operational events' in nature but have evolved otherwise.

definitions have a 'reality' producing power and on the assumption that the definition constructed by the leader serves as a leadership tool because it enables the leader to "comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate and predict" (Starbuck and Milliken 1988, p. 51) the event that has occurred thereby making sense of it. This process of "structuring the unknown" is what Karl Weick termed as 'sensemaking' (1995, p. 4). Sensemaking is of great importance in surprising, confusing events (Maitlis 2005, p. 21) because it enables "rational accounts of the world that enable action" (ibid.). Action is not a separate and later step in sensemaking. It is one way of understanding 'reality' because it provides additional input to assign meaning (Weick et al. 2005) causing the whole sensemaking process to be an emergent activity (Ancona 2011, p. 5). In other words, "the action that people take to make sense of a situation enacts the environment that they seek to understand. These meaning-action cycles occur repeatedly as people construct provisional understanding that they continuously enact and modify" (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 67). Enactment describes the process within which the reciprocal influence between action and the environment during sensemaking is taking place. According to Weick (2001, p. 225), "the term 'enactment' is used to preserve the central point that when people act they bring events and structure into existence and set them in motion." Therefore, Weick continues (ibid.), "people who act in organizations often produce structures, constraints, and opportunities that were not there before they took action."

In today's complex and dynamic world, sensemaking is perceived as a core leadership capability (Ancona 2011; Shamir 2007). This is not surprising since, as mentioned before, sensemaking constitutes "the making of sense" (Weick 1995, p. 4) and since leadership has long been described as concerned with the 'management of meaning' expressed in "the way leadership actions attempt to shape and interpret situations [in order] to guide organizational members into a common interpretation of reality" causing leadership to be perceived as a social process as well (Smircich and Morgan 1982, p. 261). Other sensemaking related constructs that help us to examine how organizational leaders (or managers) strategically shape the sensemaking of organizational members is sensegiving and sensebreaking. Sensegiving is defined as: "the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organization reality" (Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991, p. 442). Sensebreaking is defined as "the destruction or breaking down of meaning" (Pratt 2000, p. 464). The present study focuses on sensemaking processes but will discuss sensegiving or sensebreaking when either of them plays a role in the broader sensemaking process.

This chapter focuses on the way military leaders construct definitions of 'crisis events'. It is based on a premise that definitions constitute part of the sensemaking process since they enable leaders to shape and construct organizational meaning. It should be noted that the process of sensemaking and its related constructs have been examined in 'civilian' organizations as activities carried out by leaders or managers (e.g. Mantere et al. 2012; Pratt 2000). This way of examining sensemaking reflects a top-down perspective on sensemaking processes (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 79). Other streams of research examined sensemaking

through the narrative lens. This point of view revealed "not only who is involved [in the sensemaking process] and what they are doing but also the meanings that they are constructing in the process. As such it spotlights the plurivocality of organizations and the much contested nature of organizational meanings" (ibid.). Examples for the plurality of narratives reflected in organizations can be found, for example, in Sonenshein's research (2010) of uncovering different stories told by groups—leaders' stories versus employees' stories—or in the fragmented sensemaking stories constructed by middle managers where the process of sensemaking is dominated by them (Balogun and Johnson 2004, 2005), or in the Brown et al. research (2008) of sensemaking process as a way to define individual and collective identities.

The present study is different from the above mentioned researches for a number of reasons: First, it examines the sensemaking process in a military organization. This creates a different context for examining sensemaking processes and given the fact that military leadership is inherently contextualized (Hannah et al. 2009, p. 898), this factor is of great importance in understanding the "unique contingencies, constraints and causations that affect leadership and leadership processes conducted in military context" (ibid.). Second, as opposed to the abovementioned research that examines sensemaking processes in order to define *identities* (e.g. Brown et al. 2008; Maitlis and Christianson 2014), the current research examines sensemaking processes in order to define *events* and '*crisis events*' in particular. Third, whereas the abovementioned research examines sensemaking reflected in different stories of *different* groups (Balogun and Johnson 2004, 2005), this research examines the sensemaking process *within a group*, specifically within a military group of leaders all related to one given unit. The main argument of this research is that defining 'crisis events' in military contexts is a subjective matter. This subjectivity is reflected in the definitions commanders, in different commanding positions and roles, construct to a given event. The research found that the way in which commanders construct a definition for a 'crisis event' is an expression of their organizational embeddedness intensity in the organization. The focus made in the research on commanding positions, on military organizations and on operational events eventuates matters that refer to leadership, organizational positions and management. Because of this empirical focus, in this research I use the specific terminology of commanders, commanding positions and 'crisis events'.

The chapter consists of four sections: theoretical, empirical, analysis section and discussion. It begins with a theoretical background of military leadership, 'crisis events' and sensemaking, then goes on to introduce the ground assumptions concerning the methodology issues of the research. The analysis section incorporates three parts: first, definitions military leaders construct for 'crisis events'; second, typifying of the process of sensemaking in 'crisis events'; third, the event's definition as constructed by commanders from different organizational positions. The discussion section provides explanations for the findings of the research and marks possible directions for future research.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Crises and Military Leadership

There are many definitions in the applicable literature of crisis situations—each of which is influenced by the discipline in which it was formulated and ascribed to (e.g. Littlejohn 1983; Fink 1986; Perrow 1984; Pauchant and Mitroff 1992; Pearson and Clair 1998). All of these definitions share the view of a crisis as a critical turning point that lacks stability and could lead to both negative and positive developments. The current chapter adopts Hermann’s definition of a crisis (1969, p. 169) which states the following: “a situation that threatens high priority goals… which suddenly occurs with little or no response time available.” The use of Hermann’s definition for a crisis is in line with the etic approach (Pike 1967), meaning, a definition that can be applied in the study and analysis of any organizational culture (Headland et al. 1990), military as well as civilian. Yet, it is important to emphasize at the outset that in this research, I was interested in exploring the way commanders constructed their definition of events—from their personal phenomenological experience.

The discussion in the literature concerning crises focuses on the fact that a crisis manifests an unbalanced period that can lead to a turning point influencing the organization to both positive and negative outcomes (e.g. Fink 1986). The current chapter concentrates on the military organization within which crises are perceived as a special case of extreme contexts which militaries are used to operate in Hannah et al. (2009), Campbell et al. (2010). Therefore, extreme contexts like crises provide interesting material for a case study that investigates how military leaders of a given unit construct a definition of ‘crisis events’.

Samuels et al. (2010) claim that crisis leadership differs from in extremis leadership (IEL) in four ways: First, some situations included under the rubric of crisis leadership appear to be more benign than those described by IEL. For example, strikes or lawsuits can be threatening to an organization but are unlikely to result in immediate harm or death to specific individuals (Klann 2003). Second, crisis leadership places greater emphasis on preparing for unexpected threats. Third, in extremis leaders typically know that they are going to lead in dangerous contexts. Fourth, the nature of an in extremis situation might be unpredictable (chaotic wartime engagement) but the level of threat to oneself and others is an expected component of the profession (squad leaders expect to lead in combat situations). To conclude, despite the differences in scope according to Samuels et al. (2010) there is an overlap between crisis leadership, leading in dangerous contexts and in extremis leadership.

Crises are not restricted to military organizations. They are to be found everywhere and in many layers of human society—economic, political, environmental etc. Nevertheless, military contexts oppose causations and unique contingencies that affect and differentiate military leadership from any other leadership causing it to be inherently contextualized (Hannah et al. 2009). This is because leadership

itself cannot be distinguished from the unique social dynamics inherent in the context (e.g. Gronn 2002). Context broadly refers to "the set of forces stemming from the environment and the person that impact behavior in the work setting" (George and Jones 1997, p. 154). Hence, it is the operational environment that differentiates the military context, the military organization and the unique leadership in this context. This assumption is based on Osborne et al. (2002, p. 802) who claim that "leadership is embedded in the context. It is socially constructed in and from a context where patterns over time must be considered and where history matters. Leadership is not only incremental influence of a boss toward subordinates but most important it is the collective incremental influence of leaders in and around the system."

2.2 Leadership and the Process of Sensemaking

Leadership incorporates the ability to control the direction of organizations (Druker 2001) through influencing and interacting with other members of the organization to engage in some purposeful or goal-directed behavior (Halpin 2011). This results in a situation within which leaders are especially needed in chaos and in extremis situations and events. They are perceived as being inherently comfortable in these kinds of environments and unafraid of taking risks in unknown or uncertain situations (Kolditz 2005, 2006, 2007). Events around us have no independent existence other than the meaning we provide them with. According to Weick (1995, 2001), leaders are the ones who provide meaning to events, thereby 'commentating' them and creating 'reality'. Morgan (1986) also asserts that the ability to define 'the reality of others' by managing meanings and interpretations ascribed to situations is given to the leader. This role causes leaders to be situated in a special position as important mediators between 'reality' and organization's members. This assumption is also mentioned in regard to military leaders engaging in combat. For example, Gal and Jones (1996) state that the commander, as a military leader, "plays a central role in creating the individual's appraisal of the situation by acting as a lens that focuses the antecedent variables into a unified interpretation of the situation. Like in a telescope, this 'lens' works to amplify the perceived threat or to reduce it, make it closer or more remote, better focused or more blurred" (Gal and Jones 1996, p. 143).

Karl Weick was the first scholar within organizational theory to articulate a coherent framework for perception, cognition, action and memory which he coined *the process of sensemaking*. Sensemaking ('the making of sense', Weick 1995, p. 4) is the activity that enables us to turn the ongoing complexity of the world into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as springboard to action (Weick et al. 2005, p. 409). Despite gaps and differences existing in the literature for defining sensemaking, in a recent review Maitlis and Christianson (2014) composed an integrated definition describing it thus: "a process, prompted by violated expectations that involves attending and bracketing cues in the

environment, creating intersubjective meaning through cycles of interpretation and action and thereby enacting a more ordered environment from which further cues can be drawn" (p. 67). This definition underlines three main components in a sensemaking process: one, sensemaking is a dynamic process; two, sensemaking is triggered by cues (events, situations etc., surprising or confusing); three, sensemaking is a social process.

Through sensemaking, individuals work to understand novel, unexpected or confusing events. Thus, when organizational members encounter ambiguity or uncertainty they "seek to clarify what is going on by extracting and interpreting cues from their environments using sensemaking as the basis for a plausible account that provides order and 'makes sense' of what has occurred and through which they continue to enact the environment" (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 58). In trying to explain how sensemaking works Weick (2001) uses a metaphor that links sensemaking to cartography. According to Weick, maps can be used as a means to move from anxiety to action. By mapping an unfamiliar situation some of the concerns of the unknown can be abated. Ancona (2011) adds, in explaining that in today's complex and dynamic world, mapping becomes an essential element of sensemaking and sensemaking is perceived as a key leadership capability (Shamir 2007; Ancona 2011). It should be noted that there is no 'right' map because sensemaking is not about finding the 'correct' answer. It is about creating an emerging picture that becomes more comprehensive through data collection, action, experience and conversation (Weick 2001, pp. 9–10; Ancona 2011, p. 6).

Sensemaking is more than interpretation. It involves the *active* authoring of events and frameworks for understanding as people play a role in constructing the very situations they attempt to comprehend (Weick 1995, 1988; Weick et al. 2005; Sutcliffe 2013). *This is to say that action is a key sensemaking tool*. People learn about situations by acting in them and then seeing what happens. This forms another baseline for action creating cycles of interpretations and actions that is termed by Weick (1995) as *enactment* constituting the sensemaking process. Sensemaking is triggered by cues such as issues, events or situations for which the meaning is ambiguous and/or outcomes are uncertain. Yet, the unexpected events will trigger sensemaking only when the discrepancy between what one expects and what one experiences is great enough and important enough to cause individuals or groups to ask what is going on and what they should do next. This experience of discrepancy or violation is subjective and how significant it feels will be influenced by a variety of factors such as its impact on individual, social or organizational identity and personal or strategic goals (Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 70).

In most current writings organizational sensemaking is understood as fundamentally concerned with language (e.g. Weick 1995; Sonenshein 2006). Leaders use language to share perceptions among themselves and gradually define or create meaning through discussion (Weick 1995, p. 99). Leaders use a kind of a 'symbolic power' which is manifested through language and that has a crucial impact on the way in which human beings perceive reality, and consequently, on their course of action (Morgan 1986). Analyzing the symbolic means used by commanders in the current research will allow for an examination of the organizational context in

which commanders operate, since "actions are symbolic elements through which beliefs, feelings and identities are forged and changed. And in addition to their impact on individuals, they also hold an important role in the strengthening of social constructions within the organization" (Trice et al. 1969, as cited in Islam and Zyphur 2009, p. 114). Characteristics of organizational culture such as images, metaphors, language, symbols, stories, texts, etc. are "instruments" that can be employed to manage meaning. This will be further elaborated in the next section.

2.3 Frames and Metaphors

In the current research frames are defined through using Goffman's definition as "principles of organizations which govern the subjective meanings we assign to social events" (Goffman 1974, p. 11). Frames are, therefore, principles of organizing and assigning meaning that are outcomes, or products, of social construction.[2] Once activated, frames impart organizing structure that direct and guide interpretation. Activating a frame creates expectations about important aspects of the context circumstances by directing individuals to elaborate on the default or prototypical scenario in a manner suggested by the frame (cf. Tannen 1979). The activated parts of the frame are linked to other parts within the same frame through a relationship of conceptual contiguity such as causes and effects, roles and actions, and actions and consequences. These kind of contiguous links between the reference points that detail a larger frame provide a basis for understanding the substance and mechanism of sensemaking or cognition in action (Weick 1995; Weick et al. 2005).

Frame and framing are central constructs within management and organization theory and have also been used over the years in various fields of research (Cornelissen et al. 2014). Framing has been used, for example, to conceptualize and explain internal, self-conscious and cognitive processes of individual sensemaking (Weick 1995). Research on sensemaking and other organizational constructs such as sensegiving conceptualizes framing as a pragmatic act of strategic framing tactics where individual leaders are considered to be skilled rhetoricians who are able to directly shape and direct the interpretations of organizational members by literally 'giving' sense (Gioia and Chittipedi 1991) to a preferred redefinition of 'reality' (e.g. Maitlis and Lawrence 2007; Kaplan 2008). Metaphors, analogues, catchphrases, slogans, contrast, spin and stories are framing tools leaders use as core processes of framing in order to influence the sensemaking of organizational members (e.g. Sonenshein 2010; Cornelissen et al. 2011). The nature of metaphors and how we use them to understand organization and the role of managers and

[2]According to Cornelissen et al. (2014) *frames* are distinguished from *acts of framing* which involve the ways in which individuals use language or other symbolic gestures in context either to reinforce existing interpretive frames or to call new frames into being.

leaders is explored in Gareth Morgan's book '*Images of organizations*' (1986) within which he claims that every linguistic or conceptual tool that we use to understand the world is a metaphor. According to Morgan, metaphors create meaning by understanding one phenomenon through another in a way that encourages us to understand what is common.[3] For example, the idea that 'the organization is a machine' finds machine-like qualities in organization (Morgan 1986). That is why metaphors are more than a figure of style and play a key role in the construction of 'reality' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999). They are central to human understanding and discourse. The use of metaphor is part of out-of-awareness schemata that influence organizational behavior (Wittink 2011).

For language users it is inevitable to use metaphor when dealing with abstract concepts (ibid.)—as is the case in the current study which tries to understand the conceptualization of 'crisis events' in military contexts. Leaders and managers may draw on analogical or metaphorical comparisons they make with other cases and experiences in order to familiarize themselves and others with a change, to reduce uncertainty and to support further inferences (e.g. Gioia et al. 1994).

In relation to sensemaking processes, metaphors serve as connectors between cues and frames. That is why they constitute a fundamental act of sensemaking (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). Metaphors, as well as other symbolic means, have a socially shared basis within a group of people. Likewise, the socially shared basis of the interviewed commanders in the research is manifested in the military socialization processes all commanders went through as well as in the organizational culture shared by the different commanders in the different units they belonged to.

The power of metaphors in the sensemaking process has been explained by Cornelissen (e.g. Cornelissen 2005; Cornelissen et al. 2011) specifying two central uses of metaphors: (1) the ability of metaphors to create order in unfamiliar situations (2) Metaphors as evaluative tools that provide justification for certain actions. Weick (1995) adds another use of metaphors as playing a valuable role in validating some accounts and discrediting others. Recent research (Cornelissen 2012) showed that sensemakers' use of metaphors varies depending on factors such as their role-situated commitments (commitment to carrying out activities as part of a professional role) and the salience of others' expectation about them, arguing that sensemakers' use of metaphors shifts significantly depending on the relationship to the issue in question and their audience. The current research will analyze the different metaphors commanders use in order to construct definitions for the different events being studied as definitions constitute part of the sensemaking processes through which leaders shape and construct organizational meaning.

[3]The process in which one idea, or conceptual domain, is understood in terms of another is also defined as a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1999).

3 Ground Assumptions, Methodology and Sources of Data

The current chapter is based on quantitative research. It incorporates an interpretative method to the subject being investigated (Denzin and Lincoln 1998). The main assumption of the interpretative approach is that human understanding and action are based on the interpretation of information and events by the people experiencing them (Rainbow and Sullivan 1979). Therefore, understanding and action depend upon the meaning assigned to any set of events (Daft and Weick 1984). Since meaning is a socially constructed phenomenon, it is unavoidably subjective and constrained by the context of goals that the human actors seek to achieve. Thus, understanding and action derive from the framework of meaning ascribed by the organization's members (Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991). One of the claims this chapter is interested in establishing is that the very definition of the event, as constructed by commanders, form part of the sensemaking process. Through these definitions commanders are able to influence the event's frame of meaning hence influencing the practices activated by both commanders and subordinates, as those practices also constitute part of the sensemaking process.

An important implication of using frames and acts of framing as methodological guides to understanding sensemaking processes in organizations is the view that organizations are interpretive systems and sensemaking is a central activity that lies at the very core of organizing. This view is also based on a premise that sensemaking is triggered by cues for which the meaning is ambiguous and/or outcomes are uncertain (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). Crises are typified events for such features (Pearson and Clair 1998, p. 60) therefore considered as powerful sensemaking triggers. In the military organizational literature the term crisis is rarely used. Common terms that can be found are: 'threatening', 'dangerous', and 'in extremis' situations or contexts (e.g. Wong et al. 2003; Wong 2004; Kolditz and Brazil 2005; Kolditz 2007; Hannah et al. 2009 etc.). Even so, this is the term I decided to approach the research with, using the etic approach (Pike 1967), as was explained above. Moreover, although crisis is a 'hard concept' and, allegedly, not suitable for discussing military contexts, since the interviewed commanders used this concept I have the vindication for using it, even if the concept is deteriorating. In addition, since commanders use this term in order to construct a definition for an event that occurred in their unit, (hereinafter) they can imagine a 'crisis event' happening in a military unit hence can imagine the concept's relevance to the military context.

Furthermore, whereas I focus on the sensemaking processes as constructed by commanders, it is important to note that these processes do not occur in a vacuum. Rather, IDF commanders make sense of 'crisis events' in the contexts of the IDF military doctrine for defining crises and for the way of managing them. A crisis according to the IDF lexicon is "an event in the life of an individual (as a single person or as part of a group) that entails detachment (or that violates balance), in one or more continuums of the following four: functional, emotional, cognitive or that of command" (IDF Lexicon 1988). According to this definition, the role of the

commander is to bridge the functional, emotional, cognitive and command continuums in order to prevent a violation of balance or discontinuity in any of them. This is a *fixed* context for all commanders in different units and commanding positions. The research will show that in spite of this singular context there are still various sensemaking processes manifested in the events' constructed definitions and the events as a whole. Alternative terms and phrases that arise, and articulated through metaphors, are: 'failure', 'defeat', 'bad event', 'trouble'. Nevertheless, none of these terms coalesced into an analytic category of meaning.

Considering these ground assumptions, the research question of this chapter is as follows: How do commanders in different commanding positions and roles in infantry units construct unique definitions of operational (crisis) events?

3.1 Research Setting

The research is based on three case studies among infantry units in the IDF. The three events were pre-defined as crises according to the three criteria that appeared in Hermann's definition (1969, p. 159) for a crisis event (threat, time and surprise, see also Herman 1972). These three criteria assisted me in selecting the crisis events examined in this chapter, however, in this research I was again interested in exploring the way commanders constructed their events' definition—from their personal phenomenological experience. *The first* event (hereinafter referred to as the "L" event) took place in 2006 during the second Lebanon war in a battalion that took part in the combat. A significant part of the battalion's command was injured in the course of a battle led by one of its companies that ended with eight soldiers and commanders killed in action and dozens wounded. The *second* event (hereinafter referred to as the "K" event) took place in 2010 along the Israel-Gaza border during routine security measures that occurred while a squad of a battalion forces pursued two terrorists who had placed explosive devices near the border's fence. The deputy battalion commander and a company's medic were killed in action during the exchange of fire between the parties. The *third* event (hereinafter referred to as the "R" event) took place in 2011 in the West Bank. Two terrorists succeeded in penetrating a settlement, without being detected by the battalion forces that were in charge of the region, and murdered five members of a family in their sleep. All three events are typical of the IDF's missions and are situated, according to the IDF military typology on the continuum between a limited war and a limited confrontation. In each of these events a battalion commander is in charge. The events took place within a subsidiary unit of the battalion (a company, a platoon or a squad), but were significant to the entire unit. The people (players) involved in each of the events include soldiers, junior commanders, battalion commanders and brigade commanders.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to collect data I conducted thirteen semi-structured interviews with commanders who participated in the events. The interviews were conducted with three different commanding ranks: the brigade commander, the battalion commander and two to three junior commanders who were direct subordinates of the battalion commander in each of the events (see Table 1).

Semi-structured interviews were used in order to be able to trace and detect the way in which commanders construct the story of the different crisis events being investigated from their own experience and their own point of view (Tellis 1997). This method enabled me to detect and follow the different framing tools ('acts of framing', Maitlis and Christianson 2014) and frameworks commanders construct to the different events they participated in and managed. Through these I could typify the sensemaking processes as well as sensemaking related constructs (such as sensegiving, Gioia and Cittipedi 1991) commanders apply in their constructed stories of the different events they participated in and which are being researched. In the course of my analysis, I specifically concentrated on tracing metaphors as they are a framing tool (e.g. Cornelissen 2005; Cornelissen et al. 2011) commanders use in order to construct their definitions of the 'crisis events' which are analyzed in this chapter.

In designing my research questions I was particularly careful not to influence the interviewee's world of associations during the interview in order to free their world of associations and not to diminish it. That is why I ask the interviewees only towards the end of the interview for their definition of the event we had just discussed.[4] Only if their answer did not include the term 'crisis' or did not relate to it in any sense, did I then ask whether the event could be termed as a crisis or not. Interviewees were then asked to explain their answer. This way of designing my research question is based on the notion of the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckman 1966) that is also one of the basic theoretical foundations of the sensemaking process as well as of the current research.

Although leadership literature defines the contemporary period as a "post heroic" period of leadership where social interactions and networks of influence exist between individuals and units in the organization regardless of their hierarchical position (Fletcher and Kaufer 2003; Uhl-Bien et al. 2007) this research is an organizational leadership study from the leaders' perspective and not from the followers' perspective. The research was conducted in this way for the following reasons: first, officers in the IDF have come up from the ranks and therefore began their careers as soldiers. Thus their perspective recognizes the experience of being a soldier in either routine or in extremis situations. Second, all commanders are part of the IDF military socialization processes, therefore they have internalized the

[4]The exact question was: How would you define the event?

Table 1 Case studies outline (Padan 2015)

Event	Case	Year	Interviewees
'L'	A significant part of the battalion's command is killed in action in a battle during wartime	2006	Brigade commander, battalion commander, operation office, company commander A, company commander C
'K'	Routine security measures end with two casualties: a deputy battalion commander and a medic soldier killed in action	2010	Brigade commander, battalion commander, company commander, deputy company commander
'R'	Infiltration of a settlement ends with five members of a family murdered	2011	Brigade commander, battalion commander, deputy battalion commander, medical doctor

organizational culture in terms of its language, norms, values and so on. Alongside this they have also internalized organizational perceptions and considerations. Commanders therefore occupy an intermediate position in the IDF, and therefore the way they lead is both a product of military organizational culture and a reflection of their own experience as commanders who were once soldiers.

3.3 Analytical Approach

In order to analyze and typify the sensemaking process in the thirteen interviews conducted for this research I followed Weick's (1993, 1995, 2001, 2005) analytical framework for analyzing this process. As mentioned, according to this framework analysis, sensemaking is triggered by cues such as events or situations for which the meaning is ambiguous and/or outcomes are uncertain. This 'triggering event' starts cycles of interpretations and actions, occurring in a reciprocal manner, and which results in an active authoring of frameworks. These cycles are known to be termed as 'enactment'. Interpretation is constituted from cues, as present moments of experience, and from frames, as past moments of socialization, which Weick also defines them as 'preconceptions'. The relation emerging between cues and frames constructs a basic unit of meaning which results in an enacted environment that serves as another baseline for interpretation and action. In this process symbolic means, such as words, expressions, stories, verbs, symbols and metaphors, are perceived as 'instruments' that can be employed to manage meaning. They function as connectors between cues and frames and as framing tools. Yet, the main symbolic mean that was employed in the current analysis is metaphor. There is much debate in the literature concerning the way metaphors 'work': Is metaphor a matter of comparison (Morgan 1986)? Does it highlight the analogies in the source and the target domain of the metaphor (Corneliussen 2005)? Or do metaphors produce new meaning that goes beyond similarity and projection (Grant and Oswick 1996)? Yet, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999) there is no formal procedure for

identifying metaphors and it is all a matter of intuition. This is the identification 'procedure' I followed in the current research. This kind of 'procedure' is used in other analyses in organization research as well, where they play a central role in conceptualizing abstract concepts (Wittink 2011), and it will be exemplified next in the analysis section concerning the events being researched.

4 Analysis

This section is organized around three parts: the *first* one will examine the criterion according to which commanders in infantry battalion units in the IDF define a 'crisis event'; the *second* will typify the process of sensemaking in the three events examined in the research; the *third* part will introduce the findings indicating the relationship between the commander's hierarchical position and the way he defines the 'crisis event' as it occurred in the unit.

4.1 Military Leader's Definition of a 'Crisis Event'

Analysis of the interviews indicates that commanders in infantry units define whether an event is a 'crisis event' according to three questions that can be worded as follows: (i) Does the unit continue to function? (ii) Are commanders able to give orders and (iii) Can organizational order is maintained? Those questions set up three criteria for defining a 'crisis event': function, control and organizational order. In any event it should be noted that commanders do not relate nor mention the physical or 'objective' features of any of the events being investigated when they examine whether a given event is a crisis or not.[5] Function relates to the unit's ability to carry out orders therefore to operate and fight during the event and after it had occurred; control relates to the ability of commanders to give orders to their subordinates and to supervise their implementation; organizational order—relates to the ability of commanders to perform emotional management and to carry out organizational practices. This criterion is based on a previous research (Padan, forthcoming) claiming that military leaders construct the management of 'crisis events' in infantry units in the IDF by creating organizational order.

4.1.1 Function

In the following quotes, commanders describe a 'crisis event' as a state within which a unit cannot function—

[5]This will be further elaborated in the third of the part of the analysis section.

> The test is whether the battalion continued to function. This is not to say that the battalion is not mistaken…but it functions. It works. The body works, it is alive, it is breathing, it operates, proceeds, detaches contact, operates fire, exits, returns… (Battalion commander, 'L' event).

> Crisis is an event in which you see that your unit cannot function in all of its strength (Company commander, 'K' event).

> If you feel that your unit is in a crisis situation, it means that you cannot 'see' the mission you are now in. It means that you have to tell your brigade commander 'I need assistance in order to complete the mission. I am not capable. I need to reorganize' (Battalion commander, 'R' event).

For the interviewed commanders, the inability to function means that the unit cannot operate and fight, therefore it cannot complete its mission. This is a situation opposing the unit's designation as well as for the military as a whole. This kind of situation can lead, according to the commanders, to a crisis situation in the unit. Furthermore, when defining a crisis, commanders relate to the ability of the unit to carry out orders and operate during the event itself and also to the ability of the unit to continue functioning as an organizational organ afterwards—

> The greatest test of the battalion commander is the recovery test [of the unit – c.p.] (Battalion commander, 'L' event).

> A crisis is not caused by the operational failure. If as a result of the event the unit loses faith in its ability to carry out orders and to perform missions than you'll have a crisis…It is not the management of the event but the management of the unit and the subordinates after the event [that will determine whether the event was a crisis or not – c.p.] (Brigade commander, 'R' event).

The importance concealed in the ability to function is based on a psychological rationalization[6] according to which preserving function continuity is important because it can preserve the combatant's sense of competence. According to this psychological logic, functioning has therapeutic effects; hence it is presented as a therapeutic tool—

> I explained to them, I am not sure that they understood…that it was important to continue their routine 'job'. That this is important for *them* not because of the need and importance to continue the unit's mission in its area…but in the rehabilitative aspect for them as individuals and as a unit (Company commander, 'K' event, emphasis in origin).

4.1.2 Control

Commanders presented me with a rhetorical question during their interviews. They asked if despite difficult military operational repercussions, commanders in different hierarchical positions in the unit could continue giving orders to their subordinates

[6]As mentioned in the theoretical section, the psychological logic is manifested in the IDF's organizational point of view for defining crises and even for methods of coping with them. This will be further discussed in the discussion chapter.

and to supervise their implementation. According to their commanding logic in such a situation commanders were in *control* over the 'event' and therefore it could not be defined as a 'crisis event'. This commanding logic can be exemplified in the following quotes—

> The battalion commanders gave orders, the company commander or his acting officer gave orders as well as the platoon commander and squad commanders…the battalion exited the theater on its own; it won [the battle – c.p.] on its own. It continued fighting (Battalion commander, 'L' event).

In contrast to the quote above, the commander in the following quote constructed his story of the 'crisis event' differently, indicating no control over the situation, no opportunity to give orders and start any proactive move—

> I came across heavy fire…and I started fighting under very, very hard conditions…we are lying down on a fence, we are on a brick wall completely exposed to the road firing towards the house…completely exposed…bullets hitting us from all directions. We were surprised. We lost. I am beaten and humiliated (Company commander, 'L' event).

The company commander continued constructing his story of being out of control, not able to give orders—

> From the tough commander I was, being in control all the time, I lied down completely naked…anyone who passed there saw me lying naked…my poor soldiers saw the body of a human who was not able to help them in the situation… (Company commander, 'L' event).

5 Organizational Order

As mentioned above, according to previous research (Padan forthcoming), military leaders construct the management of 'crisis events' in infantry units in the IDF by creating organizational order. The analysis of this research shows that organizational order is constructed through two dimensions: emotional management and organizational practices. Organizational practices are defined as the organization's routine use of knowledge for conducting a particular function that has evolved over time under the influence of the organization's history, people, interests and actions (Kostova and Roth 2002, p. 216). Emotional management helps to preserve existing order through the construction of the 'correct' emotions for particular sociological systems (such as organizations) (Fineman 1996) that constitute contexts of meaning and action (Lock and Strong 2010).[7] In the following quote, the commander indicates that the organizational practices he had to carry out resulted in a very ordered mission as well as having no time to think about the situation. In 'thinking',

[7]Emotional restraint and control that combat soldiers need to express constitutes a measure for judging the military-organizational professionalism of the combat soldier that creates an internalized awareness within soldiers and enables an automatic action during battle (Ben-Ari 1998, 2004).

he meant for *feeling* the loss of the battalion's deputy as well as the loss of the battalion's medic. These two mechanisms resulted in an organizational order that helped him in managing the event and its aftermath—

> I was working, I had things, actions to take, inquiries…operational activity right after…the event didn't end. You have to apply fire, operate tanks and soldiers etc. Afterward… all the issue of inquiries… It brought me into a very, very organized schedule and I didn't have time to think. When I sat down to think it was harder for me. In training, when it suddenly began to be intensive for everybody, I had more time to think. It was there that things started to sink in… But not… not in the first 48 hours (Battalion commander, 'K' event).

Another example of the way organizational practices help to preserve organizational order is exemplified in the following quote reflecting the battalion commander's commands from the quotation above, but now from his subordinate's point of view—

> …He [the battalion commander – C.P] got behind a pillbox, which gave a fair protection, stood there, looked at everything that was going on for about seven or eight minutes – I'm not being accurate…and then he thought and gave an extremely organized command as to what to do… I remember the order he gave… you rescue, you isolate, you open fire, tanks – you do this and that….a very long command, but when he put down the radio all troops understood exactly what needed to be done (Deputy Company Commander, 'K' crisis event).

5.1 Typifying the Process of Sensemaking in a 'Crisis Event'

In the following paragraphs, I will demonstrate one cycle of enactment as it was activated in one segment in the sensemaking process, in each of the three events examined in the research. Let us first examine the enactment cycle and the sensemaking process that follows in the deputy battalion commander's (DBC) constructed story of the 'R' event—

> I called the operations room and heard a soldier *shouting X!X!* It's actually a part of a code word for a terrorist infiltration to 'I' [name of a settlement – C.P]…That's all it takes, I just got what it means, it was a *Friday evening*, so I understood; it was a very *problematic day and time*. I commanded *automatic orders*; I gave an order to headquarters, to everyone – to all of my troops – to *'fly out'* to 'I' as fast as they could since there was a terrorist infiltration to 'I'. As I was driving down I started to hear the voices more clearly through the radio…and concluded that there were terrorists in 'I'. I gave *preliminary orders* and drove as fast as I could to 'I'. The thing that helped me was the battle-drill. Two or almost three weeks before I'd had a battle-drill, a battle-drill of terrorist infiltration…it helped me to conclude lessons to this event…when I arrived at 'I'… (Deputy battalion commander, 'R' event, emphasis added).

The trigger event that sets up the sensemaking process begins when the DBC called the operations room and heard a soldier shouting part of a code word. The cues that the DBC accumulates from the environment are: part of the code word he heard indicating a '*terrorist infiltration*', the time and day of the week ('*a Friday evening*') from which he concludes the event is '*problematic*'. The frames, based on

past experiences, the DBC produces in the present event are: '*terrorist infiltration*' and '*battle drill*' which he had had almost three weeks before the present event. The connection between the elements of the cues and frames leads the DBC to conclude that '*there are terrorists*' in 'I'. This is the framework he constructs which forms his interpretation. This framework leads him to give '*automatic orders*': ordering his subordinates to '*fly out*' to 'I'. This segment also involves and is constituted from *sensegiving* as a sensemaking-related construct. It is manifested through the way the DBC constructs the organizational reality as a '*terrorist infiltration to 'I*''.

By constructing this exact meaning for the situation he influences their sensemaking towards a preferred redefinition of organizational reality. This active authoring of framework also serves as the reason the DBC commands his subordinates to arrive as soon as they can to the settlement. The '*preliminary orders*', as the DBC defines them, are given by him through using metaphors: the first one is a metaphor of a machine '*automatic orders*' and the second is a metaphor of a bird '*fly*' indicating together that he expected from his troops, as well as from himself, to operate in a fast and effective manner. The use of these metaphors helps the DBC to create order and serve as evaluative tools since implementing those serves as justification for fast action. The DBC's actions lead him and his subordinates to 'I' and serve as another baseline (enacted environment) for further interpretation that set another cycle for enactment.

Now, let us move to the second event, the 'K' event, and examine a quote taken from an interview with one of the platoon commanders (PC) in the event—

> I got a call from the company commander saying: '*prepare your platoon there is a chance that we will be called*. I cannot tell you what it is about. But it is the area of…' We knew this area very well but still if it is a point that I don't know as much I can open a map and understand the features of the area…I saw that the company commander went to the *operations room*…to look at the cameras in order to get a better picture of the situation before he arrived at the area. Suddenly I saw him *flying* with his jeep and I received a telephone: '*arrive at point…two terrorists are handling something on the ground…*'. I realized it was *probably an explosive*. I shouted quickly to my platoon to arrive…I called the jeep's driver…my soldiers geared themselves up taking all the equipment needed and we started moving…fast! I felt that an event was really about to emerge (Platoon commander, 'K' event, emphasis added).

The trigger event that sets up the sensemaking process begins with the command that the company commander (CC) gave to his platoon commander (PC). The cues that the PC accumulates from the environment are: the CC command to '*prepare your platoon*' and the reason he provides to his command: '*there is a chance that we will be called*'. Moreover, the PC saw his CC entering the '*operations room*' and exiting from there '*flying with his jeep*'. The next segment is also constituted of sensegiving as a sensemaking-related construct. It is manifested through the way the CC constructs the organizational reality as '*two terrorists are handling something on the ground…*'. By constructing this exact meaning for the situation, the CC influences the sensemaking of his subordinate, the PC, towards a preferred redefinition of organizational reality. This active authoring of framework also serves as the reason the PC '*flied with his jeep*' and the reason the PC was ordered to '*arrive*

at point'. There is a use of a metaphor here: 'flying'. Later in the quote we realize that the use of this exact metaphor as a framing tool provides a justification for the CC's actions—reacting and operating fast, help to create order. The connection between the elements of cues and past experiences leads the PC to form a basic unit of meaning: '*an explosive*'. The central framework the PC produces is: '*an operational event emerging*'. This framework spawns action since the PC realized he must arrive as fast as he could with his platoon to the area. The PC commanded his platoon to arrive '*quickly*', he calls the jeep's driver and the platoon starts '*moving fast*' to the area. The PC's actions lead him and his subordinates to the area and serve as another enacted environment for further interpretation and action.

Now, let us move to the third event, the 'L' event, and examine a quote taken from an interview with one of the company commanders (CC) in the event. This quote exemplifies the difficulty of the CC to construct a basic unit of meaning in the situation therefore a failure in activating it—

> A', the deputy combat commander (DCC) started returning to his platoon…I heard someone on the radio, I don't remember who he was, saying: '*we are identifying figures*'. The first thing that came to my mind was that someone from the platoon identified the DCC returning and he reported him as 'a moving figure'. I said to them: 'look out! *This is the DCC exiting from me returning to you.* Make sure you don't open fire on him'…and then another quick report on the radio saying '*the figures do not wear helmets*', I said to myself: no way! A' and his signaler operator who accompanied him do not remove their helmets. No chance! And another quick report on the radio saying: '*they're wearing speckled uniform*', and then I heard him say *'Kalashnikov'*, it was unclear from these reports who saw these things, how they were seen. It was not clear to me in these moments. And then we heard a burst of fire and the fire fighting began (Combat commander, 'L' event, emphasis added).

The trigger event that sets up the sensemaking process begins with the report of one of the platoon soldiers on the radio of '*identifying figures*'. For the CC this report is very unclear and ambiguous. The cues continue to accumulate ('*the figures are not wearing helmets*'; '*they're wearing speckled uniform*'; '*Kalashnikov*') but the CC continues to discount the discrepant cues leaning on two frames that constitute a strong belief that the 'figures' belong to the deputy company commander (DCC) and his signaler operator who were '*exiting from me returning to you*' and on a preconception that these kind of blurring situations can potentially cause a friendly fire. These 'stick frames' also prevent the CC from identifying any other possible frames in the situation therefore prompts the CC, again, to discount the cues. The discount of cues and the 'sticky frames' result in no action taken or commanded by the CC which produces more confusion manifested in the surprise that 'caught' him once he heard the '*burst of fire and the firefighting*'. In this case no meaning was constructed, therefore the enactment was incomplete. The inability to provide meaning created inability to act and led the CC as well as his subordinate to freeze in place. This situation serves later as another baseline (enacted environment) for further interpretation and sets another cycle for enactment. The exact point in the enactment where sensegiving is articulated is when the CC talked on the radio and said '*Look out! This is the DCC exiting from me returning to you*'. Through this phrase the CC influences sensemaking and meaning construction of

his subordinates causing them, eventually, not to produce any reaction towards the '*figures*'. The battle develops from this point forward and ends with eight soldiers and commanders killed in action and dozens more wounded. The CC finishes his constructed story of the event specifying the severe psychological effect on him following this battle.

> It was difficult. Very difficult for me…we lost. We were skirmished. We were surprised. I was battered and humiliated. Personally humiliated… I had severe shell shock, I could not sleep…I went to a psychologist and afterwards a psychiatrist…every time I closed my eyes I immediately returned to the battlefield…

In part, these psychological influences are consequences of the CC's difficulty to construct a basic unit of meaning in the situation, that therefore produced a failure in activating it.

5.2 Definitions of 'Crisis Events' in Different Commanding Positions and Roles

As was briefly mentioned above commanders do not relate nor mention the physical or 'objective' features of any of the crisis events investigated in the research when they construct their stories of the 'crisis events' through the interviews. Also, as was shown earlier commanders constructed three criteria when examining an event and deciding whether it was a 'crisis event' or an 'orderly' operational event. Nevertheless, in analyzing the commanders' answers to the question (which was directed to them and towards the end of the interview) whether they define the event they participated in and manage, as a crisis or not, I realized that their answers were not a direct consequence of the criteria that they previously mentioned. A further examination led me to conclude that the commanders' answers vary according to the commanding positions and roles each of them was in.

The following chapter will examine the definitions that commanders in different commanding positions construct in relation to the event they participated in and managed. First, the event will be examined with respect to the three criteria for defining a crisis. Second, the definitions commanders constructed in relation to the event as a whole will be presented. For demonstrating purposes the analysis will focus on one event: the 'K' event. The analysis will follow a table (see Table 2).[8] The table exemplifies and summarizes how commanders in different commanding positions and roles constructed their stories of the event using each of the three criteria which were presented above. It also summarizes the definition each commander constructed of the event as a whole.

[8] A comprehensive analysis of the way organizational order influences the construction of the way within which commanders manage 'crises events' is explained in Padan (forthcoming) "Organizational order as a mechanism for constructing 'crisis events'—The case of infantry military leaders in the Israeli Military".

Table 2 Defining a 'crisis event': criterions versus final definition ('K' event)

Position	Function	Control	Organizational order		Event definition
			Emotional management	Organizational practices	
Platoon commander	"I remember that we walked fast. Very fast. We did not stop. Jumping over from time to time, saying: we must enter, we must try to enter. We aim for contact at all times"	"The soldiers said that they prefer not to exit to the military travel…that they need time to digest that their friend was killed in action. This was a red line for me. I told them that a soldier who will not exit the march is, in my opinion, not competent for battle. When we arrived at the point, I descended the bus alone…suddenly I saw them descending the bus too, putting on their gear and walking with me. Making a very good march. At the end I told them I was very proud of them"	"You cannot think about the fact that two combatant were killed in action. You always think of the possibility of entering the area of fighting again…you mustn't think…I remember that one of the soldiers started crying and the rest of them said to him…'there is no time for that now, stop it'"	"We are waiting. Waiting to get in [into the area of fighting]. During this time we performed combat-drills…[Was it artificial?] No. As long as you are in a state of being on-call this is the most important thing to do"	**Crisis** "From the moment we returned back [to the base—c.p.] until we proceed to practice I felt that the unit [platoon—c.p.] **was in a crisis**. The soldiers told me that they don't want to exit for the military travel, I saw them sitting in their rooms with 'long faces', two of my best soldiers did not return from their home vacation claiming to be sick. Yes, **I felt it was a crisis**"
Company commander	"I told the soldiers who were with me: 'we have two combatants killed in action…this is hard but we also killed two terrorists which is an operational achievement…There is	"As a CC I need to be focused on two things: one, to make sure that my subordinates do not become saddened and two, to continue to give operational outcomes… So I decided not to	"The main argument…'I'm in the same boat. as you… who do you think is going to walk up to the family and tell them that their son was killed in action? I am. Not you.	"…Just to be on the same page I notified all the company's combatants about the event. I told them that one of the company's combatants was killed in action, I described the	**Crisis** "It is **a crisis event** for the unit. Obviously…It entails a special organization and deployment of the unit"

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Position	Function	Control	Organizational order		Event definition
			Emotional management	Organizational practices	
	still a possibility that the enemy forces will continue to attack so we need to stay on-call'. The soldiers continued to be in a full alert, ready for any possibility to develop"	hesitate and to keep them running…so that they won't go backwards…"	Me and 'P' [the combat commander—C.P]. Who is going to look the parents in their eyes? I am. I am the commander…' When they realize that I'm with them in the same boat but reacting [emotionally] a little bit differently, then it's possible to react differently, it's just a question of how you choose [to react]"	exact chronological order of the event so there wouldn't be any rumors…of someone not shooting correctly or about the other for not being 'in place' etc. These rumors can get to the family and can devastate them"	
Battalion commander	"After the event ended the battalion went on training. That allowed us to concentrate on doing our job. Everyone was practicing, entering to cycles of doing and slowly regaining military competence… So people didn't deal with the event…"	"People didn't want to carry grenades on their bodies…this was a kind of phenomenon. Through leading by example I continued to carry grenades and I ordered the other battalion commanders to also do so …I also explained that there was a one in a million chance that a bullet would hit the grenade at the exact angle…this	"In the first 48 h I was working like a machine. I didn't have time to think. I didn't… I didn't let myself think"	"It is important to return to military competency…to return to an ordered pattern of military schedule. This was the purpose of going back to training so close after the event, among other things"	**Event** "This is a **skirmish** event. I had these kinds of events in my previous position almost every two weeks. This is not something rare…there were only two terrorists there, nothing much"

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Position	Function	Control	Organizational order		Event definition
			Emotional management	Organizational practices	
		was important and at the end it succeeded…"			
Brigade commander	"The unit stayed competent. The battalion continued operating and fighting all the time. This is a fact. We fought. We accomplished our mission"	"I was with them the whole night long till the day after and did not feel any problem in the battalion—not with their motivation nor with their military competence"	"A combatant that sees two of his friends killed in action must not enter into self-pity or self-misery or feel sorry for himself…he needs to continue fighting!"	"Whether an event will be a crisis event or not depends on the number of actions you need to pursue. It is all about the number and order of action you need to implement in order to get the unit back to military competence"	**Event** "This is a **skirmish**… like all military events…It is not rare. An event within which a DPC with this specific family status* is killed in action is indeed rare. That is why the event made such a story…the story was outside of the military"

*The DBC's brother was also killed in action during the first Lebanon war (1982) and the family's father died from a heart break as a consequence

According to the findings shown in Table 2, when relating to the function criterion, the PC explained that the troops did not stop functioning after the event had occurred but on the contrary: the event motivated them to try to get as close as possible to the enemy: “I remember that we walked fast. Very fast. We did not stop. Jumping over from time to time, saying: we must enter [into the area where the terrorists were], we must try to enter. We aim for contact at all times” (Platoon commander, ‘K’ event).

When the BC relates to the function criterion he also constructs the way the unit did not stop to operate and fight. Meaning, the event that occurred did not weaken the unit nor did it hurt the fighting motivation of it: “the unit stayed competent. The battalion continued operating and fighting all the time. This is a fact. We fought. We accomplished our mission.” As we can see from examining the table, the PC and BC exemplified all three criteria as being achieved by the unit. Yet, the definition each of them constructed for the event varies: whereas the PC defines the event as a ‘crisis event’, the BC defines it as a ‘*skirmish*’, meaning an ‘orderly’ operational event. Moreover, the BC regards the event as being like ‘*all military events*’. Furthermore, whereas the brigade commander and battalion commander define the event examined in the research as a ‘*skirmish*’ meaning ‘just’ an ‘orderly’ operational event, the PC and CC define the event as a ‘crisis event’. This finding led me to conclude that commanders in different commanding positions and roles construct different definitions of the same given operational event, even when leaning on identical criteria. Another indication that reinforces this claim is manifested in things said by relatively senior commanders, though in relation to soldiers and not in relation to other commanders. For instance, having asked the brigade commander in the ‘L’ event whether the event investigated was a crisis or not, he asked me if I was about to interview soldiers from the battalion. I answered that I interview commanders from different commanding positions. His reaction to my answer was: “well, this is good. Because interviewing soldiers about these issues [whether an event is a crisis or not] is very dangerous.” The BC’s answer implies that commanders also share the idea that different positions in the organization can lead to different definitions of the same event.

The next chapter will discuss and offer an explanation concerning the findings presented in this chapter.

6 Discussion

Although the term crisis is rarely used in military contexts, the present study revealed that commanders in infantry units in the IDF are familiar with this term; they can imagine crisis events occurring in military contexts; and they can produce criteria for defining crisis events. Nevertheless, ‘crisis events’ in the military context are a subjective matter. This subjectivity is reflected in the definitions commanders in different commanding positions and roles construct in a given operational event. The findings suggest that the way commanders construct their definitions for a

'crisis event' is a manifestation of the intensity of their organizational embeddedness (OE) in the organization. This implies that different intensities of OE shape the definition that commanders construct in relation to a given event thereby influencing its definition. This finding strengthens the argument first made in the research that the contested nature of organizational meanings exists not only in 'civilian' organizations (e.g. Monin et al. 2013) but also in military ones.

Commanders do not relate nor mention the physical or 'objective' features of any of the events being investigated in the research when they examine whether a given event is a crisis or not. They set up three criteria for defining a crisis event: function, control and organizational order which were all exemplified using quotes from different interviews. As was shown, definitions of 'crisis events' form part of the sensemaking process of events as they enable leaders to shape and construct organizational meaning. Sensemaking processes are constituted from cycles of interpretations and actions—termed as enactment—which leads towards an activated authoring of frameworks or, in other words, units of meanings (Weick 1995, 2001; Weick et al. 2005). Typifying the process of sensemaking shows that difficulty in making sense of a situation, hence failing to activate it, can result in severe psychological influences for the 'sense-maker'. This was exemplified in the sensemaking process of the CC in the 'L' event. Future researches may want to apply psychological perspectives in order to further analyze possible outcomes of the failures of sensemaking processes in military contexts, as well as others.

The research shows that the constructed event definition differs between commanders depending on the commanding position and role of the commander who defines it. For example, in the 'K' event, whereas the PC and the CC defined the event as a 'crisis event', the BC and the BC defined the event as a 'skirmish'. This means that as long as we move away from the commander's specific unit (platoon and/or company) within which the event occurred, the event's definition turns more neutral and less dense with emotions and organizational meanings. The claim of this research is that the difference reflected in the commander's constructed definitions is a manifestation of their OE. More specifically, the hierarchical position or the commanding position and role of the commander influence the construction of the events' definition since it is associated with the intensity of the commander's OE.

OE is an acid test for examining the comprehension of the organizational culture as well as for identifying with it. Feldman and Ng (2007) defined OE as the totality of forces that keep people in their current organizations. They proposed that individuals are embedded in their organizations to the extent that they have formal or informal *links* with organizational members, perceive that they *fit* the organization, and perceive *sacrifices* by leaving the organization. According to these scholars, there are different degrees of embeddedness (Feldman and Ng 2007, p. 353). This could mean that individuals differ in the degree within which they identify with the organization's norms, values, means and purposes and the degree within which they are committed to them. Therefore, for example, a strong OE can imply a strong identification with the organization's norms, values, means and purposes and a strong commitment to them.

Out of the three criteria commanders use in order to construct their definition of crisis events, it is possible to identify function and control as being part of military's well known commanding tool of command and control. The third criterion for defining a crisis event which commanders use is termed as 'organizational order'. This criterion was identified for influencing the way military leaders construct the management of 'crisis events' and therefore for being a leadership tool (Padan forthcoming). The current research adds in another aspect of organizational order, binding organizational order and OE together. It claims that a commander's commanding position and role influences the construction of the event's definition because it is associated with the extent of the commander's embeddedness in the organizational order. Moreover, as explained in the previous research (Padan forthcoming), organizational order is reflected in the way commanders manage emotions (their subordinate's as well as their own) and regulates various organizational practices they need to operate (also on their own and through their subordinates). Hence, the extents to which dimensions of organizational order are manifested in the commanders' constructed stories of the events actually reflect the intensity of the commander's OE.

Commanders in different commanding positions understand the organizational culture and its purposes even when they 'hold' different OE. Therefore, a collective and coordinated action can still emerge by them. In other words, although the sensemaking process is regarded as social (Weick 1995) and through which people "produce, negotiate and sustain a shared sense of meaning" (Gephart et al. 2010, as quoted in Maitlis and Christianson 2014, p. 66), "'shared' or 'intersubjective' meaning need not indicate a completely overlapping agreed-upon understanding but rather understanding that are close enough or equivalent in ways that allow coordinated action" (ibid., p. 67).

OE even raises another understanding concerning organizational contexts: Differences found between commanders' constructed event definitions also means that the organizational context is not the only factor influencing the construction of a given event, as a crisis or not, and in any event it indicates that contexts are not unified. As claimed in the research, another factor influencing the construction of a given event is manifested in the commander's OE. Furthermore, there are other findings in the research indicating another aspect of OE which is related to career management. These findings imply that the way senior commanders construct their story of a given event is influenced by their need to manage their career in the organization. Future research can examine these preliminary findings within any military organization.

Since sensemaking is a key leadership capability as well as a core leadership tool (Shamir 2007; Ancona 2011), the sensemaking process allows the study of the commander's leadership. In the Israeli-military context, defining an event as a 'crisis event' or as 'other' event is associated with the commander's leadership capabilities. This is so since, according to the IDF military doctrine (2014), the way the commander will *lead* the event will *determine* whether the event will be experienced as a 'crisis event' or as an 'orderly' (operational) event. This means that according to this doctrine, the events' definition is not fixed but, actually,

subjected to processes of the commander's social construction (as it was found in the research) which, in turn, reflects the organization's stance concerning the role of the commander in the military organization. It seems that this is the reason why the IDF does not specify criteria for defining crisis events since this would take away the commander's ability to make sense of the event as well as would deprived him from a meaningful leadership tool and, as indicated in the present study, also a central criterion for the commander's superiors to examine his leadership. This kind of organizational culture which leaves room for commanders to influence their subordinates in meaningful ways is also manifested, for instance, in the way soldiers in the IDF are described by their junior commanders (such as PC and CC). They resemble soldiers as 'modeling clay' in the hands of their commanders waiting to be sculpted, and construct the commander's role as the educator of his soldiers (Padan et al. 2009).

In sum, the IDF military culture, at least as long as it involves commanders in infantry units, binds leadership with function, control and organizational order and pushes aside 'objective' criteria for defining 'crisis events'. By doing so the organization leaves the commander space for constructing and for 'making sense' of the event. In other words, it leaves the commander space to influence the direction that the event will take during its occurrence as well as in its aftermath, hence gives the commander a complete responsibility to lead the event and, by doing so, letting him, in the final analysis, to construct the event. Moreover, it can be said that by doing so, the organization also gives commanders space to influence the way the event will be remembered in the organizational memory. Future research can examine and compare different ways in which operational events are constructed inside the military organization versus outside, in the wider Israeli, or any other, society. This kind of research can further help to examine the reciprocal influential relationship between armed forces and society.

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Author Biography

Carmit Padan is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her Ph.D. research concentrates on social construction on crisis events. She presently holds a Research Associate position at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). Previously, she worked as a researcher in the leadership development school of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) for eight years. Her areas of interest include civil leadership, military leadership, civil-military relations and social resilience. Ms. Padan is a member of the Board of Directors of the Israeli Association of Civil-Military Studies.

Part III
Leadership in Extreme Situations and Lessons Learned/Education

Leading in Extremis Situations: How Can Leaders Improve?

Deirdre P. Dixon and Michael R. Weeks

Abstract *In extremis* leadership is a situation in which the leader's life and those of his/her team are, or are perceived to be, in danger. Because dangerous situations are difficult to study, and most of the literature is theoretical, little is known about how leaders communicate with their teams and make sense of these contexts. We proposed research to address this gap and understand how leaders sensemake in *in extremis* situations and sensegive to their teams and how this affects *in extremist* situation outcomes. Our study was a qualitative study of thirty US Army leaders from West Point who recently have returned from combat tours in the Middle East. Our data demonstrate that sensemaking and sensegiving in that context differ from those processes in more commonly studied benign situations. We found that leaders who have mental flexibility, sense of duty, and self-confidence were the best prepared for these dangerous situations. Our study has implications for both theory and practice.

Keywords Sensemaking · Sensegiving · Leadership · *In extremis* context

1 Introduction

There is surging interest for *in extremis* leadership (Hannah et al. 2009, 2010)—defined as situations in which leaders' and followers' lives are at high risk (Gardner et al. 2005). Leading in perilous environments contrasts sharply with doing so under stable conditions (Baran and Scott 2010). In an increasingly unstable world, understanding how leaders[1] function in *in extremis* situations is essential for mil-

[1]From here on the generic masculine is used in this text for the purpose of simplification, and our study only included men, but the text equally refers to women.

D.P. Dixon (✉)
University of Tampa, Tampa, USA
e-mail: ddixon@ut.edu

M.R. Weeks
Houston Baptist University, Houston, USA

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itary (Yammarino et al. 2010), firefighters (Baran and Scott 2010) and other first responders or critical action organizations (Hannah et al. 2009)—but is also relevant for those at the helm of traditional and other organizations.

Conducting research on leadership is difficult in itself—but research on leadership in perilous conditions is 'nearly impossible' (Campbell et al. 2010, p. S2). *In extremis* leadership has its roots in military stress, which has been studied since the 1950s (Egbert et al. 1957), but it remains one of the least addressed areas of leadership research (Hannah et al. 2009). Most empirical studies have appeared in military journals (Baran and Scott 2010; Olsen et al. 2010; Samuels et al. 2010). These studies focus on *in extremis* conditions—how leaders construe their environments, how ethical behavior is impacted, and how leader self-control and leader assertiveness can be improved. Most *in extremis* leadership research in non-military venues has focused on firefighters (Weick 1993), actors in natural disasters (Chow 2008), and emergency medical technicians (EMT) (Popa et al. 2010).

A number of studies have addressed how leaders make sense of *in extremis* environments (Weick 1993, 1995; Weick and Roberts 1993; Weick and Sutcliffe 2007). What has not been studied in depth, however, is how leaders help subordinates make sense of situations. This idea has been termed *sensegiving* (Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991; Maitlis and Lawrence 2007; Snell 2002).

To address this gap in the literature, a qualitative research study was conducted based on semi-structured interviews with thirty U.S. Army leaders who have recently led teams in *in extremis* situations. By eliciting rich narratives of critical incidents involving officers leading teams perceived to be in danger, we hope to generate ideas about how leaders make sense of *in extremis* situations.

Our work has implications for both scholarship and practice. We hope to make a meaningful contribution to the limited empirical research on sensemaking during situations of extremis leadership. Our results should also contribute to the development of leaders with the potential of responding in *in extremis* contexts. Although *in extremis* leadership is generally considered a military and first responder domain, traditional organizations may benefit from lessons learned about it.

2 Research Questions and Conceptual Model

When a military leader perceives his team in danger, how does he make sense of the situation (sensemaking) and communicate that sense (sensegiving) to team members? What leader characteristics affect the dangerous experience?

To guide the research, we designed a conceptual model presented in Fig. 1 and elaborated in the text below.

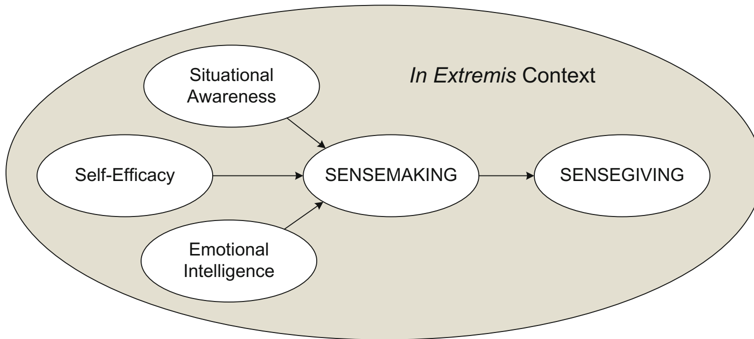

Fig. 1 Conceptual model: sensemaking and sensegiving in *in extremis* conditions

Our model was inspired by the literature on sensemaking. Sensemaking is about understanding one's environment enough to move forward and take action; it literally means "the making of sense" (Weick 1995, p. 4). It is the state of being "thrown into an ongoing, unknowable, unpredictable streaming of experiences in search of answers to the question, what is the story" (Weick et al. 2005, p. 410). Sensemaking explains how people decipher information through filters so they can devise an appropriate manner to act in situations they encounter (Jensen 2009). Some factors that may influence a leader's sensemaking are situational awareness (Sonnenwald and Pierce 2000), self-efficacy (Bandura 1982, 1997; Bandura and Adams 1977) and emotional intelligence (Goleman et al. 2002).

How leaders make sense of a situation and then communicate that sense to their team constitutes sensegiving, a more recent focus by scholars of sensemaking (Corvellec and Risberg 2007; Maitlis and Lawrence 2007; Smerek 2011; Stensaker et al. 2003).

Context refers to the set of elements in which an object is embedded (George and Jones 1997). The primary role of context is to "remove ambiguity or to interpret the situation" (Bazire and Brézillon 2005, p. 34). The importance of the context is well documented in psychology (Mowday and Sutton 1993), organizational behavior (Porter and McLaughlin 2006) and leadership (Osborn et al. 2002; Tosi 1991) literature. Despite calls in the leadership literature for over twenty-five years for more focus on context (Blair and Hunt 1986; Hannah et al. 2010; Johns 2001), there remains little focus on it (Campbell et al. 2010). Porter and McLaughlin's (2006) study of 373 leadership articles, for example, revealed only 16% of the articles took context into consideration. Our context—*in extremis*, meaning a life threatening situation is discussed in detail in the next section.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research is informed by theories from several streams of literature—organizational behavior, social science, psychology, and leadership. We begin by discussing the *in extremis* context of the study, followed by the notion of sensemaking, the central focus of the proposed research. Thereafter we consider situational or environmental awareness. Next, we examine self-efficacy and the emotional intelligence of the leader. Exploration of complexity theory and communication follow, and we conclude by addressing sensegiving.

2.2 Context

Our inquiry focuses on leadership behaviors exhibited in dangerous contexts, often referred to as *in extremis*, an expression leadership researchers have used to describe perilous situations where actors are "at the point of death" (Kolditz 2006, p. 657). Scholars have offered various definitions of "extremis" and "in extremis" contexts in their research. Kolditz and Brazil (2005) used it to refer to situations where followers believe that leader behavior will influence their survival. This definition emphasizes that not just the context, but also the *perception* of the context by involved individuals is important. The leader/follower relationship is paramount in the definition; the leader is relied upon for survival. Kolditz (2007) illustrated this by describing an expert mountain guide and a novice both on the same mountain with dissimilar views on the danger involved; one may perceive the situation as "*in extremis*," but the other may not.

We adopt the definition of extremis situations as those "in which leaders or their followers are *personally* faced with highly dynamic and unpredictable situations and where the outcomes of leadership may result in severe physical or psychological injury (or death) to unit members" (Campbell et al. 2010, p. S3). We will examine leading when the leader is in situ with the team.

Extreme events can occur in myriad situations and across organizations (Hannah et al. 2009). Our definition does not include crisis leadership which can occur when "a situation that threatens high priority goals… suddenly occurs with little or no response time available" (Pearson and Clair 1998, p. 60) Doctors who are called in for emergency surgeries address crisis situations, but are not in *in extremis* situations, since the *doctors*' lives are not in danger, unless they are working with *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (Doctors without Borders).

Other important factors include characteristics of the leader and what affects him in his sensemaking. Current leadership scholars distinguish between leading and leadership (Day 2000; Day et al. 2004; Hannah et al. 2010). Leading is an individual accomplishment with innate knowledge, skills, and ability—the individual attributes of a specific leader (Day 2000). Leadership, however, is more of a collective action—"a social process that engages everyone in the community" (Day

2000, p. 583). Leadership is about the interaction of all members of the organization (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Palmer et al. 2011). We will focus on leading as an individual characteristic and will examine variables that could make a difference in the sensemaking process, and hence the sensegiving process. These variables include situational awareness and the leader's self-efficacy and emotional intelligence.

2.3 Sensemaking

An individual must make sense of a situation before he/she can give sense about it. In Weick's terms, sensemaking is the way people understand, or make meaning of their experience; people do things they may not understand until they think about it afterward. Weick's ideas are similar to Gidden's (1986); they both discuss "unintended consequences and the limits of practical consciousness" (Eisenberg 2006, p. 1695) and examine the interaction of action and thought, but the origins of his theory are in pragmatism (James 1975).

Weick observed sensemaking at the organizational level, with a special focus on situations that tend to be ambiguous or changing, noting seven properties of it. The first, 'grounded in identity construction,' refers to how one thinks about one's self as part of a team and how others view one. *Who* people believe they are in this specific context shapes how they enact and interpret other events (Currie and Brown 2003; Thurlow and Mills 2009; Weick 1993).

Weick's second property of sensemaking is 'retrospective.' In looking back at something, one gives it a frame of reference. There is a hindsight bias, but retrospective helps give clarity and the time to decipher what really is important (Dunford and Jones 2000; Gephart 1993; Huzzard 2004; Weick 1995).

In defining his third property of sensemaking—'enactive of sensible environments'—Weick argues that people are part of the environment and what they expect to happen is usually what they get. How people enact their surroundings occurs in their narratives (Bruner 1991; Currie and Brown 2003). Talking and writing help individuals figure out how they feel about events after they occur (Abolafia 2010; Isabella 1990; Weick 1995).

Weick's fourth sensemaking property—'social'—refers to human connectivity. We have a shared understanding about things, and our understanding is about alignment and socialization (Weick 1995). Not only does the individual make sense for themselves through sharing, narratives shared with others also help in the preservation of stories (Isabella 1990; Maitlis 2005).

'Ongoing,' Weick's fifth property, alludes to the uninterrupted nature of sensemaking. Individuals are always in the middle of something and often use past events that are similar to understand the present environment (Weick 1995). Thus, people both shape environment and react to it; they look at results and evaluate themselves (Thurlow and Mills 2009) through a feedback loop.

Weick used schemas, in which individuals use what they know to figure out things they do not know, surmising that they are 'focused on and by extracted cues.' Environmental cues, he argued, help to decipher what material is important and what makes sense (Brown et al. 2008).

People are, Weick concluded, 'driven by plausibility rather than accuracy,' Suggesting that we need to know enough to start something, although the information does not have to be correct. This notion has roots in the expectancy theory of motivation. When someone chooses one behavior over another, their choice may be influenced by the end they desire—i.e. they must believe they can do the exercise in order for them to even try (Porter and Lawler 1968; Vroom 1995). Individuals often choose plausibility over accuracy in discussing events and contexts (Brown et al. 2008; Currie and Brown 2003).

The properties of sensemaking change as events are occurring and are being interpreted. Individual narrations, in turn, help people understand the sense they have made of the event from what they have written or stated (Currie and Brown 2003). As Weick said, "how can I know what I think until I see what I say?" (Weick et al. 2005, p. 412).

Sensemaking is not a new concept for the military. Deciphering how military leaders act in various situations often begins by analyzing sensemaking (Jensen 2009). There are empirical studies where researchers examined sensemaking from various military perspectives, focusing on planning and command and control (Alberts and Hayes 2007; Jensen 2006, 2009; Jensen and Brehmer 2005), training (Klein 1993; Klein et al. 2003; Larsson et al. 2001; Sieck et al. 2007), and trust (McGuinness and Leggatt 2006).

Sensemaking has been identified in practitioner circles of the military community as a worthy concept to investigate. The office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control and Intelligence held a sensemaking symposium in 2001. The military objective was to scrutinize sensemaking for military operations and to build upon "the conceptual framework…and to develop a better understanding of how different fields of research might contribute to a number of applied areas unique to the military" (Leedom 2001, p. 2). In the symposium, sensemaking was identified as a function of the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) on initial phases of the cognitive process (Leedom 2001).

The MDMP is a comprehensive, analytic process used by military teams when confronted with dynamic and uncertain environments (US Army 2010). Commanders continually intermix analytic and intuitive approaches when exercising command; analytic is the systematic approach, and intuitive is the "act of reaching a conclusion that emphasizes pattern recognition" based on many leadership variables such as knowledge, experience, judgment, boldness, and character (US Army 2008, pp. 5–2). According to the final report from the sensemaking symposium, sensemaking comes into play during the mission analysis phase, in the "cognitive domain" (Leedom 2001, p. 3). See Fig. 2 for the MDMP process.

The symposium's final report (Leedom 2001) identified three reasons why the military should expand research on sensemaking: first, future military personnel will be forced to conduct in more dynamic environments with a "complex spectrum

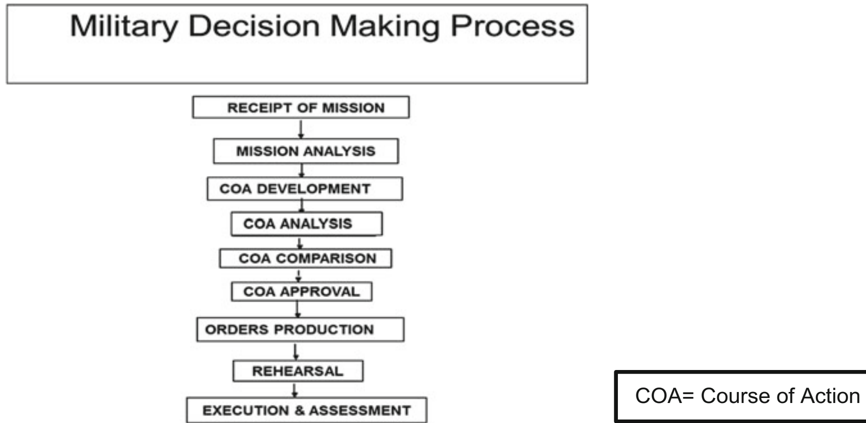

Fig. 2 Military decision making process (adapted from US Army FM 5-0, The Operations Process 2010, p. 9)

of operations" (ibid., p. 4); second, the military needs to employ innovative command approaches to differing situations; final, military sensemaking research should be expanded to capitalize on the "network centric warfare concepts" which require a thorough understanding of sensemaking at the command and control level (ibid., p. 4). Sensemaking allows individuals and organizations to transform tumultuous situations into events or information they can comprehend and hence act on (Mills 2003)—something military commanders continually strive to do.

2.4 Situational Awareness

Situational awareness refers to how much knowledge an individual has about a situation (Endsley 1995a, b; Strater et al. 2001) and the degree to which the individual can predict what will ensue (Jensen and Brehmer 2005). As input from the environment is imperative because of the dynamic nature of things (Endsley 1995b), even ordinary, routine behaviors rely on situational awareness, or on a consistent, almost unconscious current appraisal of relevant facts. When individuals are faced with complex environments, the situational awareness becomes even more vital because there is more to contemplate.

In complex, dynamic environments, including *in extremis* situations, situational awareness is vital. Having more information does not necessarily imply better situational awareness, since too much information can overwhelm (Jensen and Brehmer 2005; Strater et al. 2001). A leader cannot just be aware of random pieces of data; there must be a sophisticated projection of future states with regard to relevant goals (Endsley 1995a).

In *in extremis* combat situations, fatigue, stress, anxiety and night operations are just a few of the numerous variables that can negatively affect a leader's situational awareness (Strater et al. 2001). As the complexity of the environment increases, situational awareness is more difficult to both maintain and acquire (Endsley 1995b). As faster response times are required, decisions and analysis of the environment must be updated continuously (Endsley 1995b; Strater et al. 2001; Weick and Roberts 1993) or the decision-maker will be ineffective.

In a perilous context, however, it is not just the environmental situation that a leader must be thinking about; the understanding of the leader's current goals is also pertinent so he can form a holistic environmental snapshot (Strater et al. 2001) of what he needs to do in the future. Goals are fundamental in the situational awareness process because they influence how the leader's attention is focused, how the information is filtered and how it is all interpreted (Endsley 1995b). Situational awareness can be affected by a leader's "abilities, experience, and training" (Endsley 1995b, p. 35). It follows that once leaders become situationally aware in the *in extremis* context, their sensemaking should become more effective. Along with situational awareness, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence were examined to see the relationship with a leader's sensemaking.

2.5 *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy, the most widely studied form of efficacy (Hannah et al. 2008), is defined as belief in one's ability to perform a successful course of action that leads to a preferred outcome (Bandura 1982, 1997; Bandura and Adams 1977). Self-efficacy affects motivation—it is not just a matter of understanding what to do, it "involves a generative capability in which component cognitive, social and behavioral skills must be organized into integrated courses of action" (Bandura 1982, p. 122). With roots in the expectancy theory of motivation (Vroom 1995), self-efficacy is broad in scope—it deals with overall performance levels both within and across goal groups versus being tied to one specific group of goals (Locke and Latham 1990).

Although self-efficacy has been described "as the key cognitive variable regulating leader functioning in a dynamic environment" (McCormick 2001, p. 22), the leadership studies domain has lagged others in recognizing its importance (McCormick 2001). Self-efficacy is similar to self-confidence (Bass and Bass 2008; McCormick 2001); but self-confidence has posited problems for researchers wanting a construct "embedded in a validated theoretical system" (McCormick 2001, p. 23). Individuals who believe they have control of their destiny tend to handle stress more effectively (Bass and Bass 2008) and such leaders are more apt to have higher self-efficacy (Bandura 1982). A leader with perceived self-efficacy will persist in the face of impediments and the stronger the level of self-efficacy, the more purposeful the leader's efforts to overcome an adverse experience (Bandura and Adams 1977).

Leader self-efficacy is a "specific form of efficacy associated with the level of confidence in the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with leading others" (Hannah et al. 2008, p. 669). According to Hannah et al. (2008) and Wood and Bandura (1989), leader self-efficacy (LES) is associated with enhanced leader performance. We conjecture that it may affect how a leader in an *in extremis* environment makes and communicates his sense of it.

2.6 Emotional Intelligence

EI not only helps identify outstanding leaders but also identifies strong leader performance (Goleman 2004) vital for survival when in *in extremis* environments. EI competencies are not endowed at but are learned (Boyatzis and McKee 2005; Goleman et al. 2002). Eighteen personal competencies comprise the framework of EI, and they may be viewed through four EI dimensions which include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman et al. 2002).

Self-awareness and self-management are personal competencies that determine how we control ourselves (Goleman et al. 2002). The former refers to one's ability to understand personal emotions, i.e., the consciousness of feelings and the ability to understand and acknowledge them (Higgs 2003). Individuals with strong self-awareness tend to be truthful, not only to themselves, but with others (Goleman 2004). Self-awareness may be important in decision making in an *in extremis* situation because self-aware leaders take values and goals into consideration and are honest when they make judgment calls that require an evaluation of personal and team competencies (Goleman 2004). Self-aware leaders are self-confident but also have realistic expectations about their abilities.

Self-management, which includes such characteristics as "self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative and optimism" (Goleman et al. 2002, pp. 254–255) thus reflects self-awareness and is present whether an individual performs or not (Bradberry and Greaves 2005). An EI leader allows himself the flexibility to think and manage emotional reactions to various contexts and situations that occur in a dynamic environment. When in an *in extremis* environment, a leader with self-management skills may be more effective than a leader lacking them (Fisher et al. 2010).

Social competency—composed of social awareness and relationship management—is another characteristic of leaders with EI. These combined capabilities "determine how we manage relationships" (Goleman et al. 2002, p. 39), i.e. how well we understand how others are feeling (regardless of how we may feel) and how long we take to consider other's perspectives (Bradberry and Greaves 2005). Relationship management is about the leader's abilities to be aware of his/her personal thoughts and emotions, keeping in mind others' emotions and managing the interaction of the two. Specific competencies for relationship management are "inspiration, influence, developing others, change catalyst, conflict management,

and teamwork and collaboration" (Goleman et al. 2002, pp. 255–256). Leaders with highly developed social competencies may be more successful in the *in extremis* environment.

2.7 Complexity Leadership Theory

Complexity leadership theory (CLT) examines leadership from a different perspective, combining information concerning both the physical and social sciences (Bass and Bass 2008; Marion and Uhl-Bien 2001). CLT can assist in assessing how leaders can flexibly adapt to dynamic environments. Traditional leadership models used to understand organizational behavior are hierarchical, (Uhl-Bien 2007) but

> viewing leadership in terms of a reciprocal, recursive influence process among multiple parties in a systems context is very different from studying unidirectional effects of a single leader on subordinates, and new research methods may be needed to describe and analyze the complex nature of leadership processes in social systems (Yukl 2002, p. 433).

Complexity leadership theory enables one to look at organizations as "complex adaptive systems" and grounds the model "not in bureaucracy, but in complexity" (Uhl-Bien 2007, p. 302). This comment implies that the system parts are interlocked and should not be examined separately because the system assessed in its entirety is distinct from the parts. Complex systems include conditions that are continually changing which require adaptive leadership (Osborn and Hunt 2007; Uhl-Bien 2007). Similar to crisis situations that are "highly ambiguous" (Pearson and Clair 1998, p. 2), *in extremis* leadership, involving environments that are constantly fluctuating, meets the conditions to apply CLT.

The traditional bureaucratic paradigm of military leadership is changing, albeit slowly (Dempsey 2011; Paparone 2004). Today's army leaders must be adaptive and flexible to appropriately respond to the complex environment facing soldiers (Useem 2010). Applying the concepts of CLT will require a new approach for army leaders, but army leadership is already acknowledging the importance of understanding the changing world soldiers face and how leadership and leadership development must be transformed (Hannah and Sowde 2012). CLT can offer a unique lens for the military to examine leadership, not only top down, but also from differing angles all at once. Using a multidimensional model like CLT may help explain sensegiving from various leadership perspectives.

2.8 Communication Theory

When a leader is attempting to give sense to his team, communication is crucial to ensure understanding. Miscommunications can be inconvenient or problematic in normal conversations, but deadly in *in extremis* environments.

Lasswell's maxim on communication defines the process as: "who says what to whom in which channel with what effect" (Lasswell 1948, p. 216). The mathematical theory of communications examines it from the aspect of probability (Shannon and Weaver 1949). If data were always the same, they are not data because they are not telling the researcher anything new; contrarily, when a novel element in the data appears and the researcher finds something he was not expecting, learning can occur from the communication (Weaver 1949).

Another way to examine communication is not just to look at the message, but also how the message is delivered by the sender, taking into account social constructs. Sociologist Erving Goffman emphasized that individuals are all actors, and our performance of self is how we frame communication (1978). The holistic message, the significance of expression, style, and performance are all incorporated into communication and should be understood by the receiver. In a military situation when leaders are often identified as part of a mission, communication may powerfully inform their performance. Each member of a team occupies and fills a position, and team members can effectively communicate without knowing one another because they know the roles each plays (Eisenberg 1990). Effective communication from a leader to and throughout his team is an essential aspect to the team performance.

Interpersonal communication is defined as "the process of sending and receiving symbols with attached meanings from one person to another" (Schermerhorn et al. 1994, p. 562). The process has three basic elements, the sender, the receiver and the message, and each of these is a possible source of malfunction (Prince and Associates 1988). An effective interaction occurs when the intended meaning and the perceived meaning from the source to the receiver are the same (Schermerhorn et al. 1994). Interference in communication can be termed *noise* and can occur in various forms: distortion, disruptions, or anything that breaks down the transmission process. Figure 3 illustrates how noise can impede the communication process.

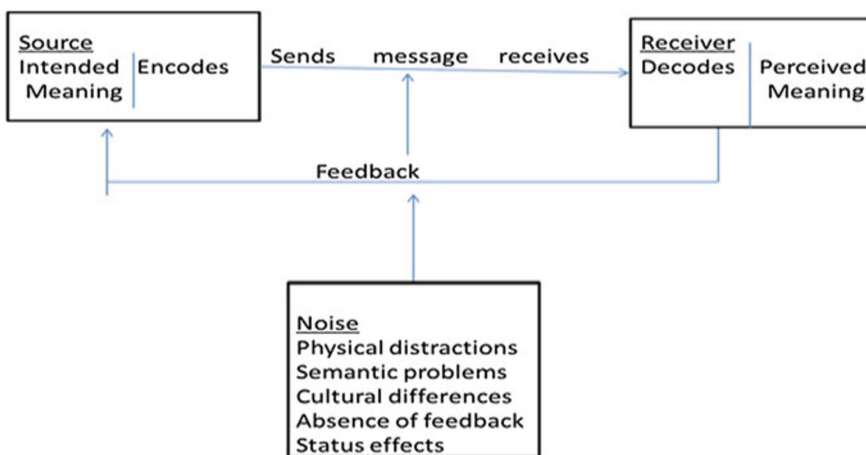

Fig. 3 Communication process and noise (Schermerhorn et al. 1994, p. 563)

An *in extremis* context could be interpreted as noise, a physical distraction that can interfere with messages on both the sender's and/or the receiver's ends. Clarity of communication from the leader to the team during perilous contexts is vital. The leader's capacity to synchronize the endeavors of the team toward accomplishment of the mission is contingent upon the ability to effectively communicate. The leader's comprehension of the importance of communications and things that can impact it is essential for organizational effectiveness (Prince and Associates 1988).

2.9 Sensegiving

Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991, p. 442) originated the term "sensegiving" teams—defining it as "concerned with the process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality." Sensegiving is an expansion of sensemaking; where sensemaking is about understanding, sensegiving is about influencing (Holt 2009) and persuading (Bartunek et al. 1999). Sensemaking and sensegiving occur together, but the cognitive process oscillates between the two teams—understanding and then influencing (Corvellec and Risberg 2007).

Most authors have adhered to Gioia and Chittipeddi's procedure of using sensegiving in the strategic change arena (Bartunek et al. 1999; Dunford and Jones 2000; Maitlis 2005; Maitlis and Lawrence 2007; Rouleau 2005; Smerek 2011), while a few have considered it in an entrepreneurial context (Hill and Levenhagen 1995; Nicholson and Anderson 2005). Kuperman (2003) examined firms (sensegivers) aiming to influence financial analysts' (sensemaker's) meaning construction and the importance of cognitive schemas in that process. The majority of prior research on sensegiving has examined situations where organizational structures can change; the organizations are either undergoing strategic change (Bartunek et al. 1999; Smerek 2011), reevaluating the organization (Ravasi and Schultz 2006), or developing a new type of organization (Hill and Levenhagen 1995; Nicholson and Anderson 2005).

Most existing sensegiving research is on stable organizations in stable environments, and the US Army is an organization that is fairly stable (US Army 2005). Leaders in the Army, particularly in *in extremis* situations, cannot change the structure of their teams or organization's teams—they must be able to adapt, make decisions quickly and communicate immediately with their teams (Useem 2010). What is different in this research is the dynamic nature of the *in extremis* environment. Compare the Army organization with the organization of orchestras (Maitlis and Lawrence 2007); both engage sensemakers that are attempting to decode their environmental cues, but the time frame for each is vastly different. The Maitlis and Lawrence (2007) article focuses on organizational processes and the sensemaking around the issues—employee appraisals, performances of musicians, scheduling concerts—things that concerned the orchestra as a whole. The *in extremis* leader has possibly minutes to make sense of the environment and help his

team make sense of it, a narrow spectrum of time; the orchestra's time frame is a broader continuum with less urgency.

Sensegiving has been examined predominately as a way to impact the sense-making of others; however, little is actually known about the specifics of what individuals do when they are giving sense to others (Corvellec and Risberg 2007), or the conditions associated with sensegiving—i.e., the who, what, when, etc. (Maitlis and Lawrence 2007). When sensegiving does occur, leaders can use narrative, language, symbols and other methods of communication to give sense to others to lead them towards an intended perception of the situation (Dunford and Jones 2000; Maitlis and Lawrence 2007; Snell 2002). Sometimes sensegiving does not occur, even when issues are paramount (Dutton et al. 2002). The reasons behind the lack of sensegiving have yet to be fully researched (Maitlis and Lawrence 2007).

Sensegiving has also been revealed as a significant activity, important to others in the organization besides leaders; organizational stakeholders (Balogun 2003) and other personnel (Heller 1998) can also find relevance in sensegiving. Occasionally, sensegiving can occur from someone outside the organization, such as the media (Maltby 2016).

Maitlis and Lawrence (2007) showed there are two conditions where stakeholders and leaders are motivated to engage in sensemaking; first, when the issue has important consequences to the stakeholder, and second, when there is ambiguity and unpredictability and/or involving numerous stakeholders. The proposed research will only examine how *leaders* of teams *in extremis* conditions make sense of their environment and then give sense to their teams. Following the sensemaking—sensegiving process structure (Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991), the leader in the *in extremis* context is the sensemaker trying to influence and persuade the team through sensegiving.

3 Research Design

3.1 Methodological Approach

This qualitative research uses a grounded theory approach. Qualitative research is appropriate when the researcher can listen with an open mind to the experiences of the participants in real life situations (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Research that is looking at words, text, and is based on observations, interviews and documents usually requires processing and is the general nature of qualitative research (Miles and Huberman 1994). Maxwell (2005) has described the power of qualitative research as its focus on phenomena and people and its emphasis on words over numbers. Qualitative investigation allows for discovery versus testing of variables (Corbin and Strauss 2008). In general, the best method of research for studying a specific subject in depth is qualitative research (Myers 2008). Qualitative research

and analysis is apropos for studying leaders in *in extremis* environments to discover how they make sense of their environment and then give sense to their teams. Within qualitative research, there are several methods of approach, including action research, case studies, ethnography and grounded theory (Myers 2008).

One of the basic differences between grounded theory and other qualitative methods is there is a "continuous interplay between data collection and analysis" (Myers 2008, p. 106). Grounded theory is most appropriate when the researcher is looking for the theory to develop from the data (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The disposition of this research on *in extremis* leadership is one of naturalistic inquiry with a grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2006). To create theory grounded in data, an ongoing process is required (Strauss et al. 1990). Our approach was appropriate here because we are interested in discovering meaning, how leaders make sense of their environment and then give sense to their team—all of which are apropos for qualitative research using a grounded theory approach (Myers 2008).

3.2 Sample

The sample includes thirty officers who have had recent leadership roles in an *in extremis* environment in the Middle East. Many may have had multiple deployments in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom; all will have had at least one deployment. The respondents were successful leaders who have been recruited from all branches of the Army to enroll in the Eisenhower Leadership Development Program (ELDP) at West Point to train as Tactical (TAC) Officers. These TAC officers will serve as the primary developers of and role models for cadets (Leadership 2011). The selection of these individuals as TAC is a rigorous one, and although the officers have diverse backgrounds, all have proven to be successful as officers (Strasser 2010).

TAC officers are screened for diversity, so the sample includes mainly males and numerous ethnic groups. Percentage of women in the Army in 2011 is 13.4% of active duty soldiers (US Army 2011), so it makes sense that there were no women represented, the majority of the incoming Tactical officers were male. Other diversity groups present include blacks and Asian/Pacific ethnicities, both of whom are male. All participants are college graduates. As part of their training, TAC trainees enter a twelve month Masters of Arts Program in Social-Organizational Psychology (Leader Development) from Teachers College, Columbia University (Leadership 2011). Ages range from 28 to 37. All interviewees were US citizens, and the sample will include individuals from many different states.

The head of the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Department will have final approval of all individuals participating in the study. For the current TAC officers, the Brigade Tactical Officer (BTO) through the commandant's office has given approval. Currently, 36 captains and majors are assigned as TAC officers, and six are women. Seventeen percent of female TAC officers is consistent with the female population percentage of the Corps of Cadets. Each member in the ELDP and

approximately half of the current TACs who have just completed ELDP were invited to participate.

3.3 Data Collection

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews of approximately 60 min were conducted in a private room of the interviewee's choice at West Point and were recorded with the interviewees' permission. Along this process, there were memoranda and notes created to capture the thoughts, observations and feelings of the researcher at the time of the interview. Informed consent forms were signed, completed and stored for a minimum of three years. Participants were informed they may withdraw from the study at any time. All information was kept strictly confidential, and respondent identification will not be revealed. At the completion of each interview, the audio recording was downloaded from the audio recording device to the interviewer's personal computer and saved with a coded filed name. The file on the interviewer's personal computer was secured by a password known only by the interviewer, and backed-up to an external storage device, also secured by a password known only by the interviewer.

Prior to the interview, participants were asked to fill out a brief survey providing demographic data. Interview questions were open-ended and encourage narrative responses (Fleming 2001). Participants were asked to think of a time when he/she felt his/her team's lives were in danger and to and describe in detail how the event transpired and was resolved. Probes were used to elicit how the respondent felt and thought at that specific time. The questions were open-ended to ensure the answers were rich and personal narratives. Subsequently, respondents were asked to narrate a story with a different outcome. If the first narrative had a positive outcome, the second was a negative one and vice versa.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis were conducted simultaneously as appropriate in grounded theory. Three stages of coding—open, axial and then selective were conducted (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Open coding requires rigorous line by line reading of each transcript to identify fragments of text with potential significance. These may be words, phrases, sentences or larger segments of text. Each is captured and recorded on individual index cards that are later sorted into categories. The index cards created in the analysis of subsequent transcripts are then sorted into the same categories and additional categories created as needed. In this way, patterns of themes and concepts in the data emerge. In the second stage of coding—axial

coding—relationships between the categories identified during open coding are recognized. In the final stage of coding (selective), the categories are further refined and abstracted to yield the study's findings.

3.5 Findings

We were privileged to conduct phenomenological interviews with 30 soldiers (most with the rank of Captain or Major) who recently returned from duty in Iraq and Afghanistan where they led troops in *in extremis* situations. We are indebted to West Point for providing access to them. By recounting the details of specific instances in which they led imperiled troops, these soldiers promoted our understanding of how leaders make and give sense in life-threatening situations. Clear patterns emerged from their stories that clarified how *in extremis* situations are experienced and managed. The data characterized *in extremis* situations as a special case of dynamic states where leaders are in a perceptual cycle of sensemaking and sensegiving.

Our main findings show that leaders who have mental flexibility, a sense of duty, and self-confidence are more able to accurately assess the situation (sensemake) and can make a difference in the outcome.

3.6 Mental Flexibility

Mental flexibility is the willingness and ability to think of and consider solutions not readily apparent or even comfortable (Bar-On 1996). A certain amount of mental flexibility is good, enabling a person to "think outside the box" (Abbassi et al. 2009; Lord and Emrich 2000), but too much can paralyze, leaving a person unable to make a decision. In order to be useful, mental flexibility must be combined with a strong and clear "sense of duty" which can help prioritize choices.

3.7 Sense of Duty

We all have competing priorities that are important. Knowing your priorities in a crisis and what your duty is can be crucial for decision-makers. A business example of this can be seen in the recent struggles of General Motors Corporation (GMC)—the automaker. GMC has been caught up in the third recall of vehicles that have safety issues (GM Authority Staff 2016). In the past, GMC has been reticent to issue recalls, their priorities of costs/profit and safety were in conflict. Recently, however, they have appointed a new Global Safety Chief, whose job is to put the safety of the

consumer above profits for the company (Bennett 2014). Time will tell how that position will influence the overall decisions of the company, but at least there is a clearer prioritization of goals for the company leadership.

3.8 Self-efficacy

Finally, the issue of self-efficacy emerged. Like mental flexibility, self-efficacy was a characteristic that had to be combined with another quality, that of self-sacrifice (Perry 1996). A leader's ability to control fear or exude calmness can aid decision-making, but leaders have to be willing to put themselves on the line. Personal experience in Iraq showed this to be true. The primary author's unit of 219 people and 63 vehicles was required to go through a minefield that was marked on the periphery but not marked inside. Instead of ordering a junior soldier to lead the convoy, she went first. Although scared, the only way through this literal minefield of decisions was to lead confidently, while also assuming the risk she asked others to take by following her.

4 Conclusion

We believe there has not been enough research conducted in this area, and anything we can do to shed light on this subject will be helpful. Most of the current research has all of the in extremis leaders looked at as one body, including military, firefighters, and police (Bowman 2006; Campbell 2012; Fisher et al. 2010). If leaders can improve their leadership prior to entering these *in extremis* situations, perhaps the outcomes can improve. This research design begins with the Army officers interviewed.

Our sample was limited to recently repatriated Army officers and some Non-commissioned Officer (NCO) leaders. Including officers of other military services (e.g. Marines, Air Force, and Navy) who had also experienced in extremis situations may have produced different results. Our methodological approach required interviewees to recall past experiences and incidents—often emotional—and we understand the potential influence of retrospective biases. Our research design did not include interviews with other military personnel involved in the actual in extremis situations reported by our informants, including subordinates.

Our results have implications for both future research and practice. Our results, highlighting the importance of individual capacities, should be of interest and possible use to developers of military and/or other leadership training programs. While the theoretical notions of sensemaking and sensegiving may be appreciated by program developers, we suspect few curricula specifically specify and introduce them in a practical way to participants. Training programs may also not focus on the factors our data suggest powerfully influence sensemaking and sensegiving—e.g.,

honing participants' skills in sensing environmental cues or the role of self-awareness when sensegiving. While critical in *in extremis* situations, these factors may be very relevant in more benign organizational settings as well.

With respect to future research, our findings suggest several promising paths. Our access to participants for this study was limited to individual army leaders. Much could be learned by researching not only the leader in an in extremis situation, but also the followers. Doing so would allow fuller modeling of the dynamic dimensions of sensemaking/sensegiving in life/death situations. Studies that compare sensemaking and giving in different situations are also recommended to identify factors that affect them in varied settings or circumstances.

Although this research entailed dangerous occupations, the leadership lessons learned can be extrapolated to leaders in other organizations. Today's turbulent society makes it prudent for leaders to be ready for any situation (Arem Gundersen and Hansell 2014). Leaders who have mental flexibility, a strong sense of duty and self-confidence tempered with willingness to sacrifice will have a head start in assessing the situation and responding in a positive manner.

Appendix

Interview Protocol and Questions

1. **Introduction (Interviewer)**: "Hi (name). I just want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. If you will allow me, I'd just like to go over a few things before we begin."
2. **Purpose and Format for the Interview (Interviewer)**: "Our interview will be approximately 1 h and I am interested in having a discussion on leadership in dangerous environments, situations where you were in charge of one or more soldiers and you felt that your lives were in peril. I'm going to ask you to describe recent incidents that you feel best answer the question—describing for me the situations and what you specifically did."
3. **Confidentiality (Interviewer)**: "Everything you share in this interview will be kept in strictest confidence, and your comments will be transcribed anonymously—omitting your name and anyone else you refer to in this interview, as well as the responses that you provide to me."
4. **Audio Taping (Interviewer)**: "To help me capture your responses without being overly distracted by taking notes, I would like to audio tape our conversation with your permission. Again, your responses will be kept confidential, however, if there is something you would like to share off the record, or not have recorded, please let me know and I will be happy to turn off the recording device. May we begin?"
5. I'd like to start by learning about you—your early years, your career history and about you personally. Please tell me about yourself.

6. I asked if you could prepare for our discussion by thinking about two instances during your deployment.
   I asked you first to think of a time that stands out in your mind when you were in charge of one or more soldiers and suddenly your lives were in peril. In this instance, because you were in charge, the others relied upon you for direction. I'd like to understand everything about that situation—what it was, who was involved and what happened.
   Please describe that situation for me. Let's start with where you were, who you were with and what you were doing. Please describe the situation with as much detail as possible.
   (Allow respondent to speak. Probe as necessary to elicit rich detail:

   When did you first understand that you were in danger?
   How would you describe what you felt at that moment?
   How did you assess the situation?
   What information did you use in making your assessment?
   How and where did you get this information?
   What did you do with the information?
   Why did you decide to do what you did?
   What let you know that this was the right thing to do?
   How did you communicate your decision to the others?
   What was the most important thing for them to understand?
   What were your challenges in communicating this to them?
   How did they respond? What did they do? What was the outcome?

7. Now I'd like to ask you about another experience that stands out in your mind. Just like the last instance, in this one you were in charge of others, suddenly your lives were in danger and the others relied upon you for direction. The outcome in this case, however, was ***different*** than in the first situation. In this one the outcome was not as (positive/negative) as the last one. (If first story had positive outcome, ask about one less positive. If first had negative outcome, ask about a more positive one).
   Could you describe that situation for me? (Allow respondent to speak. Probe as necessary to elicit rich detail.) Let's start with where you were, who you were with and what you were doing.

   When did you first understand that you were in danger?
   How would you describe what you felt at that moment?
   How did you assess the situation?
   What information did you use in making your assessment?
   How and where did you get this information?
   What did you do with the information?
   Why did you decide to do what you did?
   What let you know that this was the right thing to do?
   How did you communicate your decision to the others?
   What was the most important thing for them to understand?

What were your challenges in communicating this to them?
How did they respond? What did they do?
What happened next?
Tell me more …
Is there anything I should have asked you and did not?
If I think of something later that I should have asked you, do you mind if I contact you again?

8. **Close (Interviewer)**
Thank participant. Ask for any questions or concerns. Provide business card if there is any follow up needed by participant.

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Authors Biography

Deirdre P. Dixon is an assistant professor of management at the University of Tampa's College of Business in Florida. Her research areas include leadership and strategy. Her undergraduate degree is from the United States Military Academy, her MBA is from Duke University and her Ph.D. is from Case Western Reserve University. She retired with over 22 years as an officer in the US Army. Her specialty is parachutes and she served in Iraq.

Michael R. Weeks is professor of management and dean of the Archie W. Dunham College of Business at Houston Baptist University in Houston, Texas. His research interests include leadership, innovation management, and strategy. He holds Ph.D. and M.Sc degrees from the University of Oxford (UK) and MBA and BEE degrees from Auburn University. He is a retired U.S. Air Force officer and served for 21 years. His military service includes over 3700 flight hours as a pilot in a variety of aircraft.

How Leaders Learn from Experience in Extreme Situations: The Case of the U.S. Military in Takur Ghar, Afghanistan

Christopher Kayes, Nate Allen and Nate Self

Abstract The 2002 Battle of Takur Ghar, also known as the Battle on Roberts Ridge, illustrates the challenges of learning from experience in extreme situations. The analysis follows the first hour of the battle and the events leading up to the battle. We propose a four-phase model of how leaders learn to operate effectively in extreme situations and identify the importance of judgment-based learning in extreme situations. Drawing on research from crisis and disaster, organizational resilience, and performance under stress, the events reveal the challenges faced by leaders operating in extreme situations. These challenges include unreliable information, situational novelty, unclear and shifting goals, and ill-structured situations. Three concepts—thrownness, depaysement, and collateral learning—are introduced into the lexicon of leadership in extreme situations to describe how leaders might overcome these challenges. The chapter suggests that the often-quoted statement, "trust your training," may not be enough to help leaders working in extreme situations and might be augmented with the command "trust your judgment."

Keywords Leadership · Crisis · Judgment · Learning from experience · Experiential learning · Resilience

This chapter seeks to answer the question: How do leaders continue to learn in extreme situations, even when learning typically decreases under stress? The answer to this question comes from reviewing a military battle where a leader and his team continued to display evidence of learning in an extreme situation. Specifically, this chapter reviews the actions of a U.S. Special Forces Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to explore how leaders learn to demonstrate judgment in the

C. Kayes (✉)
The George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA
e-mail: dckayes@gwu.edu

N. Allen
TribusAllen, Wake Forest, NC, USA

N. Self
The Praevius Group, Salado, TX, USA

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face of stress brought about by extreme situations. The events occurred in March of 2002 during the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan and have become known as the Battle for Roberts Ridge or the Battle of Takur Ghar.

While the importance of learning for leadership is well established, the mechanisms by which individual learning contributes to success or failure in the face of extreme situations is not well understood (see Kayes et al. 2013). The chapter contributes to our understanding of the role of learning for leading in extreme situations by integrating research on organizational resilience, leader decrements in performance under stress, and learning. The events provide a tragic example of how learning emerges during times of stress and introduces three new concepts to our understanding of how leaders maintain judgment-based learning.

The interdisciplinary nature of the study of leaders in extreme situations lends itself to considerable disagreement about definitions of extreme situations and their conceptual relationship to crisis, disaster, error, and failure. Before presenting the specific events of Takur Ghar, we embed this discussion in three distinct but related streams of research that inform our understanding of how leaders learn in extreme situations. These streams are research on crisis and disaster, learning in organizations, and the psychology of performance under stress.

1 Literature Related to Leaders in Extreme Situations

1.1 Organizational Crisis and Disaster

The literature on organizational crisis and disaster (e.g., Turner 1976) considers extreme situations as a unique context. Extreme situations pose a threat to the organization's capacity to cope, and a capacity to function is overtaken by demands generated by the situation (Smith and Elliott 2007). Boin's (2006) summary of what constitutes a crisis can serve as a summary of the characteristics associated with extreme situations. His definition of crisis mirrors the experiences that leaders often describe when they are in these situations. According to Boin, crisis involves

- Discontinuity; the interruption of the normal flow of events and experiences
- An attack on the core values of a system
- Critical decisions that may result in extreme outcomes, often with life-or-death consequences
- A destabilizing effect to the organization and its leaders such that current roles, reputation, or operations may no longer continue as expected
- An escalation of one or more issues, errors, or procedures

Sagan (1993) outlined two theories of disaster and crisis that inform our understanding of extreme situations: normal accident theory and the theory of high-reliability organizations. Normal accident theory describes how complex organizations remain vulnerable to accidents despite human efforts to improve

reliability. Accidents are a normal part of operating in a complex, high-risk environment, and accidents can quickly escalate. Perrow (1999) placed extreme situations at the intersection of complexity and coupling. Normal operating procedures themselves can lead to accidents as small deviations, expected under normal conditions, can quickly grow into full-scale organizational accidents. Discrete events transform into extreme situations in complex systems because the consequences and second-order effects of small events cannot be predicted. Tightly coupled systems involve close relationships between the system's parts so that small events can have a quick and significant impact on other parts of a system.

Normal accident theory tends to be concerned with larger vulnerabilities inherent in complex and tightly coupled systems; in contrast, the high-reliability organization approach suggests that organizations can build resilience into normal operations. This approach focuses on intrapersonal and interpersonal coordination. Organizations become vulnerable when teams of people fail to make sense of situations. Crisis and disaster can be avoided or contained. The emphasis on high-reliability organizations is less about the complexity of the system, although that may be a factor, and more about how interactions among people in the organization work to coordinate their behaviors to respond to events (for example, see La Porte 1988). As coordination improves, organizations develop the capacity to make sense out of situations. For example, the ability to respond to small errors at an early stage of crisis can prevent the events from leading to bigger problems. Both the high-reliability organization and normal accident perspectives inform our understanding of how leaders learn in extreme situations by offering insights into how organizations cope with new technology, respond to innovation, get work done, and learn.

1.2 Organizational Resilience

Theories on the high-reliability organization and normal accidents are closely linked through the concept of resilience. Resilience is an emerging way of thinking about leadership in extreme situations that draws on learning and how barriers to learning prevent organizational failure (Kayes 2015). The notion that micro-level (e.g. individual and interpersonal) learning is core to organizational functioning is not new (see, for example, Vince 2001; Vince and Reynolds 2004). According to this viewpoint, learning is not simply a tangential activity in leading, but in extreme situations, learning may constitute the primary activity of leading (Kayes 2004). Kayes (2004, 2006) is representative of this effort, as he has described how learning broke down in a group of mountain climbers just as situational complexity increased. He reviewed the 1996 Mt. Everest climbing disaster that led to the deaths of eight mountain climbers and outlined several factors that led to the breakdown of learning during the attempt to summit Mt. Everest. These factors include increasing intergroup conflict, limitations in the leader's ability to abandon a pre-established goal, and dysfunctional dependence of followers on their leaders.

The Mt. Everest study shows how the learning approach emphasizes social dynamics such as conflict, power, and authority relations and how institutionalized routines and culture can destabilize learning. Importantly, from a learning perspective, extreme situations often arise from failures of learning. For example, Wilensky's (1967) categorization of intelligence failures can serve as a typology of factors associated with the breakdown of learning in extreme situations. Wilensky identified five forms of learning failure. *Goals* can lead to the first form of failure. Goals relate to organizational language such as vision, purpose, goals, and objectives. Second, *controls* describe how organizations monitor and control operations. Controls involve aspects of organizing such as leadership, power, psychological safety, compliance, and oversight. *Innovation* describes how an organization responds to new external demands, how it changes internal systems, and how it changes, adapts, and applies new technology. Fourth, *the gathering and processing of information* is associated with failure when the processes are not done well. Finally, *coordination* describes how work gets done and can lead to failure when organizations fail to effectively coordinate their actions, make decisions, or communicate across divisions.

The emerging learning perspective on organizational resilience offers features that can enhance our understanding of extreme situations and, more importantly, provide insight on how to maintain action and learning in the face of extreme situations.

1.3 The Psychology of Performance Under Stress

A third stream of research that informs how leaders learn in the face of extreme situations involves the psychology of performance under stress. More specifically, this stream of research seeks to uncover how stress induces a decrement in performance. Prior research has identified three task characteristics associated with decreased performance under stress: (1) task complexity; (2) use of programmatic decision making, in the sense that the task is routinized and refined through practice; and (3) application of sensorimotor skills as well as cognitive skills (Sears 1985). Of these, the most important element for the discussion of leaders in extreme situations is programmatic decision making, which is associated with routine, well-rehearsed procedures that can be acquired through repetition and training. Programmatic decision-making implies automatic response to well-structured problems. These problems require knowledge and practice and the eventual habituation of this knowledge into well-developed skill-based procedures (see, for example, Beilock and Carr 2001, 2002). In extreme situations, these well-learned routines are no longer applicable or are applicable only in part.

Extending the research on performing under stress to learning, we propose a four-phase process that describes how leaders learn to manage the stress associated with extreme situations:

1. *Knowledge acquisition*. In Phase 1, leaders acquire task-specific knowledge. This involves understanding explicit rules and procedures and codified knowledge. Knowledge acquisition is often domain specific. For example, leaders in the military learn rules of engagement, operating procedures, command structure, equipment operations, and general principles of leadership based on psychology and professional practice.
2. *Habit formation through practice*. In Phase 2, leaders develop specific habits, which become learned through repetition and practice. Habit formation emerges as leaders demonstrate specific actions that result in skills and abilities. These habits result in organizational routines, which are social habits or patterns of interaction that develop over time. Habit formation, then, like knowledge acquisition, holds both a psychological and a social component. This is the phase where well-developed skills are useful in programmatic, step-by-step decisions and actions.
3. *Expertise*. Expertise involves taking domain-specific knowledge, which is developed in Phase 1, and applying that expertise to resolve situations using judgment. Another way to describe expertise is the application of professional judgment based on domain-specific knowledge.
4. *Judgment under stress*. Phase 4 involves application of expertise under stress. While most models of expertise development stop at Phase 3, we believe a fourth phase is an important addition to understanding how leaders perform in extreme situations. Phase 4 introduces a new consideration into learning under stress.

This four-phase model of learning provides a working framework for how leaders develop the capacity to continue to learn in the face of extreme situations. Learning in extreme situations involves cognitive, emotional, and sensorimotor skills. Specifically, conditions of learning in extreme situations require application of expertise under stress, which in turn requires more than sensorimotor and cognitive performance and following procedure rules.

The research on crisis management, resilience, and performance under stress provides insights into ways that learning in extreme situations has been conceptualized. We draw on this research to build new insights into how leaders learn in extreme situations. Next, we describe the opening minutes of the Battle on Takur Ghar and analyze its implications for understanding how leaders learn in the face of extreme situations.

2 The Case of Takur Ghar as an Extreme Situation

The 3-day Battle of Takur Ghar was conducted by joint U.S. military forces (Air Force, Navy, and Army) against Al-Qaeda–backed fighters in Afghanistan. We focus our review on the first few moments of enemy contact of a nine-member

Army Ranger QRF as they attempted to understand, conduct, and make sense of the mission. We focus particular attention on the QRF leader, Captain Nate Self.

We gathered primary source data from informal, unstructured interviews with some of those involved in the events and reviewed unclassified Department of Defense briefings on the events. Experience also served as a source of primary source data, as one of the authors was the leader of the QRF and not only experienced the events first hand, but also archived his experiences in his personal account of the events, *Two Wars* (Self 2008). We reviewed secondary source material, archival data, journalistic accounts (MacPherson 2005; Naylor 2005), and media interviews (Phillips 2006).

As an effort in sensemaking (Weick 1995), we utilized multiple qualitative methods for our analysis. The methods we chose involve reconstructing and analyzing events in a way that is consistent with crisis research and prior research on management learning (see, for example, Elmes and Barry 1999; Useem et al. 2005; Kayes 2004). Since the events have been described in narrative detail in other sources, we provide only a short description of the opening moments and provide a timeline over the course of 3 days (see Table 1).

At the time of the events, the loss of seven U.S. Special Forces soldiers on the summit of Takur Ghar in Afghanistan represented the most significant loss of U.S. soldiers in almost a decade. The mission ultimately resulted in securing the summit of the 10,000-foot Takur Ghar mountain, a key strategic point in the battle to secure Afghanistan. The events at Takur Ghar took place as part of Operation Anaconda, an attempt to 'squeeze' enemy fighters out of the Shah-i-kot Valley, a stronghold of Al-Qaeda–sponsored fighters.

Captain Nate Self led a two-team QRF, which was spread across two Chinook helicopters. The team was ordered to board the helicopters at Bagram Air Base, where they were stationed. They had been stationed there for a few weeks, but had not been put into a full combat mission until this time. The helicopters left the base, headed for a landing point in a forward operating base in Cordoza.

Initially, the QRF was not given a specific mission; members were told they would receive a more specific set of orders once they were on their way. It is not uncommon for QRFs to begin a mission with little knowledge of the goal, because, unlike conventional forces, a QRF is often put into action as the back up to another operation, to execute a rescue, or to respond to an ongoing crisis. The Chinook helicopter carrying Self and his team approached a landing point, but was hit by fire just short of its identified drop-off point. An explosive hit the helicopter's engine, a grenade flew through the windshield of the helicopter, and heavy machine gun fire penetrated the shell of the helicopter. Two more rocket-propelled grenades hit the team and enemy gunfire flew at them, even as the soldiers tried to exit the now incapacitated helicopter.

The team exited the helicopter and exchanged fire with the enemy for about 20 min until the team could assess the location of the fire, assess the terrain, and determine a further course of action. The team identified a bunker about 70 meters away that was the primary source of the enemy fire and began to devise a plan to take the bunker.

Table 1 Timeline of battle at takur ghar, Afghanistan

Date	Event
December 2001	Army Ranger QRF deployed to Bagram Air Base, 150 miles from Shah-i-kot Valley, Afghanistan
Early March 2002	Operation Anaconda begins in Shah-i-kot Valley, at an elevation of 8,500 feet, in Southeast Afghanistan, led by General Hagenbeck. U.S. military intelligence estimates between 150 and 250 foreign Al-Qaeda, including 'high value' targets. With 1400 U.S. troops, the goal is to cut off the enemy and drive them out of the valley
March 2, 2002	Intelligence explains that the enemy holds a reinforced position in the valley. The CIA estimates about 500 fighters but there were actually between 800 and 1000 fighters, significantly more than the military intelligence estimates
March 2, 2002, 4:00 a.m.	First engagement begins. Afghanistan militia, under direction of U.S. forces, are mistakenly hit in an incident of 'friendly fire,' causing militia to withdraw. LZs, which are predetermined areas for landing helicopters, are identified throughout the valley but due to eminence issues, intelligence is unable to 'secure' or verify that the sites are clear of the enemy. U.S. LZs come under attack from small arms fire and RPGs, creating difficulty in calling in air support. Only a limited number of radio frequencies work, making communication difficult as all groups move to the same frequency for communications
March 4, 2002, 3:00 a.m.	U.S. SEALs come within 10 feet of LZ on Takur Ghar. The mission is to secure the mountaintop as 'key terrain' to gain a vantage point from the highest mountain overlooking the valley, which could then be used to call in air fire. SEALs are shuttled in by helicopter operated by the 'Night Stalkers' team. The trip is delayed by over 3 h due to equipment problems. The helicopter is hit by RPG, power goes out, and fire starts within the helicopter. The helicopter crash-lands in the valley. Navy SEAL team member Neil Roberts is identified as missing. A second helicopter rescues the remaining SEAL team, and the helicopter returns to Takur Ghar LZ to retrieve Roberts. The second helicopter receives fire and is shot down, unable to fly; SEAL team member John Chapman is shot. The remaining SEAL team retreats down the mountain A 9-member Army Ranger QRF divides into two squads, code named Razor 1 and Razor 2, and boards two helicopters. The team, led by Captain Nate Self, has little intelligence and no knowledge of previous incidents. The flight from Bagram to the valley is 1 h. A decision is made to get the QRF in the air, headed toward the battle, and radio further instructions Hearing radio communications between the Bagram-based command center and a soldier in the field, Self hears that a SEAL has fallen out of a helicopter. He learns that it is "MAKO 30" a code name for the SEAL team and that a helicopter has attempted to secure the fallen SEAL. He does not know it is related to his mission The commander sends communication to Razor 1 to "not land" on the mountaintop, but the communication is not received; Razor 1 and Razor 2 lose contact with each other

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Date	Event
6:00 a.m.	Sunrise, eliminating the advantage of a night attack
6:10 a.m.	The Razor 1 helicopter circles twice to identity LZ; the pilot identifies LZ and positions the helicopter to land. The helicopter is hit by an RPG, and small arms fire enters from both sides of the helicopter and through the front windshield. Two soldiers are both killed instantly. The helicopter pilot is hit by enemy fire. Anderson is shot and killed. The Razor 2 helicopter is diverted to an LZ about 70 meters below Razor 1 LZ. Five Ranger team members work their way down the ramp. Crose and Commons are hit. Self and Lancaster are hit with shrapnel from an RPG. The Razor 1 QRF team moves to a rock outcropping for cover and identifies that the fire is coming from a fortified outcropping of rocks on the mountaintop
6:30 a.m.	The Razor 1 QRF team makes contact with air support, but a test run by jets determines the QRF team is too close to release a bomb
6:30–7:30 a.m.	The Razor 1 QRF team exchanges fire and grenade with the enemy
7:30–8:30 a.m.	Razor 1 QRF receives fire from mortar rounds on another mountain ridge. Razor 2 QRF, now climbing their way up the mountain toward Razor 1, starts receiving mortar round fire every 15 s. Razor 1 finds a small outcrop of rocks, built into a small fortress, where they find the clothes of Neil Roberts. Captain Self communicates with his superiors about using an unmanned drone, a product of the CIA, to attack the bunker and discusses with Vance who believes the technology is not safe to use
9:45 a.m.	The unmanned drone is cleared to fire. Two shots are fired; the second incapacitates the enemy bunker
11:00 a.m.	Razor 2 catches up to Razor 1 and the platoon overtakes the enemy bunker and secures the mountaintop. The bodies of Neil Roberts and John Chapman are found in the bunker; later analysis confirms that both had been killed hours before. QRF takes fire from another ridge. Air support takes out enemy fire
8:30 p.m.	The rescue helicopter returns to Bagram Air Base

Note *CIA* indicates Central Intelligence Agency; *LZ* landing zone; *QRF* quick reaction forces *RPG* rocket-propelled grenade; *SEAL*, U.S. Navy Sea, Air, and Land team

3 Analysis

3.1 From "Trust Your Training" to "Trust Your Judgment"

The first minutes of the events in which Captain Self and his team found themselves provide an important entry point for studying how leaders learn in extreme situations. From these first few minutes, we can begin to unravel underlying characteristics of learning in extreme situations. To begin with, of the three task characteristics associated with performance under stress (task complexity, programmatic processes, and application of sensorimotor skills), programmatic

processes, the step-by-step procedures associated with well-developed skills, are only partially at play during military combat. Extreme situations like the Battle of Takur Ghar require more than habitual training developed through practice; they require the highest levels of learning: judgment under stress.

Judgment was one of four processes Allen (2006) identified in his study of learning in platoon leaders and company commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan as essential outcomes to learning. Judgment is described as the exercise of discretion in the monitoring and control of emotion, especially during the exercising of decisions. One company commander from Allen's study described judgment this way:

> To develop leaders to think more critically, more innovatively—to do so fluidly and quickly in a compressed time under fire. That skill helps you out. To visualize the situation as it's happening and make smart decisions. It's not easy to do. I'm by far better at that now. It's experience that teaches it. I learned it in combat (Allen 2006, p. 127).

From a more academic mindset, Kayes and Kayes (2016) described judgment as a kind of learning process that applies discipline-specific knowledge to solve complex problems. Judgment involves four largely sequential processes: (1) assessing the context and problem structure; (2) acquiring knowledge from a particular discipline, relying on evidence, analyzing experience, and learning from the expertise of others; (3) applying knowledge to solve problems; and (4) evaluating knowledge by establishing criteria for assessing the outcomes.

This definition of judgment implies that knowledge of the situation is built on a foundation of disciplinary evidence, experience, and expertise. Klein (1999, 2008) emphasized the importance of leaders' prior experience for judgment in extreme situations. For example, he described how chief firefighters rely on past experiences to assess a situation and determine a course of action. However, in the Takur Ghar case, few of the soldiers had prior experience in this extreme situation, so they were left with trusting their training and learning judgment in real time.

Judgment is needed when training is inadequate in and of itself and when a situation requires innovation and fluidity of decision making. One company commander described his experience in combat as "a situation where you've been taught the way to do it your entire career, and that just wasn't working" (Allen and Kayes 2011, p. 93). When hearing this statement, we might conclude that in extreme situations, the widely heard military adage "trust your training" may not be the only advice that leaders need to hear. An additional call might be something like "trust in your judgment," because as demonstrated by the Battle of Takur Ghar, learning and adaptability, perhaps along with training, proved to be critical elements that led to winning the battle. As one officer in the Allen study said:

> We all spend time planning, but at the end of the day your ability to think on your feet and react is what differentiates good officers from great officers…. You have to be able to plan and adapt on the ground immediately and you have to react to a constantly changing environment (Allen 2006, p. 128).

3.2 Challenges to Judgment-Based Learning in Extreme Situations

Before digging deeper into the role of judgment-based learning, we discuss four ways that learning can be compromised in extreme situations and tie these to the situation on Takur Ghar. These include unreliable information, situational novelty, unclear and shifting goals, and ill-structured situations.

3.2.1 Unreliable Information

The Battle at Takur Ghar represents the kind of extreme situation in which leaders often find themselves—where evidence is plentiful but unreliable. A U.S. Navy Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) team had landed near the top of Takur Ghar a few hours prior to the arrival of Self and his team. The SEAL team was the first U.S. team to experience gunfire at the top of the mountain. This is where Lieutenant Roberts went missing, during the initial engagement between the SEAL team and the enemy fighters.

Despite the fact that the SEAL team had been shot down, Captain Self left on the mission believing that the mountain was clear of enemy fighters. This conclusion was reached through others' interpretation of the video footage fed by the Predator unmanned drone that scouted the site. The interpretation proved wrong. The Navy SEAL team first sent to capture the mountain was the first team to experience this failure; they were immediately greeted by hostile fire as they reached their insertion point near the summit of Takur Ghar. One member of the SEAL team, Neil Roberts, was jolted out of the helicopter upon landing and taken captive by enemy forces. Self's team had not heard that the SEAL helicopter was shot down there, nor had they heard the specifics of Roberts' case. In the course of a single evening, two helicopters were shot down. First, the SEAL team was shot down, and then the Ranger team, at the same location, both because of faulty interpretation of evidence. Images of the video footage fed from the Predator were interpreted as goat paths crossing near the peak of Takur Ghar. It only later became clear that these paths were actually created by humans. Wider dissemination of the feeds might have garnered an important fact: goats do not usually wander on snow-covered mountains at 10,000 feet.

3.2.2 Situational Novelty

Unreliable evidence is not the only factor that may cloud learning. Consider the bigger military operation. The command structure involved integration of multiple forces beginning with the Navy and then involving Army Rangers and the Air Force. Nonmilitary organizations, such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),

also became involved. Not only did this joint interdependence create communication and logistic challenges, it also exposed how current practices prove to be limited in novel situations. The teams faced other novelties as well. Neither the multiple organizations involved in the battle nor the individual team of men—not even the leader himself—had ever experienced battle before. In addition, not only had the teams not trained at altitudes of 10,000 feet, but no Army Rangers had fought at high altitudes for more than a generation.

3.2.3 Unclear and Shifting Goals

The situation faced by Captain Self reveals that leaders in extreme situations must also navigate unclear and shifting goals. At first, Self assumed that his mission involved locating and retrieving the fallen Navy SEAL. He made this judgment because he had been in the command center hours before his mission was launched and had heard about the fallen SEAL. Minutes before reaching his insertion point, his landing coordinates were changed. The mission goals shifted again moments before his helicopter reached the insertion point when it was hit by unexpected enemy fire that rendered the helicopter unable to fly. Then, Self's gun jammed. Self's initial goal shifted, within minutes of the operation, from returning the fallen soldier to pure survival. When goals are constantly shifting, learning involves the ability to revise and update goals based on new and emerging evidence and to shift from programmed to unprogrammed decisions. When considering learning factors associated with disaster, the particular learning orientation of the actors is central.

A series of events illustrate the various unclear and shifting goals Self faced as a leader on Takur Ghar. Self (2008, p. 148) recognized two potential missions he might be facing: "to secure a downed aircraft or to recover a missing American." He also referred to "widespread confusion over the specific mission tasks" (p. 146). Before the aircraft landed, Self and his team lost communication with the second helicopter carrying the second team of the QRF. Prior to landing, the mission changed (p. 147), as the team was advised to go directly to the battle rather than making a stop, which may have involved meeting up with a gun-equipped helicopter that they would normally have had as cover for the landing. The gunner aircraft was called off. Further complicating the situation, the QRF had planned to execute its mission in the dark, relying on night vision technology that the enemy likely did not have. Working under cover of night provided an important advantage. The confusion leading to the mission cost valuable time, and Self realized that the sun would soon be rising, taking the night advantage away from them.

3.2.4 Ill-Structured Situation

At about 10:45 a.m., nearly five hours after their initial insertion near the summit of Takur Ghar, the second team of Rangers caught up with Self's team. The second helicopter of the QRF landed down the mountain safely about 2000 feet. The team

had jettisoned much of its gear during the 2000-foot ascent to reach Self's team. Together, the two teams were able to organize and take the bunker, but only after an unmanned Predator fired a rocket directly into the bunker. At this time, to our knowledge, no Predator had been used in a U.S. battle. Further complicating the matter, armed drones (in contrast to drones equipped with reconnaissance equipment) were operated by the CIA, not the Army. Launching the Predator missile at the bunker required coordination with multiple groups within and beyond the QRF, the command, and the Army. It was when Self and his men overtook the bunker that the true mission was revealed. It was here that they found the body of fallen Navy SEAL Neil Roberts.

The events of Takur Ghar reveal that leaders seldom operate within simple, well-structured problems. Ill-structured problems exist when no clear agreed-upon outcome exists, nor is there a clear path to reach that outcome. Even when an outcome is reached, experts will disagree about the success of the events (King and Kitchener 1994).

Ill-structured problems create a particularly challenging environment for learning because cause-and-effect relationships are more complex and require constant reevaluation (Daft and Weick 1984). Most striking of all perhaps is that the efforts on Takur Ghar reveal significant unintended consequences faced by leaders engaged with an ill-structured problem. The mission was accomplished, but at the expense of seven soldiers' lives.

4 Concepts to Guide Understanding of How Leaders Learn in Extreme Situations

We have outlined the importance of judgment-based learning and suggested characteristics of extreme situations that might challenge learning. In this final section, we return to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter: How do leaders continue to learn in extreme situations? In order to move closer to an answer to this question, we introduce three concepts into the lexicon of leadership that may help us understand how leaders might develop judgment in extreme situations: thrownness, depaysement, and collateral learning. These three terms provide a way to characterize how leaders experience learning in extreme situations.

4.1 Thrownness

Drawing on a concept from philosophy (see Dreyfus 1995), Weick turned to the idea of thrownness to describe situations when leaders find themselves thrown into a situation of ongoing events over which they have limited control. Thrownness is marked by a situation that already has an agenda of ongoing complex events. Even

more confusing, leaders do not always have access to the 'levers' or tools they need to solve the problem they face. Leadership requires taking action where the outcome is beyond one's direct control. Leaders in extreme situations seldom operate with a 'clean slate' (Weick 2004, p. 75), and thus past training, experience, and knowledge may count for less than judgment.

Thrownness implies that events and interpretation of events are already ongoing and leaders must deal with emergent properties that are outside of their control. Judgment, rather than problem solving, becomes important because leadership success may be better described as evading problems rather than solving them. Leadership is a process of getting yourself and others out of situations with limited options (ibid., p. 77). Leaders experiencing thrownness find themselves in the fog of a situation created by someone else, with responsibility for clearing it up.

In his recounting of the events, Self described a startling realization: he was not facing the situation that he originally thought. He recounted remembering that "somebody made a pretty big mistake" (cited in Kayes and Kayes 2016, p. 70).

Command of the mission proved to be a complex mix that included Navy SEALs, the Air Force, Army Ranger QRFs, and central intelligence, in addition to civilian military intelligence. Self was given no clear mission. He was handed limited amounts of information, perhaps even faulty information, about what had already unfolded on the mountain. He knew the ARF was to fly to Gardez. He had heard the night before in the command center that someone from a Navy SEAL team was missing. Then, minutes before landing, Self lost communication with the command center. When communication was restored, Self found himself answering directly to a two-star–level command center.

Weick saw thrownness in a variety of situations including high-end architectural design, incident command during 9/11, and composition of music. Self's description of the situation he led on Takur Ghar provides another example of thrownness that deserves further study.

4.2 Depaysement

Thrownness describes the context of extreme situations, but it does not describe the experience itself. In order to better understand the direct experience of extreme situations, in terms of emotions, cognitions, and anxieties, we introduce the concept of *depaysement* to the discussion on leadership in extreme situations.

Depaysement is a French word often translated into English as homesickness, disorientation, or displacement. It implies being relocated, being placed out of your comfort zone. The closest historical translation of depaysement to English is to be removed from one's country of origin, to be essentially 'de-countried.' The term implies that one has become an outsider, which creates a feeling of loneliness, alienation, and distance. The leader has become dislodged from the world, dislocated from a prior sense of self, or even displaced as a refugee.

More than a statement of ‘homesickness,’ depaysement implies a sense that you cannot go home again, that you may be forever disconnected from your old world (Smith 2006). Depaysement is reminiscent of a kind of ritualistic ‘becoming,’ but does not imply being caught in the middle, as in Turner’s (1964) ‘betwixt and between,’ because depaysement is not qualitatively transitional. A rite of passage implies a new social role or place in a social structure. Depaysement implies a sense of being stripped of that social structure altogether. It implies a new permanence in one’s experience in the world.

Depaysement can serve as an interpretive device that captures the state experienced during extreme situations. Palmer’s (1969) description of experience and learning is relevant (see Kayes 2015). Palmer described learning that resulted from a time of discontinuity of experience. To paraphrase, Palmer said that the experienced leader knows the limitations of his or her own experience, the limits of all human plans. Yet the leader continues to think, act, and learn. Despite knowing these limitations, the leader is not rigid or dogmatic, but rather remains open to new experiences (Kayes 2015, p. 130).

Depaysement implies a sense of disengagement from what one knows. It is a realization that what has worked in the past may no longer be completely relevant. Yet, the leader can still arrive at the new situation willing to try new routines, develop new thoughts and emotions, and turn these into new habits that lead to action in the new order. Under the experience of depaysement, training itself seems to take on a new value. Training no longer provides guidance necessary to operate, but creates a foundation for the leader to develop situation-specific judgment.

Captain Self experienced what might be described as a kind of depaysement. In the seconds after the helicopter had been shot down, he looked around the helicopter and assessed the loss of human life. Moments ago there was no expectation of death. He then turned to the situation at hand, and moving the disbelief aside, he quickly began to assess the situation tactically. Captain Self questioned the very authenticity of the experience he was facing. He described what might be considered depaysement moments after exiting the helicopter when he was under heavy fire. He noticed a bearded man firing the shots. “How did we get here?” he asked himself before returning to the reality that someone was trying to kill him.

4.3 Collateral Learning

Depaysement may provide an explanation for what some combatants experience during extreme situations, but it does not in and of itself offer a means to deal with the situation. To understand how to successfully navigate experiences of depaysement, we can turn to philosopher John Dewey’s concept of collateral learning.

Similar to Palmer’s conceptualization of learning, Dewey (1938) saw the basis of learning in breaks in the perceived continuity of experience. One reason that extreme

situations provide the ground for learning is that they provide the ground for discontinuity and, thus, the raw material of experience. For Dewey, understanding these breaks in experience required both consideration for the context (extreme situations) and internal conditions (stress). Dewey believed it was difficult to make connections between classroom learning, such as training, and application in real situations. Collateral learning—the attitudes, beliefs, and stance towards learning, as well as the content that one learns as a result of learning something else—proved important (ibid., p. 48). This discontinuity in the environment serves as a sort of master reframing or global reframing. An altered state opens up a new realm for learning and problem-solving.

For example, in a training exercise, the goal might be to learn tactical engagement. A leader might be learning to lead his team through an enemy assault or learning how to clear a building of enemy fighters. That is the stated goal of the training. While leading, however, the leader might also learn collateral lessons. She might learn how members of her team act under pressure. She might learn how to manage her own stress under fire, and she might learn the importance of creating an environment where her team can speak to her freely when discussing the exercise in the postexercise briefing.

Collateral learning is essential learning that prepares leaders to operate during extreme situations. It says that leaders need to pay attention to experiences and insights that occur during the learning process, not simply to the content of what is learned. In addition to the content, the process of learning is important. The attitudes, beliefs, and insights that arise from learning form the foundation of how a leader will react, learn, perform, or otherwise act during an extreme situation. Training, while important, may need to focus on creating insights into the learning process itself, as much as it does on the techniques, skills, and knowledge associated with tactics and technical aspects of learning.

Collateral learning is not only about process knowledge. Captain Self gained valuable knowledge from the habit of speaking with others at Bagram Air Base, where he was stationed in Afghanistan. His regular conversations were not part of his duties, but from these conversations he learned about the missile-equipped drones that were operated by the CIA. This knowledge would prove valuable once in the extreme situation of battle on Takur Ghar. Over the course of the battle, he had called in several targeted bombings directed toward the enemy bunker; however, these proved ineffective at hitting the target. After the use of the piloted aircraft was deemed too dangerous, Self recommended calling in the drone. Had Self only engaged in official learning activities, duties, and briefings, he would not likely have known about the drone and its capacity.

Self's attitude towards learning was one of curiosity, openness to new experience, and constant updating. He saw a larger body of information as relevant to his job, not only what was considered standard. He learned about the capacity of the drone as a collateral learning activity.

The concepts of thrownness, depaysement, and collateral learning provide new insights into the demands placed on leaders operating in extreme situations. For

leaders to learn in extreme situations, they must move beyond learning that results from training (e.g., knowledge, practice, and expertise) to demonstrate judgment under stress. When leaders are thrown into existing situations, they are likely to experience what can be described as depaysement, an emotional and cognitive dislocation from their prior experience. To continue to act, leaders draw on their judgment, but also on collateral learning, learning that may not have been part of their normal routine of learning but that proves helpful in situations where past experience is not enough.

5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the Battle of Takur Ghar in the context of learning in extreme situations. The battle provides insights into how leaders can overcome the stress associated with extreme situations and foster learning. Extreme situations are characterized by discontinuity, a system under attack, life-or-death consequences, a destabilization of current roles, reputation, or operation, and an escalation of one or more issues, errors, or procedures. To maintain learning in the face of such extreme situations, leaders must overcome the challenges brought on by ill-structured problems, unreliable evidence, situational novelty, and shifting and unclear goals. Leaders may be able to overcome these challenges by understanding the emotions of depaysement, encouraging collateral learning, and managing thrownness.

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Authors Biography

Christopher Kayes (Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University) is professor and chair of the Management Department at The George Washington University School of Business where he has also served as interim dean. He is author or coauthor of numerous peer reviewed publications and four books, including *Organizational Resilience: How Learning Sustains Organizations Through Crisis, Disaster, and Breakdown* (Oxford University Press) and *Destructive Goal Pursuit: The Mt. Everest Disaster* (Macmillan).

Nate Allen (Ph.D., The George Washington University) served as a director in the Army's Office of Business Transformation in the Pentagon, as a professor at the United States Military Academy at West Point and at the National Defense University where he taught leadership. He has been recognized as one of Fast Company magazine's Top 50 Innovators and Harvard Business Review cited his approach to leadership connectivity as a "Breakthrough Idea for 2006". Nate completed Ranger and Airborne training, and served as an infantry officer in Army units throughout the US and in Somalia and Iraq.

Nate Self is a former U.S. Army officer and founder of The Praevius Group, a company providing leadership development and technology fielding support to the Defense Sector. He is graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and served on active duty in Germany, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He was awarded the Silver Star for combat actions in Afghanistan. Nate regularly works with organizations on the topics of leadership, decision-making, resilience, and mentoring. He is author of the book *Two Wars: One Hero's Fight on Two Fronts—Abroad and Within* (Tyndale).

What Difference Does a Difference Make? Considerations About Lessons Learned from Difficult Operational Situations

Therese Heltberg and Thomas Jellesmark

Abstract In the wake of extreme operational situations—especially those with a tragic outcome—the concept of Lessons Learned is often taken into hindsight revision: What did we learn from previous events? What learning potential did we miss out on? Based on theoretical and empirical knowledge from the Danish Defense and NATO Lessons Identified/Lessons Learned guidelines, the article centers around reflections pertaining to this concern and its inherent assumptions related to the idea of learning from experience. We note that while we try to learn from past events, what happens is always a new event. The article discusses potentials and pitfalls related to the delimitation of 'incidents' in relation to time and context. Furthermore, the article considers the practice of categorization that is central to military Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned guidelines. It is suggested that the practice of categorization is exerted through three main activities: narrative selection of punctuations; fragmentation of experiences; and translation of personal (physical and emotional) experience into (written) knowledge management artifacts. All three categorization activities rely on specific taken-for-granted assumptions which the paper questions, encouraging the research field to further explore and develop ways of translating subjective, lived experience and its individual meaning into organizational learning.

Keywords Military lessons learned · Event analysis · Context analysis · Categorization · Experience-based learning · Knowledge management · Operations analysis

T. Heltberg (✉) · T. Jellesmark
Danish Defence College, Copenhagen, Denmark
e-mail: thereseheltberg@hotmail.com

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1 Introduction

On February 14th, 2015, a young man shot and killed two people in Copenhagen, Denmark, in what was later referred to as a ‘terrorist incident’ (Rigspolitiet 2015). The first shooting took place in the afternoon at a public event called “Art, Blasphemy, and Freedom of Expression”, where Swedish artist Lars Vilks was among the speakers. In 2007, a Swedish newspaper had published some of his drawings portraying the Prophet Muhammad as a “roundabout dog”—a kind of Swedish street art installation. Vilks was not hit, but a Danish film maker was shot and killed in front of the building and three police officers were wounded. The gunman got away and in the following hours, the police were engaged in a man hunt that continued when the gunman shot and killed a guard outside the city’s Great Synagogue 8 h later. Again, the attacker got away, but in the early morning hours, the police tracked down and shot and killed a suspect. The police subsequently identified the man as responsible for both attacks.

In the following days, the police underwent harsh criticism. Questions arose: Why had not better security measures been deployed to protect this event in the first place? How was it possible for the gunman to get away after the first shooting when several police officers were posted close by? Why were military helicopters not immediately used in the search for the shooter?[1] And so forth.

References were made to events that had taken place in other countries, notably the attack earlier that year against the French satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo,* and an episode two years previously in Norway, where another young man, Anders Breivik, massacred 69 young people, who were participating in a political camp on a small island in the capital archipelago. Most of the criticism directly or indirectly related to the concept of Lessons Learned, noting that we spend so much money and efforts on police and military drills, on evaluations and investigation groups. We form commissions to look into the unfolding of challenging operations and incidents. And indignantly, the same question is asked: “All this money, all this time. Didn’t you learn ANYTHING?!”

But perhaps this is the wrong question to ask. This concern is both the starting point and key to central reflections developed in this paper: that by delimiting and designating something as ‘an incident’ in order to better grasp it and learn from it, we inevitably also lose some analytical potential. By establishing experience-based learning manuals and systems in order to ensure thorough analysis of Lessons Identified and the organizational transformation of these into Lessons Learned, we also install an organizational ‘blindness’ towards our own taken-for-granted-reality; and while we try to learn from past events, what happens is always a *new* event.

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[1]A later review of the incident stated that the Police had asked the Danish Defense forces for helicopter surveillance assistance shortly after the attack. However, the Joint Operations Centre of the Defense had informed that all helicopters were grounded due to equipment malfunctions (Rigspolitiet 2015, p. 144).

2 Observation and Method

In this article, we analyze the concept of Lessons Identified/Lessons Learned (LI/LL) in its complex military operational contexts from a second-order perspective. The main thrust of the article lies within a social constructionist understanding, with inspiration from the sociology of knowledge. We draw on the conceptual framework of Niklas Luhmann and his system theory in the understanding of first-order and second-order perspectives (Luhmann 2013 [1992–92]).

A pivotal building-block concept of this theory is observation. Luhmann defines observation as indicating something by means of a distinction. According to Luhmann, every distinction is rooted in a distinct meaning-processing system to which the specific mode of distinguishing and the criteria for selection of differences make sense. While the distinction *itself* is always invisible for the system, i.e. for the one who observes, in the moment of observation, it is possible to *observe the observer* and hence to investigate how observers draw distinctions in order to bring their world into relief. Luhmann calls this kind of observation 'second-order observation' (Luhmann 2013 [1991–92]). So while first-order observation refers to *what* an observer observes, second-order observation is concerned with *how* the first-order observer observes (Borch 2011).

Rather than seeking to determine whether certain decision-making structures are right or wrong, better or worse, Luhmann proposes consideration of what logics the distinction programs are based upon, and then to investigate what these distinctions enable the system to see and what they hide (Kneer and Nassehi 1997). Likewise, the aim of this article is to consider assumptions and conditions that appear to be implicitly part of our way of understanding and handling experience-based learning in the context of complex military operations. Our aim is to consider how these assumptions and conditions frame both what we see and what we do not see. Our goal is to propose a dialogue that invites an expansion of current perspectives on experience-based learning in the context of military operations. We use the NATO guidelines on LI/LL as our main reference,[2] but examples will also be included from the Danish Defense.

To broaden the perspective on experience-based learning from complex operational situations, we searched the abstract archives of the past five years' articles in two central, international peer-reviewed military journals; *Armed Forces & Society* and *Res Militaris*. Furthermore, we made a rough keyword-based article search for theoretical articles concerning military experiential learning among all scientific journals accessed through the Danish Defense College.

[2]We take these guidelines to encompass the NATO Lessons Learned Handbook and the NATO Joint Analysis Handbook.

3 Structure of the Article

The structure of the article is simple, with three main analytical sections: (1) Knowledge management technologies and experiential learning (2) Delimiting difficult operational situations and (3) Assumptions enabling Lessons Learned procedures.

We begin by defining the central concepts and perspectives relative to this article. We first look into Lessons Learned guidelines and procedures viewed as a knowledge management technology and make clear which perspectives are of main interest to this article. Following this, we consider a conceptual framework for understanding experience-based learning in the context of operational situations. The second section of the article discusses the delimiting of operational 'situations' in the LI/LL process by pointing to the inevitably *constructed* limitations of such situations in relation to both time and context. The reflections in these first two sections lead us in the third section to take a closer look at two performative actants of the Lessons Learned procedures: (1) those of knowledge perception and (2) the practice of categorization. The article is rounded off by our conclusion.

4 Knowledge Management Technologies and Experiential Learning

In recent years, a rapid increase in the use of knowledge management technologies in both public and private sector occurred (Røvik 2009; Holsapple 2003; Liao 2003; Alavi and Leidner 2001). By 'knowledge management technologies' we refer to concepts and guidelines that are set up to ensure quality and efficiency in work processes. Examples of such technologies include key performance indicators, annual staff review manuals, quality indicators, and guidelines and procedures for experience-based learning and knowledge management. We consider the NATO Lessons Learned guidelines along with national military procedures for experience-based learning as examples of such knowledge management technologies (cf. Weber and Aha 2003).

Knowledge management technologies have multiple aspects from a theoretical perspective (cf. Røvik 2009; Holsapple 2003). They may be regarded as *instruments* that facilitate and align specific procedures within certain areas (for instance an annual staff review manual or LI/LL procedures).

When thus regarded, the main focus is directed at instrumental—technical and thematic—aspects such as specific categories that the instrument sets up or questions that it formulates. Knowledge management technologies may also be considered from a *neo-institutional* perspective, as standards that are continuously reshaped and re-narrated while 'traveling' across organizations; for instance annual review manuals now exist in many larger Danish companies and organizations. And knowledge management technologies may be analyzed from the perspective of their

performative power—performative in that the tools become constitutive not only for specific actions but also for *ways* of thinking and doing (Tangkjær 2005; Tangkjær and Thygesen 2008; Holsapple 2003). At present, it seems that an inherent challenge to the use of knowledge management technologies is that they tend to draw attention in the direction of discussions related to their instrumental aspects (Tangkjær 2005; Tangkjær and Thygesen 2008). They instigate considerations such as "Should tactics be included as a category in LI/LL guidelines, or should they not?" By doing so, they divert attention away from discussion of the taken-for-granted baseline issues they tacitly imbed.

In later years, however, knowledge management research *at the theoretical level* increasingly found an interest in looking into such aspects of performativity (Røvik 2009; Alavi and Leidner 2001). A central point of this research is the recognition that knowledge management technologies create diverse modes of thought and modes of action *within* organizations. The organizing principles of an organization —its structures, values, attention points, themes, challenges etc.—that are emphasized when thinking in terms of staff review are different from those considered to be important in terms of financial control, which are different yet from those we focus upon when applying the knowledge management lens, and so forth. Each technology imposes its specific communication taxonomy and value reference system. Sometimes, within the same organization, we find cohesion between these, and sometimes we do not.

So while the main, *obvious* instrumental purpose and function of these tools is to enhance and ensure work quality and efficiency, they simultaneously rely upon and produce a taken-for-granted understanding of other aspects of the organization as well as of 'reality'. Knowledge management instruments install a certain *discourse* about the specific phenomenon they deal with, as well as about the system of which the phenomenon is part. This taken-for-granted understanding leaves something in the dark. Paraphrasing Foucault, "No foyer of discourse is powerful enough to cast light on its own areas of shade" (Visker 1995, p. 80). To give an example: The Danish Army knowledge sharing system DLIMS[3] is structured so that any observation or suggestion made by an individual soldier or a unit is handled by their immediate commander. He or she will act as a 'gatekeeper' in relation to the entry of the case into DLIMS, deciding whether to accept or to reject the observation. If the commander accepts the observation, a Senior Point of Authority will be appointed, responsible for further analysis and any follow-up steps in relation to the case[4] (Isaksen et al. 2014; HOK 2013, 2014). So while the main, visible focus of DLIMS is on the issues suggested and analyzed (the Lessons Identified), the system tacitly relies on and reinforces the taken-for-granted assignment of authority of judgment to a senior in rank.

[3]Defense Lessons Information Management System. The system is inspired by the knowledge sharing system of the British Army (Isaksen et al. 2014, p. 46).

[4]This is in line with general advice in the NATO Lessons Learned Handbook to ensure that responsible persons or bodies are appointed at all stages of the LI/LL process (NATO 2011a, b, p. 8, pp. 33–38).

The central focus of this article lies with this aspect of performativity, i.e. of what military Lessons Learned technologies are *also doing,* while serving their instrumental purpose. When exploring the performance aspects of current military LI/LL instruments, we may ask questions such as: What does it actually mean to identify and learn a lesson (cf. Patton 2001)? How does the LI/LL technology influence the way leaders lead, the way commanders command, and the actions and assumptions of front-line soldiers (cf. Lipsky 2010; Weatherley and Lipsky 1977)? Which priorities and value taxonomies are legitimized by the LI/LL guidelines? Which types of knowledge are tacitly included in the LI/LL focus range? What are the images of thought underlying the ways in which the LI/LL instrument consider the value of experience-based knowledge?

While it seems that in practical and institutional terms, experience-based learning is today a well-developed and integral part of the NATO organization and the military organization of its member states, we found few research analyses or little theorizing on such *conceptual* foundations of knowledge management practices and technologies within a military context in our literature review (Some examples of research with a focus on such aspects are Weber and Aha 2003; Guillou et al. 2009; O'Toole and Talbot 2011; Andersson et al. 2015; Desouza and Vanapalli 2005). In the study at hand, we turn our attention to the question as to how to learn from experiences and to ensure that lessons identified and learned are shared among relevant stakeholders.

4.1 A Conceptual Framework for Experiential Learning

In military contexts, it has long been recognized that materiel and technology count, but knowledge as related to practice, to know-what and know-how (i.e. both explicit and tacit knowledge) is a key asset to winning (NATO 2011a, b; Bungay 2011; Moltke (Hughes) 1993 [1892]; Clausewitz 2010 [1832]). In 2002, NATO established a Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) that develops handbooks and guides on how to manage experience-based learning and offers tools for sharing Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned. They do that through a web portal and by organizing events and conferences. At a national level, most NATO member states have well-established evaluation and knowledge-sharing systems as an integral part of their military organization (NATO 2011a, b).

The NATO Joint Analysis Handbook proposes to view LI/LL processes as the continuous application of the OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) loop to NATO activity (NATO 2007, pp. 2–3). While the OODA loop was initially conceived in an attempt to find the conditions that led to success or failure in combat, it was later applied to the understanding of learning processes (Brehmer 2005).[5] To further

[5]Brehmer's analysis of the OODA loop led him to suggest a dynamic modification (DOODA) to deal with criticism of the reactive approach of the OODA.

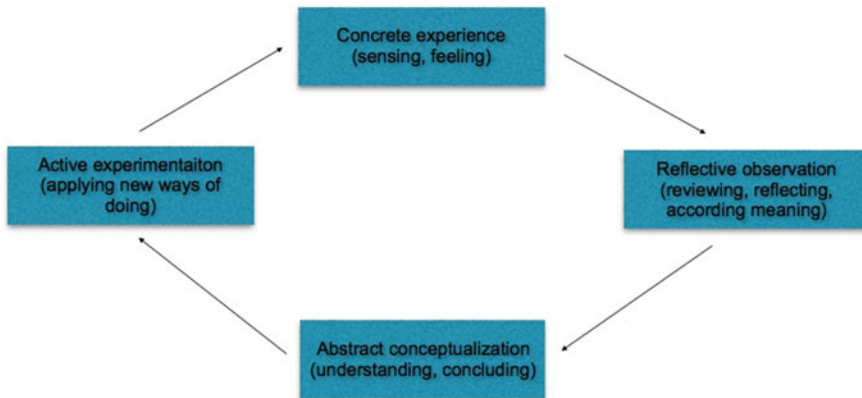

Fig. 1 Kolb's experiential learning cycle (The model is based on Kolb 1984)

emphasize the learning aspect, we suggest viewing military Lessons Learned procedures within the framework suggested by David Kolb, who draws on learning models from Lewin and Piaget (Kolb 1984). We found Kolb's model relevant in our context because it is primarily concerned with *experience*-based learning. "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb 1984, p. 38). Furthermore, the model underlines effective learning as transformative for ways of *doing*.

According to Kolb, experience-based learning typically passes through the four phases illustrated in Fig. 1.

We found the aspect of abstract conceptualization in this model particularly important in its emphasis on learning as involving the acquisition of abstract concepts or general models that can be applied flexibly in a range of new situations.

5 Delimiting Difficult Operational Situations

When reading through introduction books to sociological and organizational theory, one captures something important about how researchers in these fields appear to conceive their research. It seems to be a general epistemological pattern in much sociological research that at first, the phenomena of interest are considered as being somehow delimited and possible to define. In the course of time however, as the phenomenon of interest is gradually being considered and as the studies of it provide us with an acknowledgment of its contextual complexity, the idea of definability seems to gradually lose its hold. It is essentially deconstructed by the posing of a fundamental question: Where does [this society, that organization, this distinct decision…] begin and end?

This question of the 'beginning and end of something' is fundamentally a question of *delimitation*, or bracketing. It addresses and relates to time as well as

context. Certainly, it is also an important question to consider when we, in a military context, set out to analyze and learn from complex operational situations. Defining the boundaries of these situations seems to be an integral, but nevertheless theoretically underdeveloped, part of military LI/LL practices (cf. Kristensen and Larsen 2010).

In the following, we first consider the construction of the *temporal boundaries* of incidents. Secondly, we consider the setting of their *contextual boundaries*, and finally, we look into the *temporal orientation* of the analysis of incidents.

5.1 Defining the Temporal Boundaries of the Incident—The When

In an article concerning sociological conceptions of outcome, Andrew Abbott suggests a conceptual distinction between outcome perceived 'at-a-point' and outcome perceived as an (endless) process—as flow. *Outcome-at-a-point-analyses* look into delimited episodes and their final outcomes, while research questions oriented towards *process outcome* aim to analyze social processes as ongoing, fluctuating sequences created and shaped by actions along the way (Abbott 2005). Abbott observes that analyses with clear, final outcomes have become paradigmatic in modern sociology. "Sociology has the sense of an ending", he notes (2005, p. 393).

There can be little doubt that the current understanding and situational framing by LI/LL tools generally lie within the realm of final outcomes. This is strengthened by the fact that we define and delimit certain situations as 'situations' and seek to extract learning points ex-post from these situations. Consider for instance the following passage from the NATO Lessons Learned Handbook.

The Handbook initially identifies three basic stages of organizational learning: Identification, Action, and Institutionalization (NATO 2011a, b, p. 2). It then gives the example of how the Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) community learns (ibid., p. 3):

1. Identification: After every IED incident a report is generated that identifies what can be learned from the incident.
2. Action: The reports are reviewed by national and multinational groups who take the necessary action to learn from the experience. Usually this is an update to or creation of doctrine, Standing/Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), tactics, techniques and procedures, or technological tools.
3. Institutionalization: The new procedures are incorporated into training for new staff and communicated to current staff through newsletters and bulletins.

Clearly, the supposition is that an IED incident is indeed an incident, implying that it is possible to delimit its temporal boundaries. Furthermore, there is the assumption that it is possible to establish general learning points that can be applied

to similar situations (cf. Colb's learning cycle) and thus that it *is* possible to identify similar situations. Finally, it is assumed that the experience from IED incidents can be translated and fitted into specific *categories* of relevance—doctrine, standard operating procedures, technological tools etc.

The perception of both *what* and *how* to learn from experience as presented in the NATO Lessons Learned Handbook can be found mirrored internationally and at all levels in modern military organizations. As mentioned before, the aim of this article is to reflect upon what perspectives, potentials and pitfalls we might encounter by this way of perceiving experience and thinking about learning possibilities from experience. So let us return to Abbott and consider where that might take us if we relate it to his article. At least two points can be extracted.

When working within a situational outcome-at-a-point framing, the first and probably least controversial point is to stress the importance of being aware of the fact that *where* we choose to draw the temporal limits of the incident has a pivotal impact on *what* we will be able to find in our analysis of the incident. We emphasize this point because, although it may seem obvious, it seems to us to be too often overlooked. In the above C-IED example for instance, no attention is drawn to the temporal delimiting *as a conscious action* with important consequences to the analysis outcome. Instead, the temporal boundaries of incidents are tacitly taken for granted by the formulation of the text.

The second point is that phrasing or considering our questions within an outcome-at-a-point-oriented understanding fundamentally shapes the way we understand the incident considered. This very framing of the question implicitly delimits how (and hence what) we observe. For instance, it makes us more liable to overlook outcome-as-process aspects such as how past experiences may be re-narrated and reinterpreted, or how they may acquire new meanings in the light of later events or new contexts. In other words, it appears that when we define a specific situation as 'a situation' and then construct it as something that we can *later* look at and learn from, we have also, *by this very method of framing our task,* implicitly played down the idea that Lessons Learned is a process constantly in-the-making and might better be termed Lessons *Learning*.

Let us take the Copenhagen shootings we mentioned in the beginning of this article as an example. With the above in mind, two of the primary questions of importance to the LI/LL process are "When does the incident begin?" and "When does it end?". Does it begin with the first shots fired by the gunman? Does it begin earlier, when the young man formed the idea and began to prepare for carrying out the violent action? Or does it start way back in a refugee camp in Jordan where his mother grew up?

And likewise concerning the end of the incident, does it end—as we narrated it in this article—when the young man is finally tracked down and shot by the police? Does it end a few hours later after the debriefing among police officers? Does it end when the evaluation commission that was subsequently established presented their report? Or does it—from a process outcome viewpoint—*never* end, because the

actions spurred interpretations and reactions of power and counterpower alike? These can and may well be continuously re-enacted, re-narrated and re-configured to take new meanings in new contexts.

5.2 *Defining the Contextual Boundaries—The What, Where, Why, How and Who*

Now we turn to situational limiting by context. Initially we may note that it seems that at-point-perspectives also prevail with regard to how *context* is perceived and staged by military LI/LL guidelines. The context of incidents appears to be taken for granted as finite.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the frequency of the use of the term 'context' within management and organization studies (Nunes et al. 2009; McLaren and Durepos 2015). Among other things this rise is inspired by the increased popularity of systems theory and actor-network studies. It can also be seen as a reaction to the mostly a-contextual research strand informed by positivist epistemology that was prevalent during the 1990s and still maintains a strong hold within scientific focus on evidence-based programs and management[6] (Alvesson and Willmott 1992).

Based on a review of a number of articles published in two leading organizational scientific journals, McLaren and Durepos note that notwithstanding this increased awareness of the importance of context, the actual meaning of the word most often remains to be defined in specific studies. According to their study, researchers often simply add one adjective—like 'social', 'organizational' or 'political'—to define the context of their study (McLaren and Durepos 2015, p. 4). This observation leads them to suggest that it remains an important task to investigate and discuss the concept of context, noting that "As a context is something in which a phenomenon is interwoven and deeply embedded, it would seem that we must examine it as complex and infinitely-dimensional" (McLaren and Durepos 2015, p. 12. See also Nunes et al. 2009).

We find this point made by McLaren and Durepos important within the context of our research. Since the identification of learning points from difficult operational situations is constitutive for further action, interpretations and priorities, and since difficult operational situations most often occur in an (obviously) multi-perspectivist setting with potentially conflicting viewpoints and multiple social and cultural references at play, it is important to remember that "One person's context is another's taken-for-granted assumption" (Rousseau and Fried 2001, p. 3).

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[6]Quantitative studies looking to establish relations of causality frequently either only refer to the non-parametrical context as 'residual' or assume context to 'pre-exist' the socially constructed phenomena that are studied, as if context were a "fixed container into which researchers place phenomena" (McLaren and Durepos 2015, p. 12).

While considering how the word context is used in NATO Lessons Learned instruments, we found it useful to distinguish between whether context is related to the observant's own organization, which we will call *the analytical context*, or if it is related to the observed, situational, incident boundaries, which we will call *the incident context*. In the NATO Lessons Learned Handbook, the word context is generally related to the LI/LL tools and the organizational context in which these tools are to play a role. Context is, generally speaking, taken to be of the analytical variety. In NATO's Joint Analysis Handbook, context is dealt with as related to both analytical as well as incident context.

Considerations related to incident context are primarily concerned with the topic of how to encourage a multi-perspective analysis of the incident and its contextual factors.[7] To a lesser extent, the Handbook also addresses considerations of how to make the contextual bracketing of the observed incident (NATO 2007).

We will explain the importance of this reflection by drawing on systems theory and the concept of cybernetics as developed by Gregory Bateson. Bateson gave the example of the cybernetic circuit involved for a blind man walking with a stick, asking where the boundaries of the blind man's system are. As the stick becomes part of how the man construes space, obstacles, routes and eventually the world, the question arises as to where the limits of that system are. Therefore, Bateson asks "Where does the blind man's self begin*?*" (Bateson 1972, p. 318).

To say that the self as system is constituted only by the man himself, by his body and bodily faculties, is misleading. To say that it is the man *and* the stick is equally misleading because the surrounding world that is important to the blind man only presents itself gradually along the way, depending on which route he takes and what happens afterwards. First a stone on the pavement, then it starts to rain, the scent of ice cream wafts by, and then he arrives at a red light. And when the man "sits down to eat his lunch, his stick and its messages will no longer be relevant" (ibid., p. 318). Seeking a priori definition of the blind man's self makes no sense in this perspective as his mind is not determined by absolute or anatomical boundaries. It is made real by perception and context, i.e. by what we select as *differences which make a difference* (cf. Luhmann 2013 [1991–92]).

Likewise, we may view the task of contextual boundary-setting in relation to establishing Lessons Identified from operational situations. Returning to our example of the terror shootings in Copenhagen, a central consideration becomes what the evaluation commission should take into account when looking into the incident. If they only take the actions directly involved in those tragic hours into consideration, what lessons will this lead us to learn? Will this lead us anywhere near to understanding what happened and why, or will it primarily make us aware of procedural and tactical lessons? Should the evaluation commission consider the publication of the first Mohammad drawings that appeared eight years previously in

[7]Among other things, the Handbook suggests "brainstorm five reasons why the issue occurred" (NATO 2011a, b, p. 30) as well as possibly trying out the Six Thinking Hats method (NATO 2007, p. 71).

a Danish newspaper and the reaction these drawings have since fueled all over the world? Should they consider the school years of the young gunman etc.?

Considering these questions, it seems obvious that what the police learn from their ex-post analysis of the shooting will to a large extent depend on how they choose to construct their temporal and contextual bracketing.

In an article about Lessons Learned by the Norwegian Defense in Afghanistan, Norwegian researcher Torunn Haaland pointed to the fact that organizational learning tends to follow modal frameworks that are already familiar. She notes that experience-based learning is strongly influenced by both the organizational culture and by what she calls 'prevailing expectations'. "In a way, we learn what we already knew from before", she says (Haaland 2011, p. 77, our translation). It seems that the taken-for-granted contextual bracketing of situations or incidents relies upon and reinforces such expectations. A Danish army officer told us of his reflections following an incident, which we find relevant here.[8]

The reflections concern an extreme operational situation in Afghanistan where a small army section had been under intense fire from locals. Air support arrived, but one soldier subsequently died from a shot through her helmet. The subsequent LI process established that the army required better protection gear, thus addressing a *static* security issue. A different LI process, which in its analysis had established broader contextual boundaries of the incident, might find that increasing static security will only serve to strengthen the host country locals' perception of international coalition forces as being a brutal, foreign oppressor, thus aggravating the cleavage between the two and increasing hostility towards the [ISAF] troops and making communication, teaching, cooperation etc. more difficult. This other LI process might instead recommend the troops to *talk* with civilians in order to communicate and share intentions. The conclusion from this LI process may be that soldiers need to be better trained in communication skills in order to avoid or mitigate such conflicts, thereby addressing a *dynamic* security issue.

So while the *imminent* conclusion from the incident was to recommend a reinforcement of protection gear and/or kinetic potential, the alternative conclusion —to increase dynamic security skills—only proposes itself as result of a broader contextual analysis.[9] Therefore, an important question to consider in LI/LL thinking will be how to challenge our taken-for-granted expectations of contextual bracketing. Among other things, this might bring forth suggestions as to how INFOOPS

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[8]We have chosen to present the example with slight alterations.

[9]In a similar example, a US study of the military learning processes during the second Iraq War concluded that there were important differences with regard to what the learning was oriented towards in the first versus the second part of the war. While in the first part, many LI/LL studies analyzed the successes of combined joint operations and combined arms operations (Fontenot et al. 2003, p. 397 ff.), studies conducted during the second part of the war concluded that these maneuvers were not always useful, even if they might seem effective. These later studies rather drew attention to the importance of planning and preparation for (what was in 2003 called) Phase IV ('Stabilize') (Wright and Reese 2008, p. 572) and of emphasizing 'cultural awareness', as opposed to individual task-specific training, in army education (Wright and Reese 2008, p. 585).

activities may, to a further extent, be included in the campaign planning and how soldiers may translate and use this approach more actively. Furthermore, it may bring forth learning points that are less centered around procedures and tactics (cf. Kristensen and Larsen 2010).

From other areas of military work we know the concept of *red teams*, where several teams independent of one another are established to look into the same facts and are encouraged to challenge one another's conclusions. Perhaps it would be useful for the military to occasionally employ this strategy in LI/LL processes in order to broaden the perspective with respect to the selection of what 'facts' are to be included in the analysis.

5.3 Temporal Orientation of the Analysis

A last important aspect of the concept of LI/LL that we consider in this section is its orientation backwards in time. Abbott notes that sociological research is often concerned with the way *things turn out*. This goes for quantitative explorative sociological research as well as for qualitative sociological analysis; whether the aim is to explore or to explain, whether it is to understand or to assert. In sociology, we tend to focus on the factors, reasons, and translations that are taken into account in establishing why and how things turned out as they did (Abbott 2005, p. 395). This seeking hindsight *sense-making*[10] also appears as a perfect example of the narratives we produce about LI/LL. We relate things backwards—explaining, understanding, reconstructing why we ended up exactly here now, or there then. Then we try to learn from it. "*But how can it be any other way?*" Given that we seek to learn from something that has already happened. Is it possible to narrate backwards forward, so to speak? To consider this and suggest ways to put LI/LL thinking into perspective, we found it constructive to use ideas and tools from narrative theory, in particular that developed by Barnett Pearce.

The central outset of narrative theory is that language is not merely a tool for description, but is, while *describing*, also *producing* reality. Narrating is an action and as such is neither objective nor innocent. In the words of Michel Foucault, we must consider discourse as "the violence that we do to things" (Foucault 1972, p. 229). When narrating—whether as part of identifying lessons from an extreme operational situation or as part of an argument with our spouse—Pearce advises us to always keep in mind the consideration of "What are we making together?" (Pearce 2005, p. 3). This is so because we make sense of things and events through the stories we tell, and because stories serve to establish and maintain the social memory of *how things are or were* depending upon what these stories include.

[10]According to Weick et al., "sense-making involves turning circumstances into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action" (Weick et al. 2005, p. 409).

From this perspective, it is also important to note that stories equally produce oblivion, because their construction of reality also relies on what they omit.

So what is a story in relation to Lessons Learned processes? Pearce used the concept of 'episode' to design the narration that a narrator chooses to delimit and present. According to him, "an episode is an action or sequence of actions that is storied; that is, it has a beginning, middle and end, with a plot-line" (Pearce 2005a, b, p. 11). Based on this, we may say that *sequences* of military operational episodes are (in hindsight) construed and conjoined into 'incidents' or 'situations' by the narration of a *progressing* story. In such a story, certain actions and episodes are selected, punctuated, and subsequently accorded with a specific meaning.[11]

The ostensibly *narrated* story of an operational situation usually follows the above-mentioned chronological structure. However, the Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) theory as developed by Pearce and Vernon Cronen suggested reconsidering and reframing the concept of diachronic narrating as a purely backwards oriented action. They suggest that narratives in their *meaning-acquiring* relate both *forth* into the future and back: "communicative acts cannot be done alone. (…) what is done is usually after and before what others do" (Pearce 2005b, p. 43, our emphasis). This dual temporal orientation is captured in the concept of a 'conversational triplet'. The triplet is constituted because, "An action is (…) an act in the context of a previous act and a subsequent one" (Pearce 2005, p. 11).

So according to the CMM theory, actions and episodes take their meaning from contextual events, their interpretations and relations, in both temporal directions, i.e. both from what has previously happened and from the response to the episode. It is important to note that the meaning that is possible to construct from an episode is not necessarily *linearly* related to the time-line of the event. "The turns that are chronologically adjacent aren't necessarily the turns that comprise the triplet" (Pearce 2007, p. 118). If we apply this way of thinking to the stories that we tell of operational incidents and which constitute the basis or the 'raw material' of LI/LL processes, we become more able to recognize those events prior to the incident or at a later point in time that may be of importance for what the incident *becomes*.

But how is it possible in our analyses and narratives to seek to look more forward, when we try to learn from past events and experience? Our suggestion is to not only *imagine* how things might turn out, but also to *encompass* the LI/LL process into the story from which we seek to learn. In other words, we suggest that the act of identifying lessons from an incident and ascribing them importance and meaning afterwards (as well as turning them into Lessons Learned later on) should not be seen separately from the incident. When we look at current military LI/LL practices, there generally appears to be a separation between two distinct stories. One is the narrative of the 'incident' (what happened) and the other is the ex-post narrative about lessons that are possible and worthwhile to learn. By merging the two stories, we will become more sensitive to the fact that our bracketing and

[11]We rely here on the definition by Alice Morgan who defines stories as consisting of a series of events that are linked in a sequence, across time and according to a plot (Hansen 2013).

interpretations of military operational incidents, and our responses to them, are constitutive for both our perception of *what was* and *what then*—just as in the conversational triplet.

In a larger perspective, we believe that the inclusion of the LI/LL process into incident-analyses might also prompt us to consider the specific ways we, *by this or that particular construction of the* '*incident story*', create a social and organizational memory of what this incident 'was' or perhaps rather by our story 'becomes'. Each specific LI/LL narrative has repercussions both on the past (by establishing what happened) and on the future by turning our focus and orientation in certain directions and away from others. It is relevant to recall the caveat that the stories we tell also produce a reality by what they omit.

6 Assumptions Enabling Lessons Learned Procedures

In this last part of the article, we consider two central assumptions that can be viewed as key actants[12] in contemporary military Lessons Identified/Lessons Learned instruments. The first assumption has to do with the *perception of knowledge* and of what we are able to do with this knowledge. The second concerns the practice of *categorization*, which is a central feature of military LI/LL guidelines.

6.1 Knowledge Perception

Referring to Luhmann's categories of first- and second-order observation, we defined the analysis of a given operational situation as a first-order observation and the observation of the *performance* of LI/LL instruments as second-order observation. In the following, we consider the perception of knowledge that military LI/LL procedures appear to rest upon.

6.1.1 Stock Knowledge

In the Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations, AJP-3(B), NATO notes that "the purpose of a Lessons Learned procedure is to learn efficiently from

[12]Bruno Latour coined the term *actant* in relation to the development of the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to describe anything that has agency (which, for Latour, everything does) (Latour 2004). The notion 'actant' (and the philosophy that comes with it) is adept at capturing non-human agency, such as the performativity of principles and technologies.

* COA: Course of Action. In the wargaming, the suggested possible COAs are contrasted with the suggested possible OPFOR COAs and eventually Joint-Force Commander (JFC) will decide which COA to pursue (NATO 2013: 3-34 - 3-41).

Fig. 2 A figurative suggestion of the analytical concept of the allied joint conduct of the operational-level planning process

experience and to provide validated justifications for amending the existing way of doing things, in order to improve performance…" (NATO 2011b, par. 0454).

This quote was selected as an example because it captures central points concerning the perception of knowledge inherent to NATO's Lessons Learned instruments in a few words. This interpretation of Lessons Learned in military contexts can be seen as leaning on a modernist notion of knowledge as cumulative, invaluable, and progressing. The concept of Lessons Learned relies upon the viewpoint that the more we increase and expand our knowledge of past events and the more nuances we are able to add to this knowledge, the better we can act in and/or respond to future situations. It is a learning approach emphasizing the past.[13] This perception of knowledge and of what we can *do* with knowledge leans on a rational choice-understanding of behavior and generally supports a notion of linearity or cohesion between cause and effect. The presumption is that it is possible to identify best practice or good practice depending on the situation.

In both NATO and Danish military contexts, this *notion of knowledge* and what to do with it finds support in several institutional and educational artifacts. One example is the analysis model used in the Allied Joint Doctrine for Operational-Level Planning, AJP-5 (NATO 2013). We might condense the overall analytical movement of the AJP-5 Chapter 3, Conduct of the Operational-Level Planning Process, as illustrated in Fig. 2. Variations of this model are well-known internationally (cf. CALL 1996).

This model of analysis suggests that as our scope of empirical data and experience increases, we become able to make better analyses, which in turn makes us able to improve recommendations and choices of action. Similar to the NATO LI/LL instruments, the model both presupposes and installs a cumulative notion of knowledge and *generally* assumes a recognizable cohesion between cause and effect.

[13]Hebel argues in his Master's thesis that the Lessons Learned learning approach might be seen as "reactive", as the initiation of novel approaches is based on past experience (cf. Hebel 2014, p. 8). We suggest that a contrast to this learning approach might, for example, be the concept of unit impulse response (where the impulse is testing the *immediate, spontaneous reaction* of all system parts) as developed in mathematics based on the Dirac delta function.

6.1.2 The Notion of Linearity

But is it always possible to calculate with this kind of linearity in regard to experiential learning in military contexts? And if not, when and how should we think otherwise?

Some years ago, in the Harvard Business Review, David Snowden and Mary Boone proposed a framework for leaders' decision-making ("The Cynefin Framework", Snowden and Boone 2007. See also Uhl-Bien et al. 2007; Haas et al. 2012). This framework draws on research into complex systems theory and narrative theory and relates decision-making to its context. A central point to this model is that the validity of the idea of causal linearity depends on the context. Snowden and Boone distinguish between the four following contextual domains and consider the practices that might find their place in each:

- In **simple** contexts,[14] the relationship between cause and effect is obvious "to all". In this context, it is possible to identify a *best* practice.
- In **complicated** contexts, the relationships between cause and effect may be multiple and require thorough analysis. We may be able to identify *good* practice(s).
- In **complex** contexts, relationships between causes and effects can only be perceived in retrospect as patterns or overall trends. Here we may talk about *emergent* practice.
- In **chaotic** contexts, there is no relation between cause and effect and we may discover *novel* practice.

LI/LL procedures are, by their structure and conceptual premises, assuming an ordered universe and the nature of events to pertain to what Snowden and Boone identify as the simple and complicated domains.[15] The value of Lessons Learned rests on the idea that cause-and-effect relationships are perceptible and that it is therefore possible to establish what is good or even best practice. This identified model practice can be exported to and applied in other situations (cf. Kolb's learning cycle).

The Cynefin framework draws attention to the fact that in high risk, high complexity organizations like the military, there is a tremendous challenge both in regard to the assumption of an ordered universe and in regard to the question of *how to prepare for the unknown*. We prepare for something that we cannot possibly experience or know before it occurs, and almost every operational situation is unique, complex, and carries (high) risk. To give an example, for years now the Danish army has been rehearsing dust landings. Language officers have been learning Pashtu. And yet, in the near future, the Merlin helicopters might be required to land in a jungle or the taiga. In this sense, extreme operational situations

[14]Snowden later suggested replacing the term 'simple' with 'obvious' (Snowden 2013).

[15]At a *first-order level*, LI/LL procedures allow learning points to be drawn from emergent and novel practices that are identified in the *operations* analyses.

condense the meeting between all learned and all new. And yet, with our Lessons Learned instruments we primarily orient our regard towards the past, relying on some degree of recognizability, based on the experience that not *everything* is *all new all the time*.

From a communication perspective, we may say that the structure of our LI/LL conceptualization has its emphasis on the past and leans on a modernist communication that leads people to act out of stories that define time and knowledge as progressing and cumulative. Our institutionalized notions and systems of Lessons Learned tend to perceive *people* as agents of change, *rationality* as the means of change, and '*improvement*' as a possible and desired outcome of actions (cf. Pearce 2005a, b). As mentioned, Haaland observed that although we think we learn open-mindedly from experiences, we nevertheless unintentionally tend to look for and to find confirmation of our prevailing expectations and taken-for-granted realities (keeping in mind the caveat by Luhmann that the distinction itself is invisible to the observer in the moment of observation). Bearing this in mind, we might see that *by* our establishment of the existing common LI/LL procedures, we have also instituted a specific perception of knowledge. This knowledge perception both *permeates* and *frames* the situational analyses of operational incidents.

From this observation it seems interesting for future military research to explore what room there may be in the current LI/LL narrative for unpredictabilities and non-linearities, for abduction as epistemology, and for the perception of each extreme operational situation as being radically *new*. Furthermore, it seems interesting to further develop and share ideas of what and how to learn from operational situations if we change perspective at a second-order observation level. What ideas and considerations might, for instance, an Actor-Network Theory-inspired approach bring forth to experience-based learning in extreme situations?

6.2 Categorization

The second actant of military Lessons Learned instruments that we consider here is the practice of categorization. By this we refer to the division of incidents and the narratives about these incidents into smaller parts, and the subsequent assignment of each experience or part of experience to a specific realm of relevance and domain of action, e.g. as pertaining to tactics, doctrine, materiel, training etc. (cf. NATO 2011a, b, 2007; Isaksen et al. 2014).

The practice of categorization can be understood from several perspectives. Following a systems theory approach, we might ask in what context(s) or perspectives categorizing appears to make complex incidents and narratives of these incidents more manageable?

In a *learning* context, categorization may serve the purpose of enabling an overview of similarities of situations, challenges, and actions, which furthers both the 'abstract conceptualization' and the 'active experimentation' in Kolb's learning cycle.

From an *institutional* perspective, we may see that the categories that are set up by the NATO LI/LL guidelines as well as in national LI/LL instruments tend to match the organizational artifacts and structures of their counterparts. For instance, the NATO DOTMLPF-J Capability Categorization, which contains the categories Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facility and Interoperability (NATO 2011a, b, p. 30), goes well with the organizational structure of the Danish Defense College. The College comprises five institutes—for Strategy, for Military Operations, for Leadership and Management Studies, etc.[16] When experience is categorized and mirrored in institutional artifacts, it is easier to appoint one section or one person as responsible for further analyzing and evaluating Lessons Identified and to ensure that they are being followed up and turned into Lessons Learned, "rather than leaving [them] merely to be… lesson[s] admired" (NATO 2011, b, p. 33).

The practice of categorizing can be seen exerted through three central activities:

Narrative selection of punctuations concerning incidents. By that we mean the selection of specific episodes, actions, and interpretations within specific stories that are considered important and come to underlie the Lessons Identified (cf. Hansen 2013, p. 118).

The *fragmentation* of experiences and the assignment of each experience as pertaining to one or more specific domains.

The *translation* of personal experience into knowledge management artifacts such as reports, documents, learning points, handbooks, platoon commander shortlists, etc.

All of these activities rely on an assumption of 'mirroring'. The selection of punctuations relies on the fact that the story narrated from selected punctuations largely mirrors the full incident. The fragmentation of experiences relies on the assumption that the whole is equal to its (divided) parts; and the translation of subjective, lived experience relies on the construed artifact's ability to represent its origin. In the following, we will look closer at each of these three activities.

6.2.1 Selection of Punctuations

We considered and discussed the selection of punctuations in a previous section of this article. We therefore do not develop it further here, but stress the observation that following systems theory, we cannot rely upon the ideal dramatic plot of Aristotle to apply to military operational experiences and assume that the *meaning-shaping* episodes (in the narratives) of incidents necessarily unfold in a sequence of a beginning, middle, and end. Furthermore, relating to the learning cycle of Kolb, we also cannot assume that the narrative punctuations selected by one person or one

[16]Additionally, there is the Institute for Military History and War Studies and the Institute for Language and Culture. The military officer academies are also part of the Royal Danish Defense College.

group—leading to certain abstract conceptualizations—are necessarily similar or close to similar to those another person or group might have made and which might lead to different abstract conceptualizations. A central question to explore in order to unfold the meaning-shaping power of punctuations therefore is *How would the story be, if different punctuations had been made?*[17]

6.2.2 Fragmentation of Experiences

The second activity through which the practice of categorization is exercised is the fragmentation of experience. Fundamentally, fragmentation of experiences only makes sense within a modernist world-view. This world-view can be seen as opposed to a cybernetic world-view or many indigenous world-views and their notion of everything being intrinsically connected.

John Law gives an example of how, in a study of how a hospital handled patients suffering from alcoholic liver disease (ALD), he and his colleagues gradually came to realize that "the object we were studying might be a shape-shifting reality" (Law 2006, p. 3). While the researchers had beforehand thought that ALD would be a fixed or solid phenomenon to consider as a part of the patchwork of artifacts, structures, relations, and comprehensions at play in patient care, they came to see it differently by observation. "Maybe we were dealing with a slippery phenomenon (…), something that wasn't definite and didn't have a single form. Perhaps it was a fluid object, or even one that was ephemeral in any given form, flipping from one configuration to another" (ibid., p. 4).

The question is if the same might be the case with regards to extreme operational situations. Although our textbooks, guidelines, and institutional structures distinguish between (say) organization, materiel, leadership, personnel and so forth, these distinctions may not always be transferable in a meaningful way to military operational *experiences*. In other words, it may be that in the *experienced reality*, it is not always possible to make distinctions between various relevant or designated categories and then relate them coherently. Humpty Dumpty cannot be recollected from the pieces scattered on the ground.

For example, in a systemic perspective, (military) leadership performance is not viewed as an attribute of individual qualities or competences of the leader, but may be considered to be first and foremost a matter of relation. In this perspective, we cannot talk about leadership without also talking about those who follow, and we cannot consider the individual leader without also considering the network of people and actants into which he or she is interwoven. This view on leadership is perhaps rather like that of a web without a weaver. From this perspective, the distinction between leadership and personnel (as suggested by the DOTMLPF-I) is not obvious.

[17]The method of the Six Thinking Hats (NATO 2007, p. 71) might be one way to explore this.

In order to unfold the power of categorization, we need to explore questions like: What is the impact of the categorizations that we make? In what way are the categories shaping the way we think of Lessons Identified and Lessons Learned? How are experiences categorized—by the individual and by the organization? What does this categorization mean with respect to the question of whether and how they are taken seriously? In what ways are the specific categories reflecting our habitual or taken-for-granted world images (cf. Tvedt 2015, p. 206)? And what happens to those experiences that do not fit into any of the established categories?

6.2.3 Translation of Experience

This last question concerning experiences that do not fit into the established categories is also a central theme in relation to the third activity through which the practice of categorization is exercised. We identified this practice as the translation of *subjective* experience into manageable artifacts, i.e. making it fit into the formats set up by LI/LL instruments.

Even from a quick glance it appears that there is a striking difference between the subjective experience of extreme operational situations as narrated by soldiers or as depicted by novels, movies, paintings, photographs etc. and the much more 'clinical' evaluation reports and learning points that are formally drawn up concerning those incidents. It is a central principle and value of modern democracies and modern public administration that the exercise of tasks and of power is based on setting aside emotions in order to have a rational, professional and 'neutral' judgment prevail (Swedberg 2005). This principle strives to attain the impartiality of civil servants and it applies to military management and its technologies such as LI/LL instruments as well.

However, the individual experience of extreme operational situations is rarely impartial. Many soldiers who participated in extreme situations will be able to tell their story of these events in detail years later. Many of them will tell how images, smells and emotions from these situations resurge as flash-backs, nightmares, anger or unexpected angst in everyday situations. From 1992 till 2014, 32,000 Danish men and women were deployed in military operations (Jensen et al. 2015); the majority of these to Afghanistan, Iraq or the Balkans. Many participated in highly risky, challenging, and unpredictable operational situations. A recent study by the Danish Defense showed that 10% of the veterans from the ISAF 7 group were suffering from serious PTSD and/or depression symptoms two and a half years after their return[18] (Veterancenteret 2013). In that sense, we may say that *we have a wounded army*.

The experience of Danish veterans is shared by thousands of soldiers and officers worldwide. Their stories all point to a central quandary facing modern military

[18]Figures from the US Department of Veterans Affairs show that 11–20% of the soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and 10% of the soldiers deployed during the first Gulf War 1990–1991 suffer from PTSD.

experiential learning systems: How can subjective, lived experience and its individual meaning be translated into systematic Lessons Identified and Learned? What tools and modes of translation do we have that can meaningfully fulfill this task? In other words, how can we include phenomenological approaches to experiential learning?

At present, it seems that by the procedural guidelines, by the use of DOTMLPF-I categorization schemes and the like, and by the use of rational criteria for assessing the relevance and importance of experiences, we have instituted a practice where the value of soldiers' subjective, emotional experiences is mainly handed over to veteran centers, psychologist services and the like. In a way, we might say that we have categorized the phenomenological experience from extreme operational situations away from being taken to be of key importance to the main task of the Defense. In an attempt to highlight and draw attention to these experiences in the Danish Defense (as well as in defense organizations more broadly), it may be fruitful in future Lessons Identified processes to further explore questions that seek to include phenomenological and existentialist approaches in their scope of inquiry.[19] Such inquiries may have many starting points, one of which could be this: Over the past decade, the Danish officer training schools reoriented themselves towards missions like the ISAF. During this time, personal experiences as told directly to officer students by veterans have become an increasingly important and valued contribution to the education. Taking a phenomenological and existentialist position as a starting point for our inquiry, we might ask questions such as: What is the emotional impact of these narrations on the students? How do these experiences affect and shape the images and expectations of the individual officer as well as of the military as a whole? In this narrative context, what does it come to mean to be a soldier? What does it come to mean to be a commander in the Byzantine tangle of extreme operational situations? Ultimately, what does a defense force—a military organization and its armed forces—become in war? Or perhaps rather, *how* do they become in war?

7 Conclusion

In this paper, we have tried to lay out suggestions for considering military experiential learning guidelines and procedures from difficult operational situations in a second-order perspective. Our main intent was to consider the *modes of observation* and implicit taken-for-granted world views of military Lessons Learned guidelines and procedures in order to see what *dialogue* these tools are proposing in relation to experiential learning from difficult operations and in order to see what these tools emphasize and what they leave in the shade. The considerations and suggestions

[19]Research into these questions does not start from scratch. Important contributions have already been presented; see for instance Sookermany (2013), Ilharco (2003), Hajjar (2014), Chiara (2014).

that we presented in the paper should not be regarded as alternatives or corrections to current practices, but as additional suggestions for further joint consideration.

Central considerations concerned the temporal and contextual bracketing of difficult operational situations. We here drew attention to the apparent assumption of incidents as being *finite* and, as such, observable as "at-point outcomes" (cf. Abbott 2005). By examples of a terrorist incident in Copenhagen and an extreme operational incident as told by a Danish army officer, we explored the importance of *where* these temporal and contextual brackets are set. While the NATO LI/LL analysis instruments encourage a multi-perspectivist view upon challenging situations, we suggested that the occasional establishment of 'red teams' to conduct LI/LL processes might contribute to the questioning of how to define these situations at all.

We also considered the temporal orientation of LI/LL processes and the idea that the observation and analysis process can be considered as *separable* from the incidents that it observes. Drawing on systems and narrative theory, we questioned this division and suggested trying to include the LI/LL process in the incident story.

We then drew attention to two assumptions ('actants') that appear to enable LI/LL procedures. The first assumption concerned the perception of knowledge as cumulative and the idea of linearity or cohesion between cause and effect. By using the Cynefin framework proposed by Snowden and Boone (2007), we challenged this assumption, suggesting that in many current conflicts where military troops or intelligence are deployed, the temporal and contextual cohesion might be fuzzy or even impossible to establish. Due to their assumption of linearity, current LI/LL tools might be more adept at identifying *procedural* and *tactical* learning points, while other types of experience-based reflections and learning potential are perhaps less included or considered by the Lessons Learned narratives.

This led us to consider the practice of *categorization* as a second actant relative to the performance of LI/LL instruments. We suggested that the practice of categorization comes to shape the way we view incidents *all while* narrating and analyzing them. We narrate and we analyze with a *categorizing gaze* (cf. Foucault 1989). We suggested that in order to unfold the power of categorization, future military research needs to further explore what we might see if we did *not* categorize. What happens if we try to narrate and analyze without a categorizing gaze?

We pointed out that one faculty that may be challenged by the current categorizing gaze is the ability to observe and learn from wholes, from longer temporal stretches and wide contexts. Furthermore, we pointed to subjective experience and impressions from extreme operational situations as something which might escape our attention when categorizing. While this kind of experience has been central in many works of art—in books, poems, films, paintings, photography and so forth—it seems that military Lessons Learned instruments may still improve ways to include these aspects and their learning potentials in their scope of attention.

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Authors Biography

Therese Heltberg has a master's degree and a Ph.D. in sociology and a subsidiary degree in studies of the modern Middle East. She works as a researcher at the Institute for Leadership and Management Studies at the Danish Defence College. Her current research interests concern the relationship between the construction and practicing of knowledge in relation to military leadership and command.

Her previous work involved empirical fields such as lessons learned and crime prevention in the Danish National Police, treatment of substance misusers in prisons, and topics related to international development and cooperation.

Thomas Jellesmark holds a master's degree in military studies and works as head of junior leadership education section at the Institute for Leadership and Management Studies at the Danish Defence College. He also teaches and does research in military leadership and develops new programs to enhance and broaden the learning at the College. Currently his work is focused on integrating military leadership and operational planning processes. Before his service at the Danish Defence College, he served as an officer in the Danish Army. Among other positions he has served as a tank platoon commander, company commander and chief of a battalion staff.

Officer Socialization as Prelude to in Extremis Leadership

Sander Dalenberg

Abstract Military socialization and character building at officer academies often also involves leadership development. To assess the effects of organizational introduction activities on leadership behavior, transformational, transactional, ethical and situational leadership was measured at three times during the first six weeks of the officer education at the Royal Netherlands Military Academy. Newly arrived cadets participated in a self-report questionnaire, at organizational entry, after military introduction and after Cadet Corps' introduction. Results indicate that military introduction stimulates participative leadership whereas the Cadet Corps' introduction improves the effectiveness of directive leadership behavior but decreases the effectiveness of participant leadership behavior. Integrity as sub factor of ethical leadership seems to be under pressure by the military and Cadet Corps' introduction. Both periods stimulate a hands on attitude in contrast to laissez-faire which has virtually been eliminated as a leadership style. Overall the officer socialization period seems to be beneficial for the development of (parts of) transformational leadership. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the relation between how new recruits think about leadership styles and leadership in extreme situations. Various factors of transformational, situational and ethical leadership are suggested to be useful in situations of in extremis and from the edge leadership.

Keywords Leadership development · Officer education · Socialization · Initiation · In extremis leadership

1 Introduction

Often, when we think of leadership in extreme situations, we address how military leaders lead their personnel while coping with the dangers and the ambiguities during missions and refer to leadership in extremis or leadership from the edge

S. Dalenberg (✉)
Netherlands Defence Academy, Breda, The Netherlands
e-mail: S.Dalenberg.01@mindef.nl

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(Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011; Vogelaar 2007). In the military literature, the concept of leadership from the edge has much in common with the concept mission command (Vogelaar 2007, 2004; Doctrine Committee of the Netherlands Army 1996). Moreover, military leadership often concerns matters of life and death. Leaders and their followers are "personally faced with highly dynamic and unpredictable situations and where the outcomes of leadership may result in severe physical or psychological injury (or death) to unit members" Campbell et al. (2010, p. 3). Leadership under these circumstances is called In Extremis Leadership, which Fisher et al. (2010) define as "giving purpose, motivation, and direction to people when there is eminent physical danger, and where followers believe that leader behavior will influence their physical well-being or survival". Military leaders are trained to lead their personnel in dangerous situations, in particular because they may have to give assignments that bring their subordinates into harm's way. A part of the training of future leaders, in particular military officers, aims at leadership development. Leadership development is core business for military academies as their main effort should lead to delivering adequate junior officers capable of leading small teams in military practice. Leadership development generally occurs through three mechanisms: formal instruction, work assignments and self-directed learning (Day and Zaccaro 2004). Most military academies (e.g. RNLMA, USMA, RMAS, OSH, ESMSC)[1] provide courses including those three mechanisms varying from one and a half to four years, depending on the personnel demands of the organization (need for rapid expansion of junior officers) and capacities of the new recruits (prior experience and education). Leadership development is argued to be a systemic process (Day and Halpin 2001) and a deep learning form of change (Lord and Hall 2005). Leadership development therefore cannot be seen as a single event.

Research on leadership evolved from 'great man' theory via trait and behavioral theories to contingency theories and contemporary 'one best way' theories (see Yukl (2013) for an extensive outline). Within the Netherlands Defence organization, the military leadership vision (Dalenberg and Vogelaar 2012; Dalenberg et al. 2014) suggests that all leaders should be able to vary their leadership styles consistent with the demands of the context, their team and the task at hand. Moreover, contemporary military missions increase in complexity which has consequences for the perception of junior leadership responsibility. Although this suggests the need for a broadly developed arsenal of leadership behavior possibilities, most initial leadership education is firmly based on situational leadership (Blanchard et al. 1993) and transformational leadership (Bass 1999). The last decade does show significant developments in military education concerning the great deal of attention that was paid to the importance of ethics for leadership (Robinson et al. 2008; Verweij 2010).

[1]RNLMA: Royal Netherlands Military Academy. USMA: United States Military Academy. RMAS: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (Brittish Army). OSH: Offizier Schule des Heeres (German Military Academy). ESMSC: Ecole Speciale Militaire des Saint Cyr (French Military Academy).

In short, situational leadership development should foster the ability of leaders to adjust their behavior to the capabilities and motivation of their employees. Shifting from a more directive, instructive approach (S1) for personnel that is willing but not capable for the task at hand to a more guiding, motivating or coaching (S2, S3) style for personnel that is somewhat capable but in need of a more people oriented approach and eventually (almost) complete delegation (S4) of the task at hand to highly motivated and capable employees (Thompson and Vecchio 2009; Blanchard et al. 1993). Development of transformational leadership should foster future leaders' capacities to formulate inspiring visions to motivate their employees, stimulate authentic consideration for individuals in their teams, intellectual stimulation of their personnel, and raise the idealized influence of the future leaders. Ethical leadership refers to the perception of ethical behavior inferred from the leaders' conduct. Leaders should demonstrate "normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships" and promote such behavior to followers (Brown et al. 2005, p. 120). Behavioral indicators for ethical leadership which accordingly should be fostered by ethical leadership development are fairness, power sharing, people orientation, role clarification, ethical guidance and integrity (Kalshoven et al. 2011).

Although we do not contest the opinion that leadership development takes time, educational models tend to be limited in time owing to organizational and societal developments. It is a conventional argument within military academies that leadership capacities of junior officers will and should develop after graduation of the military academy. However, organizational socialization research suggests that it is possible to achieve beneficial effects at short notice (Saks et al. 2007; Saks and Ashforth 1997) and military socialization studies suggest that it is possible to achieve adaptation within a few weeks to months (Guimond 1995, 2000; Xiao et al. 2011). New recruits at organizational entry are primed through contacts with cadre and colleagues who provide a view of what kind of leadership behavior is expected.

Furthermore, social learning theory suggests that people learn and adapt from others by observation. In many domains, especially within the military, individuals are not in charge over the "social conditions and institutional practices" (Bandura 2002, p. 2) that affect their everyday lives. Moreover in difficult and stressful situations, people look at role models for guidance (Kohlberg 1969). Leadership involves influence (Yukl 2013) and provides such guidance (Van Knippenberg and Sitkin 2013). A social cognitive perspective on leadership suggests that leaders influence the behavior of followers via modelling (i.e. observational learning, imitation, or identification). Anything that can be learned via direct experience can also be learned by vicarious experience, via observing others' behavior and its consequences (Bandura 1986). This seems important when ethical conduct in organizations constitutes the behavioral target. From a socialization perspective this means that newcomers get to understand what behavior is expected through their role models (Van Vianen and De Pater 2012). Consistent with the idea that leadership development takes time, leadership behavior is not directly recognized as proximal outcome of organizational socialization (Saks et al. 2007; Bauer and Erdogan 2012).

The cognitive model about how leadership should look like, what kind of behavior would be expected might however be under the influence of the first encounter with the role models of the newcomers. Moreover, research on effects of swift, specific socialization periods (Ashforth 2012) or mini acts of socialization (Kesebir et al. 2010) especially in the military is scarce. Most socialization research uses three month intervals to measure the outcomes of socialization (Bauer et al. 2007). This study therefore explores to what extent short events in the first two months of the officer education at the Royal Netherlands Military Academy (RNLMA) have influence on leadership development and how specific leadership styles relate to leadership under extreme conditions.

2 Two Distinct Initiation Periods

New recruits entering the RNLMA experience two distinct periods in which they are confronted with role models. The first encounter with military life and leadership for the new recruits at the RNLMA is their introduction field training or Military Introduction Period (MIP). This is an eight-day period including a weekend in which the main target is a gentle transition from civilian to military life and which provides time for team building and group development. Furthermore, new recruits get used to their newly acquired uniform, sleeping outdoors and exercising and they learn the basics of planning, executing and evaluation skills, personal hygiene in the field, map and compass reading etc. During this first encounter, the cadets work under the responsibility of a captain with non-commissioned officers in charge of their training. The behavior of this captain and his cadre is the first image of leadership that new recruits experience. Working together, proper planning of timelines and openness for feedback during evaluations are key elements of leadership during this period. After this military introduction week, the freshmen follow military skills classes at the RNLMA for a couple of weeks.

The second fixed period that might involve leadership development is the Cadet Corps' Introduction Period (CCIP). A period of a couple of days after which the new recruits acquire membership to the Cadet Corps. The goal of the CCIP is to deliver new enthusiastic members to the Cadet Corps and to teach the newcomers the values and virtues of their new environment (the Cadet Corps and the RNLMA). Furthermore, as uncertainty is a large part of military life, this is also an important issue to be confronted with as an officer cadet. Therefore, the exact moment and program of the CCIP is somewhat secretive. Dealing with insecurity and uncertainty (no time, no phone, and no sense of program) has an impact on the mental well-being of the new recruits and they have to learn to deal with it, accepting it just the way it is. During all activities the new recruits are under the guidance of senior cadets. They are responsible for a specific group of about ten freshmen. Next to the objectives of specific activities there are general objectives like stimulating teamwork and group forming, stimulating leadership skills like initiative and responsibility and creating motivation for Cadet Corps membership. The senior cadets in charge have to achieve

these objectives that are specified for each day. The behavior of the cadets in charge is generally directive and daunting. Although both, the CCIP and the MIP are well developed and documented, the influence of these periods on the new recruit's perception of officer leadership behavior has never been evaluated scientifically.

3 Research Question and Hypotheses

This study therefore explores to what extent single events in the first weeks of military officer education influence the perceived leadership attitude of new recruits. This self-perception of leadership might not reflect the exact way the new recruits behave. First of all because a lot of them lack the actual experience of leading a group or at least their experience is scarce, secondly because they do not lead actual teams of soldiers and thus their leadership behavior might be biased to lead teams of officer cadets, which after all is a different kind of group and might ask for different approaches.

Acknowledging that leadership is largely based on action makes actual measurement of leadership behavior difficult. Especially self-report measurement of leadership behavior often is not more than the depiction of the personal perception of 'the right thing to do'. In this chapter, this is exactly the focal point of interest. This research examines whether the perception of what recruits think that is expected of them as aspirant leaders, will change as a result of the first organizational entry activities. In other words, the newcomers' opinion of what officers are supposed to do concerning leadership behavior will be primed by single events in the first weeks of military education.

Despite a vast body of research concerning leadership and leadership development, there still is no clear-cut definition of leadership (Day and Halpin 2001; Yukl 2013). Therefore, to study leadership development at the military academy, leadership was operationalized into separate constructs, consistent with the general vision of leadership within the Dutch Armed Forces. Leadership development for junior leaders in the Netherlands is largely based on models of Situational Leadership (Blanchard et al. 1993; Thompson and Vecchio 2009), Transactional and Transformational Leadership (Bass 1999; Callow et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2003) and more recent Ethical Leadership (Kalshoven et al. 2011; Brown et al. 2005; Mendonca and Kanungo 2006).

To answer the main question, I propose a set of separate hypotheses providing an analysis of differences between leadership behavior preference before organizational entry, after the first military introduction period and after the Cadet Corps' introduction period.

> To what extent do single events in the first weeks of military officer education influence the perceived leadership attitude of new recruits?

Considering situational leadership (SLII), example behavior of NCO's during the MIP is sometimes a directive, but for a large part a participative and supporting

attitude. Exercises and tasks that have to be performed are not very hard, cadets have to solve and execute them by themselves with the help of their team-mates. The NCO's are mainly motivating the cadets and to a certain extent, when necessary explaining how to perform the task at hand (stage 2; 'selling' in terms of SLII[2]) when necessary but mostly try to let the group work on their own and discover group dynamics.

During the CCIP senior cadets mostly exhibit very directive behavior in combination with a lot of time pressure. The freshmen's lack of knowledge at the start is brought to attention by telling them exactly what to do. There is little room for supportive behavior let alone team building. In short I expect the MIP to stimulate participative leadership attitudes, whereas the CCIP stimulates directive behavior as the preferred idea of leadership behavior amongst new recruits.

Hypotheses 1a: After the MIP preferred situational leadership styles will be congruent with participative leadership styles. Preferences for selling (S2 in the SLII model) and participating (S3 in the SLII model) will increase after the MIP.

Hypotheses 1b: After the CCIP preferred situational leadership styles will be congruent with directive leadership styles. Preferences for telling (S1 in the SLII model) will increase after the CCIP.

For transactional and transformational leadership, the same effects are expected. Idealized influence, inspiration and attention will be stimulated by the MIP whereas the CCIP will stimulate management by exception. In short the MIP will be beneficial for parts of transformational leadership behavior whereas the CCIP will be beneficial for parts of transactional leadership behavior.

Hypotheses 2a: After the MIP preferred leadership styles will be congruent with transformational leadership styles. Preferences for inspirational motivation and individual consideration will increase after the IP.

Hypotheses 2b: After the CCIP preferred leadership styles will be congruent with transactional leadership styles. Preferences for management by exception will increase after the CCIP.

Regarding ethical leadership, the approaches of both MIP and CCIP are not clearly developed to foster moral aspects of leadership. Within the program of the MIP there is some (although little) attention to organizational ethics and integrity but the connection with leadership behavior will still depend on the perceived behavioral example of the cadets' cadre. Therefore, the connection with ethical leadership in the MIP is thought to be thin.

For the CCIP the case might be even worse. As cadets impose the Cadet Corps' values, expected behavior and historical knowledge on the freshmen in a way that is very directive and in some cases without attention to mutual respect and individual consideration, it requires little effort to see that example behavior of the senior cadets and expected behavior of the freshmen are in contrast. In short I suggest that the MIP will not have beneficial effects on ethical leadership whereas the CCIP

[2]See methods section for an explanation of the SLII measure operationalization.

might have contrasting effects resulting in reduced preferences for ethical leadership behavior.

Hypotheses 3a: After the MIP, preference for ethical leadership will not have increased. No differences will be found for ethical guidance and integrity after the MIP.

Hypotheses 3b: After the CCIP, preference for ethical leadership will decrease. Preferred behavior like ethical guidance and integrity will be lower after the CCIP.

To identify what types of leadership are advocated during military initiation is interesting in itself but even more interesting is whether these types of leadership answer to the demands on junior leaders in the practical situations they are about to enter, as for instance platoon commander, in the future. The second part of this chapter therefore answers the question to what extent the attributed leadership styles are congruent with what is needed for leadership under extreme conditions.

4 Method

4.1 Procedure and Participants

Officer candidates were approached to participate in this research on three occasions as part of a larger project. Data was collected at three moments; first before organizational entry (T1), second after the MIP (T2), and third after the CCIP (T3). All candidate officers (546) applying for a position as aspirant officer known to the department of selection were approached with questionnaires at their home address a month before scheduled organizational entry, 175 responded. Eventually 180 new recruits actually entered the RNLMA. Although the response rate at the separate moments of data collection was fairly high (75%) of the participants filled out the questionnaires, the longitudinal attrition rate was high. The overall response declined to 45 cadets participating at all three moments, 64 at T1 and T2 and 78 at T2 and T3. Apparently participants changed their minds about their education of choice, backed out, or did not make it through their high school exams in the end. In an attempt to improve the response rate at the second and third moment of data collection, the commanding officers of the cadets were asked to distribute the questionnaires. Tables 1 and 2 display the mean age and other biographical data of this sample.

Table 1 Means and standard deviations of age and years of occupational service at T1

	M	SD
Age	21.45	2.74
Years of service	0.40	1.04
Years of prior work experience	2.24	2.28

Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2016

Table 2 Biographical data of freshmen at T1

		n	%
Gender	Male	38	84.4
	Female	7	15.6
Living situation	With parents	34	75.6
	Single own residence	8	17.8
	With partner not married	2	4.4
	Married	1	2.2
Service	Army	20	44.4
	Air force	17	37.8
	Military police	7	15.6
Educational model	Bachelor	29	64.4
	Non bachelor	16	35.6

Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2016

The high longitudinal attrition rate (75%) is probably caused by a lot of Air Force officer applicants who withdrew from the selection process or eventually did not make it through the selection process, as 86 respondents were still awaiting the final result. Furthermore, at T1 applicants for the Naval Academy also participated (n = 45) but they did not respond at T2 and T3. The high longitudinal attrition rate is probably caused by different educational paths for large groups of newcomers and reluctance of commanding officers to participate at all three moments.

Tables 1 and 2 present the biographical data of the remaining sample of 45 participants. They have a mean age of almost 21 varying from the youngest being 18 years old to the oldest with 29 years. Most of them (75%) are under 23 years old and 62% does not have prior service experience. Only 4 persons of the current sample have more than one-year experience within the Defence organization. 27% does not have any prior work experience. One person has 8 years of prior work experience, 50% has one year of work experience prior to their application within the armed forces.

The distribution of gender, living situation, service and educational model is consistent with the population at the RNLMA in general although in recent years the distribution of recruits in the bachelor versus the non-bachelor education is more towards 50% of each.

4.2 Data Collection

The questionnaires used in this study consisted of three instruments of measurement capturing different kinds of leadership styles. All three questionnaires and the theoretical background on situational, transformational, transactional and ethical leadership are elaborated on in this section.

4.2.1 Situational Leadership (Hersey et al. 1988; Blanchard et al. 1993; Blanchard and Ken Blanchard 2008)

Situational Leadership theory as originally proposed (Hersey et al. 1979; Hersey and Blanchard 1972; Hersey et al. 1988), predicts an optimal mix of people or task-related behavior which can be prescribed for given levels of subordinate task maturity (Thompson and Vecchio 2009; Blanchard and Ken Blanchard 2008; Blanchard et al. 2013). The exact practice of this relationship between leader behavior and subordinate attribute means that for subordinates of low-level maturity, superiors should show lower personal consideration and higher task structuring; however, as subordinates grow in maturity, task structuring should decrease, while people-orientation should rise for intermediate subordinate maturity and after that subsequently reduced as subordinates realize high-level task maturity.

According to Hersey et al. (1988), four combinations of subordinate maturity and leader style are identified: (a) the subordinate of very low maturity who should benefit from a "telling" leadership style, (b) the subordinate of moderately low maturity who should benefit from a "selling" leadership style, (c) the subordinate of moderately high maturity who should benefit from a "participating" leadership style, and (d) the subordinate of very high maturity who should benefit from a "delegating" leadership style. Since 1988 Situational leadership theory amended the type of styles to 'leading, coaching, supporting and delegating' (Blanchard et al. 2013) but in essence the initial types cover the core of the substyle at hand. Therefore in this chapter the initial typology of Hersey et al. (1988) is maintained.

Leaders or aspirant leader should be able to adapt their leadership style effectively to the needs of their subordinates. However, people also have their preferences for specific leadership behavior. The instrument used in this study measures both effectiveness and preference of the four emergent styles of situational leadership.

Participants had to read through 12 specific situations (e.g. You asked one of your employees to write a case for the purchase of a new production machine. Usually this employee manages to finish the job with a little bit of your support but the proposition is at risk to exceed the deadline) and choose one of four options of leadership behavior after each case (e.g. (a) Tell that you need the proposition in time, explain what the content should be and control daily developments; (b) Give more time to finish the proposition; (c) Analyse the causes of the delay together and explain the expectations and when the proposition has to be ready or; (d) Encourage the employee in a personal conversation to finish the job in time).

Obviously the options represented the four leadership styles and the cases represented the task maturity of the subordinates. The scores were summed to indicate the preferred leadership style. The larger the number, the greater the preference for that specific style with a maximum of 12 (in all cases one style was chosen) and a minimum of 0 (this style was never chosen as course of action).

Effectiveness was calculated by giving points for each decision varying from not effective at all (−2), not effective (−1), effective (1), and very effective (2). For example, if a 'telling' style would be the most optimal style and a participant chose 'delegating' this would result in −2 points, if the participant actually chose the 'telling' style this would result in a 2 points gain. For 12 situations, this would lead to a maximum score of 24 (very effective) and a minimum score of −24 (not effective at all).

4.2.2 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Short Version (MLQ5x)

The MLQ 5x (Bass et al. 2003; Avolio et al. 2009) measures a broad variety of leadership styles including laissez faire, transactional and transformational leadership which in itself are divided in several subscales. The current questionnaire, MLQ (5X short), contains items that identify and measure key leadership and effectiveness behaviors shown in prior research to be strongly linked with both individual and organizational success. Each of the nine leadership components along a full range of leadership styles is measured by four highly inter-correlated items that are as low in correlation as possible with items of the other eight components. The complete MLQ consists of 45 items of a 5-point scale (0-not at all to 4 frequently if not always). The reliability of the scale for transformational leadership (α) is 0.75. The reliability for the scale of transactional leadership in this sample is 0.60, which is rather low for a well-tested instrument.

4.2.3 Ethical Leadership at Work (Kalshoven et al. 2011)

Although situational, transactional and transformational leadership cover a great deal of what is necessary for leadership. Ethical issues are not completely covered by transactional and transformational leadership (Turner et al. 2002). Transformational leaders may impress their followers with the worthiness of their competence and intentions. But to do so they must maintain their trustworthiness and authenticity whereby authentic leaders develop and draw upon reserves of moral capacity, efficacy, courage, and resiliency to address ethical issues and achieve authentic and sustained moral actions (Avolio and Gardner 2005).

Therefore, attention to ethical standards of leaders is a recent development in leadership training and assessment. In this study the scale for ethical leadership at work (Kalshoven et al. 2011) was used to measure ethical leadership. This scale consists of 26 items which represent six ethical leadership behavior subscales: fairness (3), people orientation (5), role clarification (5), ethical guidance (6), power sharing (3) and integrity (4). The reliability (Cronbach's α) of the ethical leadership scale is 0.85 and the variability of the subscales in this sample differs from Cronbach's α varies 0.60 (fairness) to 0.83 (role clarification).

5 Results

All hypotheses were tested with GLM (general linear model) repeated measures analyses. Means and results of the comparisons of means are shown in Tables 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The uneven Tables (3, 5 and 7) depict the means and standard deviances at the three times of measurement (T1, T2 and T3); the even Tables (4, 6 and 8) reveal the results of the actual GLM repeated measures analysis. The delta symbol in those tables refers to the mean difference between the attributed scores on the various leadership concepts at T1 and T2 or at T2 and T3. Minus symbols in those tables refer to a declination of the preferred leadership style or behavior as the mean scores of the measurement moment are subtracted from the scores at times of the following measurement moment (e.g. T2–T1 and T3–T2 result in negative scores when the second term in the calculation is higher hence suggesting a reduction).

Table 3 reveals that the mean preference for various styles changes back and forth over time. The highest mean preference was 7, attributed to both 'tell' and 'participate' which is consistent with the relatively high means at T1. The lowest minimum score for preferred style was 2, attributed to 'sell' which is consistent with the relative high mean at T2 and the increased preference at T2. Furthermore, results indicate rather low means for effectiveness, closer analyses reveal that effectiveness scores varied between −7 and +12 indicating that neither participants were extremely effective nor were they very poor in their judgment.

Table 4 shows significant differences over time for preferences for the 'tell' ($F_2 = 14.16$, $p < 0.001$), 'sell' ($F_2 = 18.80$, $p < 0.001$), and 'delegate' ($F_2 = 8.93$, $p = 0.001$) styles of situational leadership. The preferences for the 'tell' (mean $\Delta = -1.90$, $p < 0.001$) and 'delegate' (mean $\Delta = -1.15$, $p < 0.001$) style significantly decrease at T2 whereas results show that the 'sell' style preference increases significantly (mean $\Delta = +1.68$, $p < 0.001$) after T2. No support ($F_2 = 1.98$,

Table 3 Means and standard deviations for situational leadership at T1, T2 and T3

	T1		T2		T3	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Preference						
Tell	3.22	1.48	1.64	0.73	2.06	1.13
Sell	2.21	0.99	3.95	1.25	3.10	1.51
Participate	3.78	1.36	3.73	1.50	3.40	1.17
Delegate	2.86	1.15	1.76	0.90	2.17	1.12
Effectiveness						
Tell	2.98	1.33	−1.89	1.81	0.09	2.18
Sell	2.24	2.14	2.44	2.03	2.79	2.28
Participate	2.98	1.91	6.17	2.64	1.02	1.77
Delegate	3.98	1.99	1.18	1.76	0.23	2.17

Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

Table 4 Within subjects' effects for situational leadership at T1, T2 and T3

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	Mean Δ T2–T1	Mean Δ T3–T1	Mean Δ T3–T2
Preference								
Tell	40.13	2	20.07	14.16	0.000	−1.90**	−1.50*	+0.40
Sell	53.91	2	26.96	18.80	0.000	+1.68**	+0.87*	−0.82*
Participate	6.33	2	3.17	1.98	0.145	+0.13	−0.42	−0.55
Delegate	17.85	2	8.93	8.17	0.001	−1.15**	−0.63	+0.52
Effectiveness								
Tell	241.20	2	120.60	38.79	0.000	−4.80**	−3.30**	+1.50
Sell	7.12	2	3.56	0.83	0.440	−0.08	+0.48	+0.55
Participate	524.90	2	262.45	49.57	0.000	+3.34**	−1.84**	−5.18**
Delegate	214.36	2	107.18	26.92	0.000	−2.75**	−3.79**	−1.04

*Differences are significant at $p < 0.05$ level. **Differences are significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Where df is less than 2: assumptions of sphericity are violated and the Greenhouse Geisser is used as more conservative measure of comparison. *SS* Sum of Squares. *MS* Mean Square
Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

Table 5 Means and standard deviation for transformational and transactional leadership (MLQ 5X scale 0–4)

	T1		T2		T3	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Overall transformational leadership (TFL)	2.68	0.49	2.53	0.28	2.48	0.33
Inspirational motivation (IM)	2.95	0.50	2.63	0.53	1.93	0.55
Intellectual stimulation (IS)	2.76	0.67	2.71	0.41	2.65	0.51
Individual consideration (IC)	2.72	0.67	2.68	0.43	2.64	0.51
Idealized influence behavior (IIB)	2.47	0.70	2.64	0.40	2.54	0.47
Idealized influence attitude (IIA)	2.49	0.65	2.50	0.43	2.60	0.45
Overall transactional leadership (TAL)	1.96	0.44	2.14	0.30	2.20	0.36
Contingent reward (CR)	2.85	0.59	2.69	0.46	2.69	0.46
Management by exception passive (MBE-P)	1.17	0.56	1.59	0.58	1.73	0.57
Management by exception active (MBE-A)	1.85	0.76	2.14	0.56	2.14	0.56
Laissez faire (LF)	1.22	0.39	0.96	0.56	1.04	0.72

Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

$p = 0.145$) was found for the hypothesized increased preference of the 'participate' style after the military introduction (MIP). Although slightly increased, the CCIP does not seem to contribute to the preference for the 'tell' style significantly, but does have a significant negative impact on the 'sell' style (mean $\Delta = -0.82$, $p = 0.027$). Results in Table 4 also reveal significant effects over time for the effectiveness of the 'tell' ($F_2 = 38.79$, $p < 0.001$), 'participate' ($F_2 = 49.57$,

Table 6 Within subjects' effects for transformational and transactional leadership at T1, T2 and T3

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	Mean Δ	Mean Δ	Mean Δ
						T2–T1	T3–T1	T3–T2
TFL	0.54	2	0.27	2.61	0.081	−0.11	0.18	0.07
IM	19.05	2	9.52	40.02	0.000	−0.30*	−1.03**	−0.73**
IS	0.11	2	0.06	0.27	0.767	−0.04	−0.08	−0.04
IC	0.01	2	0.00	0.02	0.985	−0.00	−0.02	−0.02
IIB	0.77	2	0.39	1.68	0.194	+0.21	+0.10	−0.11
IIA	0.32	1.6	0.20	0.76	0.446	+0.07	+0.14	+0.07
TAL	0.90	2	0.45	3.76	0.028	+0.18	+0.21	+0.03
CR	0.74	2	0.37	2.32	0.107	−0.13	−0.21	−0.07
MBE-P	4.08	2	2.04	7.53	0.001	+0.41**	+0.45**	+0.04
MBE-A	2.21	2	1.10	3.38	0.040	+0.28	+0.34	+0.06
LF	1.47	2	0.73	3.16	0.049	−0.27	−0.24	+0.02

*Differences are significant at $p < 0.05$ level. **Differences are significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Where df is less than 2: assumptions of sphericity are violated and the Greenhouse Geisser is used as more conservative measure of comparison. *SS* Sum of Squares. *MS* Mean Square
Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

Table 7 Means (M) and standard deviations (SD) for ethical leadership at T1, T2 and T3 (N = 45)

	T1		T2		T3	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Ethical leadership (total)	3.74	0.57	3.67	0.41	3.75	0.40
People orientation	4.01	0.70	4.04	0.54	3.98	0.62
Fairness	3.11	0.94	3.19	0.74	3.33	0.68
Power sharing	3.66	0.79	3.81	0.63	3.72	0.58
Ethical guidance	3.34	0.94	3.24	0.83	3.51	0.63
Role clarity	3.80	0.88	3.62	0.48	3.78	0.43
Integrity	4.43	0.53	4.19	0.46	4.12	0.59

Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

$p < 0.001$) and 'delegate' ($F_2 = 26.92$, $p < 0.001$) style. No significant differences are found for the effectiveness of the 'selling' style. Considering 'telling', results indicate a reduction of effectiveness after the MIP (mean Δ = −4.80, $p < 0.001$) and a marginal increase of effectiveness after the CCIP (mean Δ = +1.50, $p = 0.089$). Furthermore, results show a decreased effectiveness for 'delegate' behavior (mean Δ = −2.75, $p < 0.001$) and an increased effectiveness for 'participate' behavior (mean Δ = +3.34, $p < 0.001$) after the MIP. After the CCIP the effectiveness of the 'participate' style reduces again (mean Δ = −5.18, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, considering that in both cases, preference and effectiveness, a raise of a situational style after the MIP often is followed with a decline of that style after

Table 8 Within subjects' effects for ethical leadership: at T1, T2 and T3 (N = 45)

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig	Mean Δ T2–T1	Mean Δ T3–T1	Mean Δ T3–T2
Ethical leadership (total)	0.17	2	0.09	0.63	0.534	−0.05	+0.05	+0.10
People orientation	0.14	2	0.07	0.28	0.761	+0.05	−0.04	−0.09
Fairness	1.30	2	0.65	1.65	0.200	+0.11	+0.28	+0.17
Power sharing	0.42	2	0.21	0.57	0.568	+0.16	+0.08	−0.07
Ethical guidance	2.75	2	1.38	3.08	0.053	−0.12	+0.28	+0.39
Role clarity	0.53	1.6	0.33	0.75	0.449	−0.16	−0.01	+0.15
Integrity	1.81	2	0.91	5.07	0.009	−0.23	−0.32	−0.09

*Differences are significant at $p < 0.05$ level. **Differences are significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Where df is less than 2: assumptions of sphericity are violated and the Greenhouse Geisser is used as more conservative measure of comparison. *SS* Sum of Squares. *MS* Mean Square
Data is retrieved from the Ph.D. project of Lt-Col Dalenberg 2012–2016

the CCIP, it seems that the results indicate that MIP and CCIP do not facilitate leadership development in synergy.

Concerning situational leadership, results thus partially support the hypothesized effects. The MIP fosters preference for the 'sell' style whereas the CCIP has a contrary effect for 'selling'. Proposed preferences for the 'tell' style after the CCIP is not supported. Interesting are also the results differences for effectiveness. The MIP seems to foster the effectiveness for the 'participate' style whereas the CCIP seems to counter that effect. Regarding the 'tell' style the CCIP (although marginally significant) seems to improve the effectiveness contrary to the effect of the MIP. All together it seems that the results show that situational leadership development at the RNLMA does not achieve the effect it aims for; aspirant officers developing this skill should after training be able to choose the proper style consistent with the capabilities and motivation of their personnel. However, the effectiveness of several styles rather seems to decline than to increase.

Regarding transactional and transformational leadership preferences, Tables 5 and 6 appear to reveal that both events also have rather diverse effects. Table 5 that at all times, means for transformational leadership are higher than means for transactional leadership suggesting a base line predisposition for transformational leadership. Especially high at T1 is the mean score on inspirational motivation. However, although the highest at T1, inspirational motivation is attributed the lowest score within the transformational leadership factors at T3. At first glance new recruits grow to prefer transactional leadership at the expense of transformational leadership.

Comparison of means presented in Table 6 shows an overall marginal decrease of predisposition for transformational leadership ($F_2 = 2.61$, $p = 0.081$) and an

overall significant increase of predisposition for transactional leadership (F_2 = 3.76, p = 0.028) styles. Repeated measures analyses results in Table 6 reveal that within the concept of transformational leadership the differences originate from changes in inspirational motivation which drops significantly (F_2 = 40.02, $p < 0.001$) after the MIP (mean Δ = 0.301, p = 0.032) and even further after the CCIP (mean Δ = 0.728, $p < 0.001$). No significant differences appear for individual consideration and idealized influence either behavior or attitude.

Within the concept of transactional leadership, the preference for management by exception increases for the active (F_2 = 3.38, p = 0.040) and passive (F_2 = 7.53, p = 0.001) variant. The increased predisposition for management by exception (both active and passive) seems to be caused by the MIP (mean Δ = +0.41, p = 0.005 and mean Δ = +0.28, p = 0.139 respectively).

Although not evidently clear, results seem to indicate that MIP and CCIP more or less foster a transactional leadership predisposition instead of, or even at the expense of transformational leadership predispositions. The decrease of preference for inspirational motivation seems to be caused largely by the CCIP but the MIP contributes to this reduction. Results thus indicate that the CCIP and MIP decreased optimism and enthusiasm about the job at hand and the ability speak in an appealing way about the future and the accomplishment of targets. Although management by exception increases slightly, no support was found for hypothesized effects after the CCIP. The increase of predisposition for transactional leadership, and more specifically management by exception is more likely to be attributed to the MIP. Apparently new recruits experience that their role models during the MIP only intervene when the output is not according to expectations.

The second part of the leadership hypotheses test concerns ethical leadership. With regard to ethical leadership results are presented in Tables 7 and 8. As the example behavior of senior cadets generally consists of directive and intimidating conduct hypothesis 3a suggest there will be no effects for ethical leadership development after the MIP and even a decrease of ethical leadership after the CCIP as suggested in hypothesis 3b.

Results indicate no significant effects for ethical leadership over time (F_2 = 0.633, p = 0.534). There is however an unexpected decrease of integrity over time (F_2 = 5.073, p = 0.009) which would mainly be attributed to the MIP (mean Δ = −0.23, p = 0.065) or reflects a general 'disappointment' in military culture concerning integrity over time (mean Δ T1 – T3 = 0.32, p = 0.037). Furthermore, results show that unexpectedly, ethical guidance increases significantly after the CCIP (mean Δ = −392, p = 0.035).

In total, conform expectation results do not indicate significant changes for ethical leadership at all, however there is no support for hypothesized negative effects of the CCIP. Positive development of ethical guidance might be an indication of 'a wrong example' which reflects in a positive score on ethical guidance. In other words, results show that new recruits are not stimulated to show ethical behavior. Closer examination of the items concerning ethical guidance show that especially the intention to state clear expectation on ethical behavior and complimenting peoples' integrity are scored highly (over 65% scores 4 or higher) by the

new recruits after the CCIP. Considering the fact that they did not receive any compliments during the CCIP and example behavior of senior cadets hardly reflected sound ethical behavior these changes might be attributed to a sense of ‘I do not want to be a leader such as my peer examples’.

6 Subconclusions for Initiation Effects on Leadership

The results to answer to the question: *To what extent do single events in the first weeks of military officer education influence the perceived leadership attitude of new recruits*? show that the influence of these first weeks is relatively strong but might benefit from joint effort. For both introduction periods, the military and the Cadet Corps, results show that perception of preferred leadership behavior (partially) changes after the specific events, although often in different directions.

After the military introduction period, the preference for the ‘tell’ and ‘delegate’ style decreased and for the ‘sell’ style preference increased. Although no support was found for the hypothesized effect that the preference of the ‘participate’ style would increase after the military introduction, the effectiveness of the ‘participate’, ‘tell’, and ‘delegate’ style increased. This indicates that the MIP supports the development of effective situational leadership behavior.

Results also show that the MIP has a negative effect on inspirational motivation and to a lesser extent intellectual stimulation and contingent reward. Although the hypothesized effects were in favor of transformational leadership behavior, in practice the new recruits are willing but not competent and therefore probably ‘told’ how to act for a large part of the time. This however is no argument for guiding cadre to leave it that way. Communication of goals for the near future and individual consideration as well as intellectual stimulation are possible, even in drill exercises and especially for a group of future officers.

The preference for management by exception increases overall, for a large part owing to the MIP. Results indicate that a leadership style concerning transformational or transactional behavior within the MIP is experienced by the recruits as control oriented and is not so much concerned with vision and intellectual challenge. Unsurprisingly, as a lot of initial training has a firm focus on executing drills without thinking, apparently the new recruits experience their guiding cadre’s leadership as role model and think that this is the way they have to be as well.

Although the preference for ‘tell’ increases slightly after the CCIP no support was found for the suggested effect. The effectiveness of the ‘tell’ style increases whereas the effectiveness of ‘participate’ seems to fall after the CCIP. Evidently the contributing factor of the CCIP (an activity involving a lot of directive behavior) on situational leadership styles seems to be proved in the telling style.

Considering transformational and transactional leadership, the CCIP has a strong negative influence on inspirational motivation. Furthermore, results suggest a negative trend for transformational leadership behavior as the five factors (IM, IS, IC, IIB, IIA) after the CCIP are lower than the level before organizational entry.

Moreover, the preference for contingent reward drops a bit after the MIP and stays at that level after the CCIP and the preference for management by exception overall increases.

Considering ethical leadership, the results reveal no differences for the total concept consistent with the hypotheses. However, curiously integrity, although attributed a high score in absolute sense, decreases after the MIP and again after the CCIP. Furthermore, ethical guidance gains a bit after the CCIP suggesting a reverse effect of the wrong example.

All together, these results suggest that both initiation periods fairly influence the perception of leadership by the new recruits. Swift socialization of the perceived way of how leadership is done in the military seems to be possible according to the two distinct socialization periods at the RNLMA. However, the direction in which the perception is guided during the two socialization periods seems to differ.

To train different styles or approaches of leadership is in itself not a big problem. In fact, junior officers might benefit from the ability to use different leadership styles in a variety of situations. After all, switching between leadership styles is one of the paradigms of contingency theories and the renewed leadership vision of the Netherlands armed forces. However, MIP and CCIP seem to foster different leadership styles while at the same time these periods discourage the use of other styles. The risk of such diverging leadership development activities is uncertainty about the future role and behavior amongst the new recruits and very likely disappointment in their officer education. Ambiguity of leadership examples in such a short timeframe is probably not contributing to a newcomer's sense of possibilities in leadership behavior. It might only degrade role clarity. This problem is only to be solved by critical evaluation of the MIP and CCIP program to strive for synergetic instead of counterproductive effects. Moreover, and more importantly, both military instruction cadre and senior cadets' awareness of the influence their example behavior has on the preferred leadership style perceived by new recruits, needs to be enhanced. In essence because this socialization of perceived military leadership is the base of leadership development of the future officers leading troops in dangerous missions.

7 Practical Implications with Regard to Leadership in Extreme Situations

The initiation periods at the RNLMA seem to influence the 'leadership mind-set' of young future officers. The education at the RNLMA is regarded as a firm base for future officers. The main contribution to leadership is the development of analytical skills and critical thinking (Groen 2012, pp. 82–85). These skills are, at first glance, not firmly related to leadership in extreme situations. A closer analysis of leadership in extremis however, reveals that analytical skills and critical thinking are very valuable for leaders in extreme situations.

Recent military missions such as the international security assistance force (ISAF) can be characterized by ambiguity and by imminent and serious danger. Often engagement in combat action was part of the tasks of military units. Risk-taking seemed necessary since the military had to patrol amidst the local population among whom the opposing forces were hiding. Presence in 'the green' was one of the key elements of success according to many Task Force Uruzgan and Battle Group commanders. Presence was believed to facilitate contacts with the inhabitants in order to 'win their hearts and minds' and with that to reduce the influence of the Taliban. Placing more importance on personal safety would lead to greater distance and less contact with the local population (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011).

The commanding officers in charge of these patrols were often young lieutenants who had just finished their officer education. How could they deal with the many uncertainties and complexities that accompanied these kinds of operations? The way presence amongst the people would be achieved was the task of company commanders making the plans, and platoon commanders actually executing the missions outside the base. These subordinate commanders, had the autonomy to choose the most suitable moments to deploy the units over their area of responsibility. "The platoon commander decided himself in what configuration the unit should be present in any part of the green at any point in time" (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011, p. 95). It required leadership from the edge (Vogelaar 2007). The sub-commanders at the periphery of the organization were in command of the situation they were in, at the edge of where the organization interacts with its environment in order to have an impact or effect on that environment (Vogelaar 2007) and where higher command had no clear immediate information of what happens in that situation.

> In his decision process of how to conduct a patrol, the platoon commander paid attention to his personnel: e.g., in the first weeks in Uruzgan most of the soldiers were a little anxious, not to say afraid. Serious attention to this anxiety resulted in some platoon commanders choosing to enter only the periphery of the green for a few hours, the very first time 'they went in' with their unit. Having completed this patrol successfully, usually reduced the tension for individuals and the unit (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011, p. 95).

At first the description of the unit above reveals that the confidence level and the courage of units is slightly lower than one might hope for. In terms of situational leadership, this calls for a more directive leader as the unit members doubt their task mastery but are willing to act. Leading and coaching the unit members to becoming a team with confidence is therefore key for leaders under extreme conditions.

Furthermore, military leaders are trained to lead their personnel in dangerous situations. Assigning task that might bring personnel in harm's way is called 'In Extremis Leadership', which is defined generally in terms of giving purpose, inspiration, and direction to personnel in situations of physical hazard, and where followers rely on leader behavior to influence their physical well-being or survival (Fisher et al. 2010; Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011). Transformational leadership (Bass 1999) is one of the most effective leadership styles under extreme conditions,

especially in situations with fast changes and complex tasks (Shamir and Howell 1999). Transformational leaders are able to motivate their personnel. With transformational leadership, followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader and are motivated to do actually more than they originally expected to do (Yukl 2013).

The dimensions ‘inspirational motivation’ and ‘intellectual stimulation’ are strongly related to leadership from the edge because they stress that higher commanders as well as on-scene commanders formulate their intent with accompanying goals in such a way that their subordinates know what should be attained in the short and the long run. The dimensions ‘idealized influence’ and ‘individualized consideration’ are more closely related to ‘In extremis leadership’. These dimensions stress the importance of a leader who is an example for his personnel, who takes risks, but also knows his personnel and takes care of their needs (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011).

For on-scene commanders, the safety of their unit often conflicted with the intent to be present in the area as much as possible. Not only could the safety of their own unit be at stake but also the safety of the citizens (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011). To solve these kind of dilemmas the analytical and critical thinking skills as well as ethical leadership come into play. In Task Force Uruzgan as well as in many other land operations, small military units usually carry out their tasks dispersed over a relatively large area.

Because of this dispersion, commanders at lower levels in the military hierarchy are usually the on-scene commanders who have to deal with the many ambiguities that accompany the operations. It is therefore imperative to have much analyzing and problem-solving capacity throughout the organization. This means that at many hierarchical levels ‘thinking commanders’ instead of merely ‘rule-following commanders’ are required (Vogelaar and Dalenberg 2011).

To ask whether the initiation periods at the officer education at the RNLMA contributes to the ability of future officers to lead under extreme conditions is to ask whether situational leadership, transformational leadership and ethical leadership that are fostered in the MIP and CIP relate to leadership from the edge and in extremis leadership. The connections between those leadership styles and leadership from the edge and in extremis leadership is presented in Table 9.

Considering leadership from the edge where on scene commanders are self-supporting they need a well-trained and highly motivated team. Transformational leadership elements such as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation support this requirement.

Situational leadership in practice is often misunderstood by students at the military academies. Often the threat of the situation is used as factor to explain the use of a more directive leadership style. Immediate threat and dangerous situations are for many leaders in practice the reason to act in an autocratic directive way. Yet, on-scene commanding officers of well-trained, highly competent units might

Table 9 Classic leadership styles related to practical leadership under extreme conditions

		Leadership from the edge	In extremis leadership
Transformational leadership	Inspirational motivation	x	
	Intellectual stimulation	x	
	Idealized influence		x
	Individualized consideration		x
Situational leadership	Tell (leading)		x
	Sell (coaching)		x
	Participate (supporting)	x	
	Delegate	x	
Ethical leadership	People orientation		x
	Fairness	x	
	Power sharing	x	
	Ethical guidance		x
	Role clarity		x
	Integrity	x	

This table is an adjustment of the table provided by Vogelaar and Dalenberg (2011, p. 99)

delegate the execution of combat drills completely and refrain from autocratic directives when they truly understand the competence level of their subordinates. Hence, if a team in an extreme situation such as combat is competent, directive task oriented leadership (S1: telling in the SLII model) is not the most effective leadership style. The counter side of this dispute is that not every unit or military is already completely trained when entering in extremis situations. With this in mind the ambiguity that comes with the dangerous situation allows the leader to be more instructive and directive contrary to a style closer to delegation especially for specific individuals.

Moral professional behavior is also important for leadership. Sometimes frustrations caused by extreme dangerous situations might lead to disrespectful or unprofessional behavior. Officers should make sure that their units always keep performing in line with initial moral standards. “I said to my colleague that I understood his feelings but that his behavior (almost hitting an Afghan civilian out of anger) did not fit a professional military attitude” (Groen 2012). Therefore, in extremis leadership requires ethical guidance from a leader and attention to personnel to keep track on personal frustrations that might develop into unethical behavior. Providing role clarity to personnel in dangerous and most of the time ambiguous situations is key to refrain from moral disengagement.

In the case of leadership from the edge, integrity power sharing and fairness are more opportune, as those factors appeal more to situations in which immediate

action is not directly needed. This seems to be consistent with the factors of transformational and situational leadership that are appropriate in times of leadership from the edge. Intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation are often labelled as effective but only if also morally responsible goals are striven for (Turner et al. 2002).

8 Conclusions

In military training programs future leaders are taught what is expected of them. Furthermore, leaders are aware that they are the focus of attention in the organization and they should set the right example. This chapter shows that the officer initiation period at the RNLMA fosters the development of leadership behavior. Elements of transformational, situational and ethical leadership are brought to the minds of young aspirant leaders. Moreover, this chapter shows that the leadership styles brought to attention are consistent with the demands of leadership under extreme conditions.

Yet, there are many possibilities for improvement. Leaders, trainees and mentors are aware of the fact that various leadership styles are appropriate under different circumstances. However, the actual application of these different leadership styles and the way the newcomers' perception of leadership under extreme conditions is shaped by initiation periods can be improved. At least various important colleagues i.e. instructors, senior officers and senior cadets might improve their collective sense of which types of leadership should be taught and applied under what conditions. At this moment there seems to be too much variety about this perception, whereas different socialization episodes like the military introduction and the Cadet Corps' introduction should at least foster a common sense about military leadership amongst the newcomers.

A limitation of this study is that the sample size is rather small and the respondents are only cadets of the Royal Netherlands Military Academy. Generalization towards other military academies therefore should be done tentatively, firstly because the sample of respondents is small and secondly because it only reflects initiation episodes at the RNLMA. However, despite the small sample size the group of respondents are a fair representation of all cadets participating in the officer education at the RNLMA and furthermore they represent almost all first year newcomers. Moreover, the educational system and the tactics used to socialize the newcomers are fairly similar to various other international military academies.

Furthermore, the perception of how leadership should be done is not the same as actual leadership behavior. However, as social learning mechanisms are in place, it is likely that the perception of example behavior by role models influences the way newcomers perceive what is appropriate as leadership behavior. Hence the

newcomers will try to act accordingly. So, although measuring leadership perception with questionnaires is arguably not the most explicit method to look into leadership behavior, this study depicts a sense of how newcomers think they have to act, and that is an important starting point of shaping their behavior as a leader.

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Author Biography

Sander Dalenberg started his career in 1995 as a cavalry officer within the Royal Netherlands Army. He achieved a master in organizational psychology in 2004. Thereafter he worked as team leader for the Defence Psychological Selection Department and assisted operational commanding officers with morale research in various operations. Furthermore he worked as Assistant Professor in Leadership, Ethics and HRM at the Netherlands Defence Academy. Currently he is employed as Deputy Commander of the Defence Leadership Centre of Expertise.

Combat Leadership on Guadalcanal: In Extremis Leadership of the Japanese and American Soldiers in World War II

Hitoshi Kawano

Abstract How did the Japanese and American soldiers lead their men in combat? Drawing on the individual experiences of combat during the Guadalcanal campaign, characteristics of combat leadership exercised by the non-commissioned officers and junior officers of the Japanese Army and the American Army and Marine Corps are examined. The combat leadership styles of the American and Japanese soldiers are compared to see if there are any cultural differences or similarities. In particular, combat leadership principles espoused by the battle-seasoned soldiers on both sides are illustrated according to testimonies of the individual soldiers whom the author interviewed more than 20 years ago. Oral histories of primary and secondary sources are also used for describing combat leadership experiences. In conclusion, I argue that the hard-learned combat leadership principles in extreme situations like those on Guadalcanal are almost identical among the Japanese and American tactical leaders, although there are slight cultural differences.

Keywords Guadalcanal · Combat leadership · Imperial Japanese Army · Americal Division · U.S. Army · U.S. Marine Corps · Authority conflict

1 Introduction

Dr. Robert Muehrcke, a medical doctor and Guadalcanal veteran of the 132nd Infantry Regiment, Americal Division, U.S. Army, looks back on the fierce combat experience in the Pacific theater during World War II:

> The Pacific war, especially the jungle fighting, brought out the best in motivation, drive and physical strength in infantryman. It brought forth man's greatest capacity for sacrifice and endurance in battle. Combat brings out confidence and faith in one's fellow infantryman, comradeship, respect, admiration, common patriotism, and a high value for life. It brings out the appreciation of life and respect of his fellow soldier.

H. Kawano (✉)
National Defense Academy, Yokosuka, Japan
e-mail: hkawano@nda.ac.jp

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> The true value of life can only be known to those individuals who have lived in the shadow of death; death so vivid, so different, so quick, and to some so lingering. In the main, life becomes more valuable when one experiences the nearness of death and discovers how rapidly a life can be lost (Muehrcke 1985, p. 12).

"If you could survive as a combat warrior, you can survive anything," says Dr. Muehrcke in his office at a local hospital in a Chicago suburb.[1] He became a physician after the war in order to save the life of a sick person dying because "the greatest thing a man can ever do in this world is to save the life of a fellow man." As an infantry officer, or a squad leader, combat leaders were to "help protect and look after your men, and save their lives if possible, or prevent them from being killed" at the risk of losing your own life. This is Dr. Muehrcke's personal philosophy in extremis combat leadership.

'In extremis leadership' is, by definition, a leadership exercised in life-or-death situations.[2] Combat leadership on Guadalcanal is one of the most extreme cases of deadly battles in the Pacific war. During the 77-day battle on Guadalcanal, from November 25, 1942, to February 9, 1943, total casualties of the Americal Division alone were 1439, including 533 KIAs (Killed In Action) while the 1st Marine Division suffered 674 KIAs, and 2736 casualties in total over 95 days of combat on the island (Meuhrcke 1985, pp. 440–441; Zimmerman 1949, p. 169). A simple calculation of the combat death rate per day (KIAs/combat days) shows that Americal Division had 6.92 KIA/day on Guadalcanal, compared to 0.94 KIA/day on Bougainville, and 2.98 KIA/day on the Philippines. The 1st Marine Division had even a slightly higher rate of 7.09 KIA/day on Guadalcanal. Overall, the cost of the first major offensive campaign waged by the U.S. forces reached almost 1600 KIAs, among the total strength of 60,000 Army and Marine Corps troops mobilized for the land battle on Guadalcanal (Morrison 1948, p. 372).

On the other hand, the defeated Japanese land force lost more than 28,000 men out of 37,000 troops in total, who were mobilized for the Guadalcanal campaign, while around 9000 men were successfully evacuated at the end of the deadly campaign on the 'starvation island', as it was known because of the lack of decent logistical and medical support by the Imperial Japanese Army, or by the Imperial Japanese Navy (Zimmerman 1949, p. 168). While losing about 76% of the total strength on average, some units lost considerably more. The Ichiki Detachment, for instance, lost about 85% of the first group of the landing force (916 men) within 3 days after having landed on Guadalcanal on August 19, 1942 (Yamamoto 1987). The 2nd Battalion, 38th Division, Imperial Japanese Army even suffered heavier casualties of more than 95% when the last men of the battalion, occupying Mt. Austen on Guadalcanal and in

[1]Interview by author, March 10, 1993. Muehrcke enlisted in Illinois National Guard (132nd Infantry Regiment) in 1938. As a non-commissioned officer, he fought on Guadalcanal and Bougainville in the South Pacific, and after he was commissioned as 2nd Lt., he joined the 383rd Infantry Regiment, 96th Infantry Division, to fight in Okinawa.

[2]Kolditz defines in extremis leadership as "giving purpose, motivation, and direction to people when there is imminent physical danger and where followers believe that leader behavior will influence their physical well-being or survival" (Kolditz 2007, p. xvi).

desperate need of logistical supplies, decided to break through the encirclement by the 132nd Infantry Regiment, Americal Division, on January 22, 1943 (Kawai 1993; The 228th Infantry Regiment 1973). The battalion commander, Major Takeyoshi Inagaki, and his subordinate company commanders led the last-ditch counter-attack to save the lives of their men. The Battalion Commander who led by example was among those who were killed in action.

However, one wonders why they did not surrender if they really wanted to save the lives of their men? How did they convince and motivate their men against all odds, and in an extreme situation in which their leadership would determine life and death of the soldiers? Did they always succeed in making their men follow their orders? Are there any cultural differences in extremis leadership in combat, or any universal principles? These are the questions I would like to answer in the sections below. The interview data used in the following description derive from my own interviews conducted in the early 1990s. In particular, the focus lies on the Guadalcanal veterans of both Imperial Japanese Army and U.S. Army and Marine Corps (Kawano 1996, 2013).

2 On Guadalcanal: Getting into in Extremis Situations

Before examining combat leadership in detail, a brief overview of the Guadalcanal campaign will help the readers comprehend the big picture of the battle in the Pacific. In the U.S. military history of the Pacific War, the Guadalcanal campaign signifies “a turning point” in the course of war, or in other words, the “Thermopylae of the Pacific War [and in] its urgency, its desperation, its hair-thin margins between success and failure, and in its profound effects upon both the U.S. and the Japanese war efforts, it may well rank as one of the decisive campaigns of history” (Zimmerman 1949, p. 165). It should also be noted that “the victory on Guadalcanal can be understood only by an appreciation of the contribution of each service” (Miller 1989, p. ix), as well as the successful contribution of the “fighting-team” of all U.S. and Allied services. The campaign’s most decisive engagement was the air and naval Battle of Guadalcanal in mid-November 1942. It was an engagement in which neither Army nor Marine Corps ground troops took any direct part. As Frank points out, “no campaign in World War Two saw such sustained violence in all three dimensions—sea, land and air” (Frank 1990, p. vii). Indeed, it can be considered an excellent historical example of joint-operation which includes many lessons to be learned. Although I focus on the land campaign since the issue to be examined involves combat leadership by the land forces, development of amphibious operational doctrine by the U.S. Marine Corps and successful implementation of the doctrine account for the U.S. victory on the strategic bridgehead in the South Pacific. The U.S. air and sea power eventually shaped the operational environment on Guadalcanal, which helped the American land force to prevail.

On the other hand, for the Japanese military historians and the nation as a whole, ‘Guadalcanal’ symbolizes the beginning of the defeat in the Pacific. ‘The island of

starvation', 'the island of death', and 'the worst battlefield' are synonyms for the bloody and tragic battle on a tropical island which was relatively unknown when the initial battle unfolded.[3] Even Major General Kiyotake Kawaguchi, the commander of the Japanese force who led the second major offensive operation in September 1942, stated: "Guadalcanal is not the name of an island. It is the name of the graveyard of the Japanese army" (Twining 1996, p. xiii).[4]

The Guadalcanal Campaign lasted for six months, from August 1942 to February 1943. The focal point of the campaign was to secure the airfield (the Japanese called it Lunga Airfield, the American name was Henderson Field) on the island, which was the key factor in securing air and sea dominance in the region. On August 7, the American Expeditionary Force, consisting of the 1st Marine Division, landed on Guadalcanal and captured the almost-completed Japanese naval airfield without strong resistance by the defending 150 Imperial Japanese Naval soldiers and 2000 civilian laborers. On the other hand, the U.S. marines ran into stout opposition on Tulagi, Florida Island, and at the sea-plane bases on the small islands of Gavutu and Tanambogo. By August 8, all areas were secured by the American forces. This happened relatively smoothly because the Japanese troops were caught by surprise and overwhelmed (Morrison 1948, pp. 15–16). Upon hearing the news of the U.S. invasion of Guadalcanal, the Imperial Japanese Army decided to send the Ichiki unit to recapture the airfield. The first group of the Ichiki Detachment (about 900 troops) landed on Guadalcanal on August 18. Based on the intelligence, the commanding officer, Colonel Kiyonao Ichiki, estimated the enemy force to consist of 2000 marines, while in fact 13,000 marines had already landed on the island. Failure in intelligence and underestimation of enemy strength are chronical problems the Japanese troops could not overcome toward the end of the campaign (Tobe et al. 1991). Without accurate intelligence, along with underestimated enemy strength and combat morale, Col. Ichiki decided to engage in a night attack on the enemy defense line, which he was unfamiliar with. As a result, the first offensive operation by the Ichiki unit failed as they lost more than 80% of the men in combat. The Imperial Japanese Army, in particular the 17th Army in charge of the Guadalcanal campaign, repeatedly made the same mistakes by attempting night attacks against the well-prepared American defense perimeters around the Henderson airfield. At least, two additional major offensive operations were waged by the Japanese troops in September and October.[5] Each time, additional forces

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[3]Since the major expected the enemy of the Imperial Japanese Army to be the Soviet Union's Red Army, and the South Pacific was not expected to be an area of operation, few army staff officers knew about Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands (Tobe et al. 1991).

[4]Gen. Kawaguchi was relieved from the commanding position in the middle of the third offensive operation in October 1942, due to his insubordination to an officer.

[5]According to the Order of Battle, as of May 18, 1942, the 17th Army included the 35th Infantry Brigade (core unit: 124th Infantry Regiment), the Nankai Detachment (core unit: 144th Infantry Regiment), the Aoba Detachment (core unit: 4th Infantry Regiment), the 41st Infantry Regiment, and other artillery and combat support units (National Institute for Defense Studies 1969). As of November 20, 1942, the 17th Army consists of the 2nd Division (4th, 16th, and 29th Infantry

were deployed to incrementally engage the enemy force. According to an analysis of the failure in the Guadalcanal campaign, it was a lack of strategic grand design and the inflexibility of the operational plan that overemphasized bayonet charge in the night while disregarding feedback from the frontline to adjust to the changing situation that led to the defeat and evacuation of the remaining troops from the island (Tobe et al. 1991, pp. 107–140).

In the following sections, leadership behaviors at the individual level are explored, drawing on the experiences of both Japanese and American soldiers in combat on Guadalcanal. The units I focus on are the Ichiki Detachment and the 38th Division, the first and the last troops to be deployed on Guadalcanal, and the 164th and 132nd Infantry Regiments of Americal Division, which are the North Dakota and Illinois National Guard regiments respectively.

3 Combat Leadership and Motivation

"It was very, very difficult to understand why they were so willing to die in such a horrible way. They'd come in waves toward us, against machine guns, there's no chance in the world…," Mitchell Pillarick, a Guadalcanal veteran of the 164th Infantry Regiment, recalled his combat experience facing so-called 'banzai charges' by the Japanese troops in October 1942.[6] As a Catholic, he believed that "your life is the most important thing you have in this world."[7] The seemingly suicidal act by the Japanese soldiers who were charging with bayonets against machine guns left him puzzled and scared. Sgt. Pillarick and his fellow soldiers of Company B, 1st Battalion, 164th Infantry Regiment, were fighting with the 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, during the second major counter-offensive operation by the Japanese forces on October 23–26, 1942. It was his first intensive combat experience. After the combat, he asked a marine soldier why the Japanese would do that. "Oh, they don't want to live," answered the marine. Later on, Sgt. Pillarick

(Footnote 5 continued)

Regiments), the 35th Brigade (124th Infantry Regiment, Ichiki Detachment), the 38th Division (228th, 229th, and 230th Infantry Regiments), and other units (Frank 1990, pp. 631–634). The September 12–14 attack was waged by the 35th Infantry Brigade commanded by Maj. Gen. Kawaguchi, and the October 24–26 attack was conducted by the 2nd Infantry Division led by Lt. Gen. Maruyama.

[6]Although the October attack Sgt. Pillarick faced was the second major attack by the Japanese Army, it was on Guadalcanal when for the first time, the American forces experienced the massive bayonet attack in the night by the Japanese infantry soldiers. Despite their eventual victory, the Americans learned what they would have to face: "a determined and skilled foe who would fight to the death rather than surrender" (Smith and Meehl 2004, p. 21).

[7]Interview by author, June 29, 1993. Pillarick volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1942, and was transferred to the 164th Infantry Regiment before being deployed overseas. As a Non-Commissioned Officer, he fought on Guadalcanal, Bougainville and Leyte before taking part in the occupation of Japan in 1945.

personally witnessed how, by means of body language, a Japanese soldier, whom he had just shot at, begged Pillarick to shoot him again. He learned that the Japanese soldiers did not want to surrender. A U.S. Army historian describes the characteristics of the Japanese soldier thus: "His tenacity, his willingness to starve or be shot rather than surrender, may be denounced as fanaticism, but such qualities gave vital strength to his defense" (Miller 1989, p. 313). The Japanese *fought to die*, while the Americans *fought to live*. This is a stereotypical view commonly shared by the American soldiers and sailors during the Pacific War (Schrijvers 2002, p. 179).

As to the fighting on Guadalcanal, the role of combat leadership was crucial. The lessons learned from the six months of fierce jungle fighting by the U.S. Army and Marine Corps are summarized as follows:

> Infantry fighting was close work, as most targets lay less than fifty yards from the infantrymen. The nature of the terrain broke most engagements into 'small unit scraps" in which "success is dependent upon the individual soldiers, NCO's, and platoon leaders' ability to act promptly and intelligently when confronted with a situation.'
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> The soldiers and marines had seen repeatedly demonstrated the obvious truth that success in war demands skillful and vigorous leadership from all ranks charged with the responsibility of providing leadership. Those whose leadership faltered under the stress of combat had to be relieved of their commands (Miller 1989, p. 307).

Thereby, the following sections shed light particularly on the tactical combat leaders who are mostly squad, platoon, and company commanders. In his classical work on military history, *The Face of Battle*, Keegan (1978, p. 51) was interested in "how and why ordinary soldiers fight" and "the nature of leadership at the most junior level" rather than 'generalship'. Although every battle in world history may be different from every other battle, what battles have in common is human. Thus, according to Keegan (1978, p. 303), "the behavior of men struggling to reconcile their instinct for self-preservation, their sense of honour and the achievement of some aim over which other men are ready to kill them," as well as fear, courage, leadership, obedience, compulsion, insubordination, anxiety, elation, catharsis, uncertainty, doubt, misinformation, misapprehension, faith, vision, violence, cruelty, self-sacrifice, compassion, solidarity and disintegration are all necessary elements of a study of battle. He further suggests that a 'social constructionist approach' is necessary for the study of battle. He claims that a study of battle is not only sociological and psychological but also historical because battles belong to "finite moments in history, to societies which raise the armies which fight them, to the economies and technologies which those societies sustain" (Keegan 1978, p. 303). As a human being is socially constructed as a result of the socialization process in each society, so is a soldier. Without socialization processes of military education, training, and indoctrination, one cannot become a soldier in a given military organization. And the military itself is also a product of the society which it is to protect.

3.1 Combat Motivation and Primary Group Theory

The question of how and why ordinary soldiers fight asked by a military historian echoes the basic question of why men (and women) fight in sociology of combat. The factors which motivate soldiers to fight range from national character, formal organization, patriotism and ideology to solidarity or "primary group tie" (Moskos 1988; Marshall 1947; Shils and Janowitz 1948). When S.L.A. Marshall concluded that "I hold it to be one of the simplest truths of war that the thing which enables an infantry soldier to keep going with his weapons is the near presence or the presumed presence of a comrade" (Marshall 1947, p. 42), the importance of solidarity with the small group of men on the battle field was underlined as a motivating factor in combat. A quantitative study of combat motivation among the American soldiers in World War II finds that 'solidarity with group' (14%) is in fact the second most important factor to motivate the American enlisted men, following the most significant incentive of 'ending the task' (39%).[8] On the other hand, the American company grade officers believed that 'leadership and discipline' (19%) was the strongest combat incentive, while assuming that 'solidarity with group' (15%) and 'sense of duty and self-respect' (15%) are equally important incentives in combat.[9]

A marked difference, however, exists in terms of combat incentives of the American officers in the European and Pacific theaters. For the junior officers in the Pacific, 'vindictiveness' (18%) is a far greater incentive than 'solidarity with group' (11%), following 'leadership and discipline' (20%). In contrast, only 8 or 9% of the officers in the European theater mentioned 'vindictiveness' as their combat incentive. 'Anger, revenge, and fighting spirit' are detailed comments included in the 'vindictiveness' category (Stouffer et al. 1949, p. 110).

Fred Hizman, for instance, was a sergeant of the 132nd Infantry Regiment on Guadalcanal.[10] What motivated him most during the war in the Pacific was "to get even" out of a sense of revenge when he found two fellow soldiers whom he had known for a few years "spread-eagled in the tree," brutally killed by the Japanese

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[8]The percentage shown in the parenthesis means comments made by those who replied to the question: "Generally, from your combat experience, what was most important to you in making you want to keep going and do as well as you could?" The survey was conducted with the U.S. infantry combat veterans, 568 in total, in the European theater in 1944. 'Solidarity with group' includes such comments as "cannot let the other fellows or the outfit down; sticking together; buddies depending on me; my friends around me" (Stouffer et al. 1949, pp. 108–109).

[9]The percentage shown in the parenthesis means comments made by those who replied to the question: "When the going is tough for your men, what do you think are the incentives which keep them fighting?" The survey respondents are 1116 company grade officers in the European and Pacific theaters in 1944. 'Solidarity with group' include "pride in outfit and esprit de corps; loyalty to comrades; opinions of other men; seeing others doing their job" (Stouffer et al. 1949, pp. 108–110).

[10]Interview by author, June 24, 1993. Hizman became a commissioned officer after the Pacific War, and stayed in the U.S. Army for 40 years, retiring as Lt. Col. He volunteered for the Illinois National Guard at age 15 in 1936.

soldiers. From that moment on, the man who had a "buck fever" experience, i.e. he could not pull a trigger when he first had a chance to kill a Japanese soldier, turned into "a machine" that had no scruples about killing the Japanese soldiers. He is not the only one who had a strong sense of vindictiveness after witnessing atrocities in the battle field. Sgt. Pillarick of the 164th Regiment also had a similar experience, in that one of his good friends was tortured to death by the Japanese over a night.[11] The American officers and enlisted men alike attached little importance to 'idealistic reasons', such as patriotism and their concern for war aims.[12]

3.2 *Combat Leadership in Banzai Attack*

Brigadier General John Stannard, U.S. Army, was sergeant of the 164th Infantry Regiment, Americal Division, on Guadalcanal. In his memoir of the Guadalcanal campaign, he expressed the stereotypical views on combat motivation of soldiers of different countries allegedly shared by the American soldiers: "The Germans fight for Hitler, the British fight for their King, the Japanese fight for their Emperor, and the Americans fight for souvenirs" (Stannard 1992, p. 107). To what extent these views prove to be true will be seen. It certainly shows, though, how little the Americans were motivated by idealistic reasons, as supported by the statistics shown above. Were the Japanese soldiers actually fighting for the Emperor?

Although the similar statistical data regarding the Japanese soldiers' combat incentives are not available, my own research on the Imperial Japanese Army soldiers suggest that they were fighting not for the Emperor, but for their families, and for the sake of family and community honor (Kawano 2011). Even a Japanese soldier explicitly denied that he was fighting for Hirohito, the Showa Emperor. "Long Live the Emperor (*Tenno Heika Banzai*)? No idiot says that!," he replied when asked if he had seen any Japanese soldier who said the phrase upon his death in the battlefield".[13] Although there were almost no Japanese soldiers who actually witnessed those soldiers who mentioned the Emperor before dying, two out of 67 veterans interviewed had witnessed them.

[11]Interview by author, June 29, 1993. "[H]e was bayoneted and completely tied by his thumbs and his legs with rope or bamboo or whatever to a tree. And, we heard him scream all night and everybody couldn't stand his screaming, because he kept going 'Shoot me! Shoot me!' And he finally died, with weakening voice and we didn't hear him by morning, but we did find him completely dismembered, cut all up and so forth. Even his groin was cut off. It was a horrible sight, horrible. To this day, I could never understand why".

[12]According to the same statistics, 2% of the officers, and 5% of the enlisted men identified 'idealistic reasons' as their combat incentive (Stouffer et al. 1949, pp. 108–110).

[13]As a member of a farmer's family in Ohita, Kyushu, the southern island of Japan, he just wanted to complete his military service as a conscript in the army and to come back home early because his mother was waiting for his return (Kawano 2011, p. 343).

The only veteran who himself actually shouted “Long Live the Emperor (*Tenno Heika Banzai*)!” is Masaharu Harada, a Private First Class in the Ichiki Detachment. This happened when the Americans took him as a prisoner of war on Guadalcanal, at the very moment he was going to be killed by them at the POW camp.[14] Nevertheless, he clearly denies that he was fighting for the Emperor. He understood that the military service was for the country and for the Emperor at that time, but he just wanted to come back home as soon as he completed his obligatory term of service in the army. “You don’t think about serving for the country and the Emperor all the time,” says Harada.

Mentioning ‘family honor’ as a combat incentive is a rather unique case among the Japanese soldiers. Masahiro Nakagawa, sergeant in the 228th Regiment, 38th Division, left home for an overseas operation with a Japanese sword which was a family treasure that symbolized the samurai spirit of his ancestor. Although his immediate concern in combat was “kill or be killed”, the sense of family honor, being a descendant of a samurai family whose duty was to guard the feudal war lord in Nagoya, always stuck in his mind, which made him act in combat as courageous as possible, while avoiding any cowardly behavior.[15] Once he was promoted to sergeant and became squad leader, he was preoccupied with thoughts of ‘accomplishing the mission’ and ‘minimizing casualties’ in his unit. In other words, ‘solidarity with group’ was one of his priority concerns in combat.

‘Fight for the commander’ or ‘we can die for the commander’ is often expressed by the Japanese soldiers referring to their combat incentive. “If you are well taken care of by your superior, you’d give up your life for the squad leader or the commander,”[16] says Kawai, Lance Corporal, 228th Regiment, commenting on personal influence of trusted leaders in combat. On January 23, 1943, when the 2nd Battalion of the 228th Regiment on Mt. Austen decided to break through the encirclement by the American forces, Kawai was among the 22 men under the command of 1st Lieutenant Sueharu Tsuruta. Following the company commander Tsuruta who had a sword and a pistol in his hands, Kawai was watching his back with a bayonet in his hand, determined to die with the commander (Kawai 1993, pp. 164–165). Kawai was fortunate enough to escape enemy fire, along with six other men. Unfortunately, Lt. Tsuruta was killed in action, literally leading his men in combat with his sword and receiving machinegun bullets in his chest. In the

[14]Interview by author, July 18, 1993. Harada was captured by the Americans in mid-March 1943, more than one month after the Japanese force withdrew from Guadalcanal. He was suffering from malaria, and stayed at a field hospital when the evacuation operation was completed on February 7, 1943. The patients at the hospital were left alone. When he was barely surviving with another sick soldier in a small cottage, the American soldiers found them, and despite his attempts to hit his captor with a wooden hammer, he was knocked out, and taken to a POW camp. It was when he was surrounded by five or six American soldiers pointing their rifles at him and about to pull the triggers that he unintendedly shouted “Long Live the Emperor (*Tenno Heika Banzai*)!” The rifles were not loaded, and the American soldiers had a grin on their faces.

[15]Interview by author, July 26, 1993. On Guadalcanal, he was Corporal.

[16]Interview by author, July 28, 1993.

following night, Kawai dreamed of the company commander, "the old man", for whom Kawai felt so sorry as he was unable to offer him a drop of water at the last moment of his life (Kawai 1993, pp. 166–170). This episode reminds us of the strong bond between the commander and his subordinates. Comparing the modes of primary group ties in the Japanese and American combat organizations, one can identify contrasting types of primary group ties. In the Japanese army, a vertical bond between the superior and the subordinates is dominant, whereas a horizontal bond is dominant in the American units (Kawano 1996, 2013). Unlike the American armed forces, the Japanese army did not prohibit socializing among officers and enlisted men. Formal and informal experiences shared by the officer and his men helped develop the vertical mode of primary group formation. In particular, in extremis situations shared by the officers and men in deadly combat resulted in enhanced unit cohesion.

Gen. Stannard, who survived the toughest Banzai attack on Guadalcanal in October 1942, which they call the 'Battle of Coffin Corner', in retrospect comments on the combat leadership of the Japanese soldiers as follows:

> The Japanese officers and NCO's at Coffin Corner knew how to inspire their soldiers, by setting an example of battlefield conduct and by sharing the dangers and hardships of their men. And certainly their willingness to fight at the head of their unit, and to sacrifice themselves for its success, speaks well for their courage. But, their bamboo spear tactics did not succeed against the Americans, and led only to the useless slaughter of the obedient Sendai [i.e. the 2nd Division, Imperial Japanese Army, from Sendai] soldiers (Stannard 1992, p. 282).

In extremis leaders, according to Kolditz (2007), share risks with their followers, have and inspire high competence, trust, and loyalty, and share a common lifestyle with their men. Since powerful motivation is inherent in dangerous contexts, both the leaders and the followers are inherently motivated by the grave circumstances of combat. Combat leadership experiences of the Japanese and American soldiers made the leaders come up with more or less the same principles due to the in extremis situations they had gone through.

3.3 Personal Principles of Combat Leadership

Having gone through the fierce combat on Guadalcanal as a sergeant and having been wounded, Gen. Stannard of the 164th Regiment summarizes his own personal principles of leadership in combat as follows:

> [Y]ou'd take care of 'em so they're in as good a shape as they can be for combat. And then you've gotta – of course in a platoon you can never be very far from the front – but you've gotta get right up there with the lead people and share the danger and see what's going on and set an example.

> My own code was I wouldn't ask another man to do something I wasn't willing to do myself or that I hadn't done myself.[17]

His comments include three of the four common leadership principles, (1) protect your men, (2) lead by example, (3) take good care of your men. Interestingly, although Gen. Stannard emphasized that his code of leadership was his own and that he did not share it with others, Richard Casper of the 132nd Infantry Regiment, a platoon sergeant on Guadalcanal, also made a similar comment:

> I think for the sergeant, I'm talking about now, the platoon sergeant, 1st sergeant, corporal – leadership boils down to certain basic things. First, know what you're doing, what your job is. Two, you never ask anybody to do something you can't do yourself. In other words, they know what you can do. You can't fool them. There's no way. And then the third factor is that you take care of 'em. You see that they get what they want and lead, to the limit of your capacity.[18]

More than a few American combat leaders mentioned that they would not ask their men to do a job which they would or could not do themselves,[19] while almost no Japanese explicitly mentioned the principle (Kawano 1996, 2013).

As for the first principle of 'protect your men', Frederick ("Fred") Hitzman, a retired Lt. Col. and a Guadalcanal veteran of the 132nd Regiment, asserts that an officer's job is to "protect your men, period." When he took out a patrol on Guadalcanal, his job was to protect the men with him, and he had to lead those men. "I don't get in the back and say you lead the way. You've got to get up in front and lead it yourself."[20] A typical patrol on Guadalcanal by the U.S. forces would involve about 50 men. Moving along a trail within three miles of the defensive perimeter line, in single file maintaining a 20-yard interval to each other, the men stretched nearly 1000 yards. The patrol leader and some scouts lead the patrol troops and the assistant patrol leader followed at the tail end. Since the lead scout was one of the most likely targets for the enemy fire, frequent rotation of the scouts was necessary[21] (Stannard 1992, pp. 36-37).

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[17]Interview by author, June 28, 1993. Gen. Stannard regards these as his own personal principles of leadership and emphasized that they were never taught by someone else.

[18]Interview by author, April 23, 1993.

[19]Lyle Sheetz, a platoon sergeant of the 2nd Marine Corps Division, also made a similar comment: "You never want to ask somebody to do something that you can't do yourself." Interview by author, November 15, 1993.

[20]Interview by author, June 24, 1993.

[21]According to Fred Hitzman of the 132nd Regiment, however, the Japanese snipers intentionally fired at a man in the middle of a column so that the patrol could be split. It happened when he was leading the patrol on Guadalcanal. He was the only survivor of the men in the front half, and he ordered the men in the rear half to withdraw. As a result, he was left alone behind the Japanese lines for seven days. In order to spot well-camouflaged Japanese soldiers and machinegun bankers in the woods, every time he went out on patrol he would take a man with color vision deficiency with him. Few people knew it, but learning from his own combat experiences, he knew it was an effective way to find the enemy position that could normally not be seen by ordinary soldiers. Interview by author, June 24, 1993.

Second, ‘lead by example’ is a basic, and perhaps universal, principle of in extremis combat leadership. Robert Manning, Captain of Company A, the 132nd Infantry Regiment, sums it up:

> The motto of the infantry was, especially for junior officers, ‘Follow Me.’
>
> You’ve got an infantry, no one’s talking. You’ve got to lead the guys. You’ve got to be up there. You’ve got to be visible. And I insisted that platoon leaders be visible, be out there. By visible, I mean, to men. Believe me! Come on! That’s why more platoon leaders are killed than other rank, per capita if you want to put it that way. But, that was the only thing I had [as his own principle of leadership - Kawano], and I still believe it.[22]

Third, ‘Take good care of your men’, as already mentioned by Stannard, Casper, and Dr. Muehrcke as well, is another common principle of combat leadership. A marine sergeant, Lyle Sheetz, who used to memorize the first names of all of his 200 men, made it his principle to take good care of his men by making sure that all of their needs, from beer, candy bars, clothes, shoes to liberty pass, were met. Of course, he always led them by example.[23]

The Japanese combat leaders also share the same three principles of ‘lead by example’; ‘protect your men’; ‘take good care of your men’ as the American counterparts. In the China theater, where most of the Japanese soldiers had experienced real combat, officers and non-commissioned officers learned how to lead their men in combat in a hard way. A company commander of the 37th Division, which fought in the China and Indo-China theaters, summarized his philosophy of leadership: “A company commander had to run in front of his men, or they would not follow. Standing up in front is all you need to raise your men’s morale. What came most into my mind in combat was not to let my men get wounded or killed. These thoughts never left my mind in combat” (Kawano 2011, p. 346). Koichi Nakashima, a commander of a Machinegun Company, the 228th Infantry Regiment, who also had experienced fierce combat in the China theater before being deployed to Guadalcanal, made it his principle to share the risk with his men. Whenever he saw danger in a situation, he would come and face the danger with his men.[24]

Jiro Katsumata, the commander of the 11th Company, the 29th Regiment, the 2nd Division, who joined the second major offensive operation on Guadalcanal on October 24–25, 1942, led the Banzai attack in front of his men (Katsumata 1996, p. 63). The attack was against the defense lines held by the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine, 1st Marine Division, and the 2nd Battalion, 164th Infantry Regiment, Americal Division. A group of the Japanese soldiers of the 29th Regiment,

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[22]Interview by author, September, 25, 1993. Manning was a platoon leader on Guadalcanal. He was later promoted to captain during the Pacific War.

[23]“[I]f they work with you, you’re gonna work with them and see that they can get liberty or whatever they want, or need clothes or need shoes or anything, while you work with ’em and get ’em.” Interview by author, November 15, 1993.

[24]Interview by author, July 29, 1993. Nakashima later went on to attend the Imperial Japanese Military Academy, and became a battalion commander of the 155th Regiment.

including Katsumata, actually succeeded in breaking into the American defense perimeter.[25] During the night attack on October 24, Capt. Katsumata, a graduate of the Imperial Japanese Military Academy, insisted on leading the attack in person. Standing alone in the middle of the attack, trying to go over the barbed wire, he was hit by machinegun fire. Nonetheless, “the Company Commander is getting over the barbed wire. The men of the 11th Company, follow me!”, Katsumata ordered his men.[26] “Leading by example in dangerous conditions means sharing risk and requires confidence and courage” (Kolditz 2007, p. 16). What Capt. Katsumata showed on Guadalcanal is an archetype of in extremis leadership.

Kozo Yasuda, a warrant officer in the 228th Regiment, 38th Division, was sergeant major and a squad leader on Guadalcanal. Having seen combat actions in Shanghai, China, Hong Kong, Anbom (the Dutch-East Indies), and Timor (the Dutch/Portuguese East Indies), Yasuda was always busy “obeying orders issued by the platoon leader, and taking care of my men” as a squad leader. Fighting against foreign enemies of various countries, he had “no animosities” against the Chinese, the Dutch, the native East Indian, Australian, and the American soldiers.[27] His men’s behavior in combat clearly shows how well a trusted combat leader Yasuda was: “I would tell my men, ‘Keep your distance! Keep your distance! Don’t come closer to me,’ when the battle became tough and battle casualties mounted.” It can be called ‘anxiety gathering,’ when the followers get closer to the leader out of a sense of anxiety (Kawano 1996). Trusted combat leaders have similar experiences in other battle theaters (Kawano 2011). Only the leaders who take good care of their soldiers and prove to be competent combat leaders will experience ‘anxiety gathering’.”[28] Sgt. Nakagawa of the 228th Regiment also had more or less the same principle of his own: “complete the mission, while minimizing casualties of my men.”[29]

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[25]According to an official history of the U.S. Army, “while the Marine battalion continued to hold back the Japanese, the soldiers entered the lines by detachments between 0230 and 0330, 25 October” (Miller 1989, p. 161).

[26]Capt. Katsumata successfully crossed over the barbed wire, despite heavy machinegun fire, and ordered his men to assemble at his position inside the enemy defense perimeter. Only four men were able to follow him. Realizing that the attack was not successful, he decided to get out of the enemy perimeter to reassemble his men to prepare for another chance of attack. At dawn, he crossed the barbed wire in order to return to the original position of the attack, and ordered his men to come to his position. A few men who survived the attack, including men of other companies, followed his order (Katsumata 1996, pp. 74–75).

[27]Interview by author, July 27, 1993. “At that time, I had no hatred against the American soldiers. As a soldier, we fight against enemies as ordered. They were just enemies. There was no personal animosity against them. We humans are so scary beings. We tried to kill the people whom we did not hate at all. […] It was just to kill or be killed. Nothing else”.

[28]Gentaro Ohtomo, Sergeant of Ichiki Detachment, also experienced ‘anxiety gathering’ when they were in combat on Guadalcanal. His men initially spread over 50 m wide but as fighting went on, the men got closer to him because they felt safer near the trusted squad leader. Interview by author, July 16, 1993. At the time of the interview, Ohtomo was the president of the Ichiki Detachment Veterans Association in Asahikawa, Hokkaido.

[29]Interview by author, July 26, 1993.

Another sergeant in the 228th Regiment, Masao Yamamoto, was always concerned about protecting his men in combat partly because there would be no replacement once a soldier was lost in battle. An incompetent platoon leader was the one he did not want to follow in combat when his own and his men's lives were at stake. "A commander who cannot issue a clear order, who cannot make a decision, you don't want to work with him. You are in trouble. You don't want to share destiny with him in combat."[30] In extremis leaders should have 'high competence'. The followers always demand leader competence since it is critical in extremely dangerous situations. 'Competence' is one of the most needed attributes of trusted leaders in combat (Kolditz 2007, pp. 10–16).

According to Kolditz (2007), 'sharing information' is also an important attribute for a trusted leader. Dr. Muehrcke of the 132nd Regiment tells us his own principle of leadership:

> You have to build confidence in them, self-confidence. In yourself, and in them as well. So that you build this self-confidence, that they have a mutual trust, and a mutual admiration, and a mutual comradeship. Looking after each other, so you can depend upon you. [In order to build confidence, you need to] Talk. Listen. Discuss freely and openly.[31]

Keeping good communication and sharing information with his men were important principles for him. Gen. Stannard of the 164th Regiment also made it his principle to "keep everybody informed of what's going on. And, they pass the word pretty fast among themselves." In the U.S. Army, combat leaders "felt strongly about that" and "most American officers in combat are very good about consulting their NCOs or soldiers,"[32] Stannard comments.

In contrast, the Japanese officers tend not to share information with their men. Kiyomitsu Momoki, a lance corporal of an artillery unit, the Ichiki Detachment, on Guadalcanal, and later promoted to sergeant, explicitly denied that he shared information with his men, although he would listen to his men to some extent. "Only the platoon commander knows the detailed information, and we were just to follow his order."[33] The operational orders came from the higher commands, i.e. from the regimental or divisional headquarters through battalion and company commanders, there is no way to challenge the orders given by the platoon leader. At this point, Momoki underlined the importance of discipline. Momoki's statement is a typical answer to the question of whether they would share information with their men in combat. In their belief, if a combat leader is well trusted by his men, that is enough to let them follow him in combat, without sharing detailed tactical information.

However, sometimes, well-seasoned combat veterans' opinions were solicited by relatively inexperienced leaders. For instance, Warrant Officer Kozo Yasuda of the 228th Regiment would share his opinions with his platoon leaders or company commanders before they made decisions. Even when he was ordered to advance, if

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[30]Interview by author, July 26, 1993.

[31]Interview by author, March 10, 1993.

[32]Interview by author, June 28, 1993.

[33]Interview by author, July 16, 1993.

the situation seemed impossible, he would tell the platoon leader face-to-face, “no, we can’t do it.”[34] Despite the inviolable rule of discipline in the Imperial Japanese Army, in extremis leaders need to listen to combat-seasoned subordinates in order to make a sound judgement.

3.4 Impression Management and Coping with Fear

In extremis combat, fear of getting killed or wounded is omnipresent. How one can effectively cope with fear in combat determines one’s combat performance. A combat leader is not only concerned with his own survival or self-preservation but is also responsible for his men’s well-being and survival. Gen. Stannard, 164th Infantry Regiment, comments on fear and leadership:

> [I]f you are in a leadership position, you have to be calm. You can’t show panic. It’s all right, all these psychologists say, it’s all right, it’s good to admit fear, but I’ll tell you this. If you’re a leader, you can’t show or admit fear and keep the respect of your people.
>
> The leader, he knows he has to set an example and it helps him be brave. You know, everybody knows fear but you’ve got to control it.[35]

Gen. Stannard himself, however, said he never had “apprehension or intuition that anything was going to happen” to him, even when he was wounded in battle.

The same point that if a leader shows fear, he cannot earn respect from his men is also made by a Japanese leader. Recalling his first combat experience in the China theater, Capt. Nakashima of a machinegun company, 228th Regiment, admits that he had fear, but intentionally showed his men that he was not afraid:

> I had felt the fear, but, at the same time had a strong sense of responsibility. As a platoon leader, I was leading two machinegun squads. When I thought one squad was facing danger, I always tried to be there with the squad.[36]

However, he was wounded later in combat in the China theater. The tactics Nakashima used in the face-to-face interaction in extremis combat can be called *impression management*, a sociological term defined by Goffman (1959). An act of a regimental commander in the China theater who shows himself standing up, without helmet, and takes a look at the enemy position in the middle of incoming bullets flying all over is another good example of impression management in combat (Kawano 2013, p. 196).

Lt. Robert Manning, a company commander of the 132nd Regiment on Guadalcanal, also used the interaction tactic of impression management to better lead his men in combat. He “never wore a helmet”, wearing a soft hat instead. In

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[34]Interview by author, July 27, 1993.

[35]Interview by author, June 28, 1993. However, he also adds that he was not going to say that he has never known fear in combat. His point is that he always kept it under control.

[36]Interview by author, July 29, 1993.

addition, he wore the insignia, which was against the battlefield wisdom of not wearing an insignia in order to avoid a sniper shot. He did that because “the fellows would still recognize me as authority” and he felt that he “had more control over the company.”[37] His personal “idol as a soldier” was a colonel who would stand up in the middle of combat with flying bullets around him. An ideal commander, to him, is “decisive, moving, he’s up near the head, he’s up there with the troops.” He believes that an officer cannot show fear, and instead, “must exude confidence.”[38]

Those overlapping voices on both sides in terms of combat leadership seem to underscore the importance of impression management tactics in front of the followers. In fact, a combat leader’s intentional act inspires his men’s morale. It is a well-known battle field wisdom among the Japanese troops that when their commanders were present, the men in units fought well (Drea 1998, p. 89). Gen. Hatazo Adachi, for instance, was one of the ideal-typical Imperial Japanese Army combat leaders according to Drea. Gen. Adachi “led by example and understood his officers and men at an emotional level. He brought this trait to combat operations. Adachi was conspicuous by his presence where the action was hottest and the enemy fire heaviest” (Drea 1998, p. 95). Impression management was also an inter-personal skill required for a samurai when preserving his honor and “saving face” was important in front of his foe or his men. In *bushido*, the traditional code of the Japanese samurai, ‘great valor’ or *moral courage* that meant being calm and cool in the heat of battle is more significant than ‘valor of a villein’ or *physical courage* meaning the simply violent and brave act of risking one’s life in an unreasonable manner (Nitobe 1905, p. 26). The oriental combat wisdom accords with the occidental war heroism. In combat, Alexander the Great is known to be always “at the most dangerous point on the battlefield, showing a disregard for his own personal safety and inspiring, through the force of personal example” (Kolenda 2001, p. 104). Thus, impression management seems to be a universal tactic used in extremis combat leadership.[39]

4 Authority Conflict and Failed Leadership

Authority conflict is defined as a conflict between formal organizational authority and informal authority which derives from shared perception of members of the organization (Kawano 1996, 2011, 2013). For instance, when a platoon leader with

[37]Interview by author, September 25, 1993. Lt. Manning was later promoted to captain during the Pacific War.

[38]Interview by author, September 25, 1993.

[39]Kolditz points out that “leaders must avoid the temptation of encouraging followers to engage in destructive impression management or other forms of faking, panic, or paralysis when things are going wrong” (Kolditz 2007, p. 131). However, referring to an episode in the Vietnam War, he mentions a sergeant major who stood up against incoming fire, “being calm, fearless, and grinning,” which exactly shows how the act of impression management inspired other men in combat.

no combat experience issues an order that a combat-seasoned squad leader believes impractical, an authority conflict situation emerges. Huntington calls this situation an 'operational conflict' between military obedience and professional competence which concerns "the execution by a subordinate of a military order which in his judgment will result in military disaster" (Huntington 1957, pp. 74–75). In extreme combat situations, leaders sometimes make mistakes or show poor judgements. Neither the Japanese nor the American combat leaders were able to avoid facing authority conflict situations.

For example, Sgt. James Fenelon, 164th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, got into an argument with his newly appointed platoon leader on Guadalcanal. Having fought on the deadly island for a couple of months, Sgt. Fenelon took an order from the "90-day wonder"[40] officer who just graduated from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, and came to his unit as a replacement platoon leader. The officer ordered Fenelon to set up barbed wire by the book. Fenelon refused the order because it was too dangerous to do so in front of enemy troops: "Sonny, you sit down over there and maybe you'll stay alive for 30 days. We'll string the barbed wire, and we'll do it and try not to lose any men or get anybody hurt."[41] The newly appointed officer "got mad" and appealed to the company commander. In reply, the commander told him to respect Sgt. Fenelon's opinion. This is a typical case of authority conflict.

Sgt. Hitzman of the 132nd Regiment, would call it "pulling rank," which means a new officer would order his men around without knowing much about real combat. "Just because the fellow is in a higher rank than you are doesn't mean he's smarter than you are, and doesn't mean that he knows more than you know about your situation," claims Hitzman. Whenever he was in this type of authority conflict situation, he would do it his own way, without telling the officer that he was wrong. "When you do that, he sees he was wrong. He's never gonna come up and say 'I'm sorry.' He can't. And you're never gonna go up and say, 'See, I told you so,' 'cause you can't do that, either," says Hitzman recalling an authority conflict situation.[42] By keeping quiet, he saved the officer's face.

The situation was more or less the same in the U.S. Marine Corps. Sgt. Lyle Sheets, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, having been in combat on Guadalcanal, was a platoon sergeant on Saipan. When a new platoon leader, who was "fresh out of Quantico" with no combat experience, was assigned to his

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[40]The United States Army's Officer Candidate School (OCS), located at Fort Benning, Georgia, trained potential commissioned officers for 12 weeks. The term "90-day wonder" refers to the short-length of the infantry officer training course, often used with a negative connotation.

[41]Interview by author, January 30, 1993. Sgt. Fenelon's personal principle of leadership was to carry out an order while taking care of his men, protecting them, trying not to show fear so that he would not lose face. "You didn't want to lose face and let your men down," says Fenelon, adding "you had to show leadership and try not to show fear".

[42]Interview by author, June 24, 1993. "But, sometimes that can do a lot of harm in a situation, where the man that does it by the book says it has to be done this way and so on. The guy who works his way up won't say that, ever," adds Hitzman.

platoon, he had an authority conflict situation. The 2nd lieutenant always contradicted what Sgt. Sheetz suggested doing. According to Sgt. Sheetz, the way the combat-inexperienced officer trained his men seemed irrelevant to combat and even "against rules and regulations". On one day in the afternoon, Sgt. Sheetz said, "Lieutenant, I'm going in. I've had enough of this here bullshit. I'm going in." He ordered his men to pick up their bags and go back to the camping base. After reporting it to the company commander and asking him to be transferred to other units, Sheetz and his men learned, three days later, that the platoon leader would be transferred to the company headquarters. Sgt. Sheetz again had the platoon to himself and felt relieved when Maj. Gen. Holland Smith later commended his platoon, the only platoon led by a sergeant, at an inspection.[43]

The situation is no different on the Japanese side. Warrant Officer Kozo Yasuda, 228th Regiment, 38th Division, had numerous experiences in the China theater. When a platoon leader issued orders, he did not hesitate to say "No" to the leader who was inexperienced in combat.[44] Takeo Tomita, Warrant Officer, Ichiki Detachment, also recalls: "compared to the military academy graduates, those Officer Candidate School graduates tended to be insistent despite their inexperience in combat."[45] Due to the relatively short military careers and less combat experiences of those OCS officers, Tomita had little respect for most of them. Whenever a conflict situation arose, he would take the side of his men.

Sgt. MasaoYamamoto, 228th Regiment, 38th Division, used to tell his platoon leaders "You are wrong" when they made seemingly wrong decisions in combat because his own and his men's lives were at stake. When a newly assigned 2nd lieutenant who had no combat experience was about to be deployed overseas, the inexperienced officer even asked Sgt. Yamamoto how to lead men in combat.[46] Later in the Pacific War, Yamamoto was transferred to an independent unit. He was the platoon sergeant, assisting the newly appointed platoon leader who just graduated from a special service school. The other soldiers in the unit were Yamamoto's subordinates before their reassignment. "When the leader is selfish all the time, without caring for his men, you are in trouble. We all would be dead. We used to call his name, Demon!"[47]

When Sgt. Masahiro Nakagawa, 228th Regiment, 38th Division, was in an authority conflict situation, he would not ignore an impractical order issued by a combat-inexperienced leader, but delay the implementation of the order, or conduct the operation in his own way, rather than just follow the seemingly inappropriate order.[48] In fact, ignoring, delaying, or modifying an order would be typical patterns

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[43]Interview by author, November 15, 1993.

[44]Interview by author, July 27, 1993.

[45]Interview by author, July 19, 1993.

[46]Interview by author, July 26, 1993.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid.

of behavior by combat leaders when they received seemingly wrong orders from their inexperienced or incompetent officers (Kawano 1996, 2011, 2013).

Failed Leadership can also be found in both troops. Not all leaders are good leaders. According to the survey result of a U.S. Army division in the Pacific theater, the question "How many officers in your company are the kind you would want to serve under in combat?," was answered with 'none' by 28% of the private soldiers who were "less confident in their con-commissioned officers (NCO's)" and 54% said 'few', while those soldiers who were "more confident in their NCO's" answered 'none' and 'few' in 6 and 26% of the cases respectively (Stouffer et al. 1949, p. 128).[49]

The above-mentioned Sgt. Hitzman, 132nd Regiment, has witnessed some cases of failed leadership:

> We've had some officers who were with us on patrol, and when we got hit, they'd run. Everybody in a patrol has been there before. This may have been the officer's first patrol, who knows? They'd flop down right away, get into a hiding position. The officer would take off, so when you came back, you never said anything, and he never said anything, but he learned there.[50]

According to the American Uniform Code of Military Justice, desertion before or in the presence of an enemy could result in death penalty. However, close call cases like this may have been abundant.

Donald Robinson was a sergeant of the 164th Regiment on Guadalcanal. Sgt. Robinson was also the type of NCO who detested "90-day wonder" officers: "They didn't know anything. They'd never been in combat, they didn't know what it was like. They didn't know what to do." An officer's rank did not mean anything to him. "If I get an order that's wrong, I'm not gonna follow it," says Robinson. He was another typical squad leader who would always think about his men's safety first, and "that way, your men will do anything you want them to do, too." When he was promoted to Tech Sergeant, on Bougainville, a new officer came to his platoon to replace the former platoon leader who was killed in action. The 90-day wonder officer asked Robinson to take over the patrol mission because he knew something about it. Facing a clear authority conflict situation, he asked the battalion commander in person to say that he and his men "didn't want that guy," who was a failed platoon leader in their eyes. Soon afterwards, the newly arrived officer was sent back to the U.S., and Sgt. Robinson was appointed as acting platoon leader for a year. Just a few days before the war was over, Robinson was called up by the battalion commander, and asked if he would like to receive a battle field commission to be an officer, he flatly refused and chose to go home.[51]

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[49]The answers by the NCO's were similar to the privates. Those who were less confident in NCO's: 'none', 14%, 'few', 62%; those who were more confident in NCO's: 'none' 6%, and 'few' 25% (Stouffer et al. 1949, p. 128).

[50]Interview by author, June 24, 1993.

[51]Interview by author, September 24, 1994.

An officer of the 164th Regiment, Charles ("Chuck") Walker, even accused his company commander of being an "alcoholic" and "abusing" him. Instead of being abused, Lt. Walker beat the drunk man up. Another company commander also "pulled a dirty trick" on him, which he detested. "Neither of them were good officers," recalls Walker. He faced another failed leadership when the West Point-graduated regimental commander issued a "stupid" order when he was drunk, in the city of Dumaguete, Negros Island, the Philippines. As a result, his unit lost "six to eight men." Walker was a major, and a battalion executive officer then. He later submitted a formal letter of complaint to the Inspector General's department, but it was neglected, perhaps due to the fact that the commander was a West Pointer. Being a reserve officer, he did not want to stay in the Army, so he retired as major in 1946.[52]

A close call of desertion can also be found on the Japanese side. When the Ichiki Detachment failed in their first attack on August 20–21, 1942, on Guadalcanal, some officers left the battlefield and swam back to Taivu Point. No one knows exactly how these officers survived the total disaster, and the mysterious behavior was questioned by the higher command later (Yamamoto 1987).

Sgt. Nakagawa, from the 228th Regiment, 38th Division, states that there were two types of commanders in extreme combat situations: those who retain humanism and empathy towards their men, and those who focus on their own survival and get selfish without taking care of their men. The battalion commander he served belongs to the second type. The major did not share the risk with his men at the front as he gave them his orders by phone from the battalion headquarters.[53]

As a company commander, Capt. Nakashima had served under various types of commanding officers. He recalls a commanding officer who liked drinking *sake* (rice wine) and who would hide deeper in a cave for the sake of his own safety when it came to a tough combat. To him, the officer was the complete opposite of a well-respected commander, i.e. a "War God" who leads by example and is courageous as well as competent in combat. Before coming to Guadalcanal, Nakashima himself had suffered from a serious lack of self-confidence in combat as a company commander in the China theater due to a lack of combat experience and skills to effectively lead his men. He was somewhat depressed and almost failed at one point in his military career as a combat leader.[54]

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[52]Interview by author, September 24, 1993. Being a reserve officer, he did not want to stay in the army, so he retired as major in 1946. Walker holds a grudge against the West Pointers, asserting that 50% of the West Pointers were "alcoholics".

[53]Interview by author, July 26, 1993.

[54]Interview by author, July 29, 1993. Nakashima was a reserve officer, and did not want to stay on in the army as a professional soldier. However, having been in combat in the China and Pacific theaters, he made up his mind to be an active duty officer. After the Guadalcanal campaign, he took an examination to enter the military academy and passed the exam. Graduating from the military academy, he was assigned to be a battalion commander of a regiment in northeastern Japan.

5 Conclusion

The battle accounts of the American and Japanese combat leaders who had gone through deadly combat on Guadalcanal suggest that effective combat leaders in extreme situations share more or less the same principles. 'Protect your men', 'lead by example', and 'take good care of your men' are the common principles of combat leadership, beyond cultural boundaries. These simple principles seem to be the enduring canon of in extremis combat leadership as they can be found in today's combat leadership field manuals (Center for Army Leadership 2004). In addition, authority conflict and failed leadership are also common to both sides of the armed conflict.

However, there are cultural differences to some extent. In the Japanese Army, sharing information on combat operations was limited. The subordinate soldiers obeyed the order given by their leaders, sometimes "blindly" in the eyes of the American soldiers. Nonetheless, the leader-follower relations seemed to play a more significant role in motivating the Japanese men in combat, encouraging them to fight and die for their commander. The vertical mode of primary group tie loomed large among the Japanese soldiers, especially when they faced life or death situations in so-called banzai attacks. Dying together in an honorable manner meant more to the Japanese soldiers than surviving in a dishonorable way. The *gyokusai* code, which emphasizes "death with honor" by being killed in action and denouncing surrender, still seems to bind the Japanese veteran's mentality long after the war was over. For instance, if you surrendered voluntarily and became a POW of the allied forces, you would hesitate to attend a reunion of the veterans association of the Imperial Japanese Army units. The feeling of survivor's guilt is even stronger among those who chose to survive against the military code.

In *Bushido*, Nitobe argues as follows:

> Nietzsche spoke for the samurai heart when he wrote, 'You are to be proud of your enemy; then the success of your enemy is your success also.' Indeed valor and honor alike required that we should own as enemies in war only such as prove worthy of being friends in peace (Nitobe 1905, p. 32).

Gen. Stannard, who went on to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point after the Guadalcanal campaign, spoke highly of the courage and discipline of the Japanese soldiers, while criticizing the way the Japanese officers led their men in combat:

> There was something about the discipline and the pride and the spirit of the Japanese infantry that made them tremendous infantry soldiers.
>
> I guess I wouldn't have minded commanding the Japanese unit, if I could have commanded it my own way and not had to do it the Japanese way.

> I have great respect for their individual soldiers. An infantry soldier who's as tough and as patient and as disciplined and as brave as the Japanese were on Guadalcanal, this was a real soldier. They were the best I faced.[55]

But, "why did we win?," he continues. The American combat leaders' flexibility, better tactics, and planning," along with their "firepower advantage" brought the victory in the end of the Battle for Guadalcanal.

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Author Biography

Hitoshi Kawano is currently dean of the Graduate School of Security Studies and professor of sociology at the Department of Public Policy, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Defense Academy in Yokosuka, Japan. He received his Ph.D. from the Northwestern University in 1996. His research interests include military history, sociology of combat/peacekeeping, mental health, family support, and civil-military relations in post-Cold War Japan. His publications include “Family support and the Japan Self-Defense Forces” (with Atsuko Fukuura) in *Military Family and War in the 21st Century*, 2015, “Japan Self-Defense Force in Iraq” in *Leadership in Challenging Situations*, 2014 and “Japanese Combat Morale: A Case Study of the 37th Division” in *The Battle for China*, 2010.

Magnanimous Valor in Arturo Prat (1848–1879): A Necessary Quality for Leadership in Extreme Situations

Alfredo Gorrochotegui

Abstract This chapter intends to introduce the quality of magnanimous valor that Frigate Captain Arturo Prat (1848–1879) developed in the course of his life, which later allowed him to display his nobleness, greatness and glory when he died in the Battle of Iquique on May 21st, 1879 during the war between Chile, Peru and Bolivia (1879–1883). This chapter will offer a brief account of his life, and proposes the current need to know, highlight and follow authentic service leaders such as Prat. It delves into the conceptualization of magnanimous valor as a significant quality for extreme situations and emphasizes how this quality served Prat's life as a leader. Practical suggestions for military leaders are provided based on the model of Arturo Prat. Finally, a description of the Battle of Iquique where the hero's final moments can be observed is presented.

Keywords Arturo Prat · Naval Battle of Iquique · Military leadership · Service leadership · Magnanimity · Valor

1 Introduction

The life of Arturo Prat impresses everyone. He died at the age of 31, and at that age he was already a giant of courage, dedication and authentic service to his country. He showed dedication in an extreme situation, a dedication in a situation where Prat was commanding a ship that was overwhelmingly inferior to the enemy's ship, a dedication he experienced with moral integrity and with enough courage to positively motivate his men. They did not falter upon the death of their leader: they emulated him, and the Chilean flag was the last item to disappear among the crests of the Pacific Ocean after the battle.

However, having this type of leadership requires a very complete personality structure, as well as previous training. Prat's sacrifice is no coincidence. It is a

A. Gorrochotegui (✉)
School of Service Administration, Universidad de Los Andes, Santiago, Chile
e-mail: agorrochotegui@uandes.cl

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sacrifice founded on a life filled with effort and many other moments of important sacrifices. Prat developed his magnanimous valor throughout his life. This virtue is the result of an experience that was built on different occasions. And this process allowed him to act with great courage in an extreme situation.

In this chapter, we will attempt to talk about this; of how Prat developed his magnanimous valor. This is what we can offer as a novelty for military leadership. We hope that our contribution can shed some light on this topic so those who train and perform in this area can develop the quality of magnanimous valor, which is most adequate in order to face extreme situations in unexpected or surprising moments.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first one provides an introduction. The second section provides a to familiarize the reader with the milestones of his existence. In the third section, we explain why the leadership of Arturo Prat is an authentic service leadership. The fourth section deals directly with the quality of magnanimous valor in Arturo Prat and also analyzes its conceptual development. There, we will talk about the different moments in which the hero displays this quality in various ways. Then we will detail how he experienced it during the Battle of Iquique on May 21st, 1879.

The fifth section contains a conclusion where we indicate that this character led an orderly life filled with ideals, which serves as an inspiring model for others. The sixth section offers some practical implications for military leaders. Finally, the seventh section describes the details of the Battle of Iquique.

2 Who Was Arturo Prat?

We cannot approach a hero without first knowing, at least succinctly, who he was, what decisions he made and how his life was configured. Arturo lived in a time of numerous economic conflicts and border disputes in America and Europe. It was a time in which nations expanded and nationalities were defined. A time of passion, of great and radical idealism, and also of the first major scientific discoveries that would change the world and the relationships between people and states. We will base this biographical sketch on the well-known and authorized biographies written by Vial (1995) and Fuenzalida (1974).

Agustín Arturo Prat Chacón—afterwards simply called by his middle name Arturo—was born on April 3rd, 1848 in Ninhue ("town protected by the winds" in Mapudungun), in the estate of San Agustín de Puñual, 48 km away from Chillán in the province of Ñuble. The midwife Juana Daza was startled when the child did not cry at the first slap. "Good heavens, Mrs Rosario—said the midwife—your son is going to be mute!" But at the second slap, the creature cried like any normal child.

Besides Agustín Arturo, four other children were born to the marriage formed by Mr Agustín Prat Barril and Mrs María del Rosario Chacón: Rodolfo, Átala Rosa, Escilda Aurelia and Ricardo. The family lived in Santiago on Estado Street, but had to suddenly move to the house of the grandfather Pedro Chacón Morales, to the

aforementioned estate where Arturo was born, because their business was destroyed in a fire. The word is that Mr Pedro was friends with O´Higgins and San Martín, and that after a harsh illness that left him in a wheelchair, he lived until the age of 95. He was married to Mrs Concepción Barrios.

In 1856, at the age of 8, Arturo joined the Escuela Superior de Instrucción Primaria of Santiago, run by José Bernardo Suárez on San Diego Street. It was known as "the school with the bell". He left his school with the following record: "Application, excellent; ability, good; conduct, good; attendance, constant; character, superb".

In August 1858, when he was 10 years old, he joined the Naval Academy together with his cousin by marriage, Luis Uribe. In 1860, he obtained the Rank of Midshipman Candidate without examination, in 1864, the Rank of Examined Midshipman. In 1865, at age 17, he experienced for the first time the tensions of naval combat at the height of the war of Chile and Peru against Spain (1865–1866). On November 26th that same year, he participated as part of the crew of the Esmeralda in the capture of the Spanish schooner Covadonga in Papudo. The Chilean ship opened fire, surprised the enemy and achieved their immediate surrender. This offensive was rewarded with Prat's promotion to Second Lieutenant. With this rank, he experienced his second combat in Abtao on February 7th, 1866, at the age of 18, on board the Covadonga schooner, where he was involved in a dangerous exchange of gunfire between the warring ships. None of the ships involved suffered serious damage.

In 1869, when he was 21 years old, Arturo Prat was promoted to First Lieutenant. At that age, he already had naval experience and had travelled to different points of the South Pacific (Juan Fernández, Peru, Magallanes, etc.).

Arturo Prat had humanist concerns and therefore wished to study and deepen his knowledge of intellectual aspects. So in 1870, he began his studies of the humanities (our current high school) at Liceo de Valparaíso and Instituto Nacional. A year later, in 1871, he obtained his Bachelor's degree in philosophy and the humanities at the age of 23, which would be indispensable in fulfilling his next dream: to study law. That same year, he was "Paymaster Officer"[1] of the Esmeralda corvette, an administrative and bureaucratic position that required him to handle files, reports, documents, etc. He would also hold several positions at the Naval Academy as Professor, Assistant Director and Provisional Director. As a teacher, he was in charge of the subjects 'Naval Ordinance', 'Law', 'Naval Tactic', 'Marine Maneuvers', 'Cosmography' and 'Elements of Naval Construction'.

In 1872 he was designated Provisional Director of the Naval Academy. That same year, he started his legal studies in order to graduate as a lawyer.

In 1873 he was promoted to "graduate" Lieutenant Commander. In February, his father Agustín Prat died in Quillota, and on May 5th that same year, he married Carmela Carvajal. He met this lady, whom he would love passionately and with extreme gentleness, because after becoming an orphan when she was a child, she

[1]Officer in charge of administrative affairs on a ship.

remained under the care of her older brother José Jesús Carvajal, who married Concepción Chacón, who in turn was the sister of Arturo Prat's mother. Thanks to the relationship between the two families, and especially because Arturo attended the social gatherings of the Chacón family, which were numerous, merry and informal, the two youngsters would come into contact. People say it was an early, exclusive and excluding love affair.

Their first daughter, Carmela de la Concepción, was born on March 5th, 1874. However, she died prematurely on December 5th that same year. Starting on the year of his marriage and for years to come, Arturo would have to accomplish several naval missions that would continuously separate him from his wife, and therefore, from the birth and death of his first daughter, as well as many family events. In his letters, his suffering for being constantly apart from his loved ones can be seen with crystal clear clarity.

On May 24th, 1875, he courageously helped save the Esmeralda corvette and its commander Luis Alfredo Lynch during a dangerous storm in Valparaiso. Prat was in bed and had a fever, and was therefore on leave. That same year, he was designated Provisional Director of the Naval Academy once again.

In 1876, at age 28, he was promoted to graduate Frigate Captain. On July 31st, he took his final exam in order to be able to practice law. He became the first lawyer in the Chilean Navy. In September that same year, he experienced great joy: his second daughter, Blanca Estela, was born. He would be able to enjoy her for 2 years.

We know that in 1878 he had a private attorney's bureau at N°15 of the Plazuela de Justicia in Valparaiso. He paid 25 pesos a month for rent and 50 pesos a year for his professional license. That same year, on November 5th, he was called by Chancellor Alejandro Fierro to serve as a secret agent on a special mission in Uruguay and Argentina in order to closely explore the military capacity of the latter due to the possibility of a future conflict concerning border issues in Patagonia. The instructions of Minister Fierro were to closely observe every detail of the number, type, artillery and crew of Argentinean war ships, etc. While on this mission, his third child Arturo Héctor was born on December 29th.

In February 1879, he returned from his mission in Uruguay and Argentina, and the armed conflict between Chile and Peru-Bolivia had already started. On March 29th, he embarked towards Antofagasta as the secretary of Minister Rafael Sotomayor. In May, he was ordered to block the port of Iquique aboard the Esmeralda corvette. On May 21st, at the age of 31, he confronted the Huáscar monitor from Peru, commanded by Miguel Grau, in front of the coast of Iquique. The Peruvian ship was an armored iron-plated warship with canons on a 300-pound rotating Coles turret, far superior to the Chilean wooden ship in movement and resistance.

Finally, Arturo Prat died while boarding the enemy ship when it rammed for the first time into one side of the Chilean ship. Prat jumped and boarded the ship accompanied by only two crewmen because the rest could not hear his command due to the noise of the rifle, machine gun and cannon shots from both ships. The

Esmeralda was rammed two more times, and for this reason, it ended up sinking at 12:10 h after a tenacious resistance.[2]

3 Arturo Prat as an Authentic Service Leader

To lead is to guide, to show others the way. But one can lead in many ways. Therefore, it must be done in the most convenient manner for the person's integral development. Currently, authentic leadership is in crisis. Society demands that young people are educated in their ability to lead, that is, in the ability to have a serious leadership, which entails responsibility, generosity and skill to perform a particular role. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to present not just any leadership model, as this model is not recognized simply by a mobilization of the masses, which can also be a characteristic of 'autocratic leadership', limited to ordering and demanding obedience, and omitting consultation with others. It is also not recognized merely as 'democratic leadership', which seeks the involvement of the members of a group, understanding that such involvement is a means and not an end. Therefore, what we mostly need today is to emphasize moral leadership, a leadership that serves as a model for others.

The quality of the goal sought by the leader is fundamental. If it is superficial and only seeks to manipulate, then it will lead everyone who follows to an abyss. But if the goal is transcendental, of true authentic service, and recognizes human dignity in all its dimensions, demanding sacrifice, genuine heroism, courage and prudence, then we are faced with a positive, liberating and transforming leadership.

In order to educate authentic models of leadership, we need to approach the heroes that have contributed with their actions, the living examples of virtues and leadership qualities, with forethought and skill.[3] "A hero is someone who is willing to sacrifice his own needs on behalf of others, like a shepherd who will sacrifice to protect and serve his flock" (Vogler 2002, p. 65). According to the Vox Greek-Spanish dictionary (1991), in ancient Greek, 'héroe' (hero) means "sublime, noble, generous of birth, feelings, actions, etc." The leaders of today need the wisdom of those who already passed through life and devoted themselves with nobleness, generosity and sacrifice. They left a legacy and transformed other lives. This idea is what we intend to present in Fig. 1.

It is clear that leaders are not born, but made. Their social and family environment influences them. It is true that their parents provide them with some genetic

[2]For more details on this battle, see Sect. 7.

[3]The conference that appears in the archives of the Academia Uruguaya de Historia Marítima y Fluvial (Uruguayan Academy of Maritime and Fluvial History), given by Herrera (2008) and entitled "Visión valórica de la vida de don Agustín Arturo Prat Chacón" (Value Vision of the Life of Agustín Arturo Prat Chacón), provides an interesting relationship between aspects of the life and writings of our hero and the theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) and cardinal virtues (fortitude, justice, temperance and prudence).

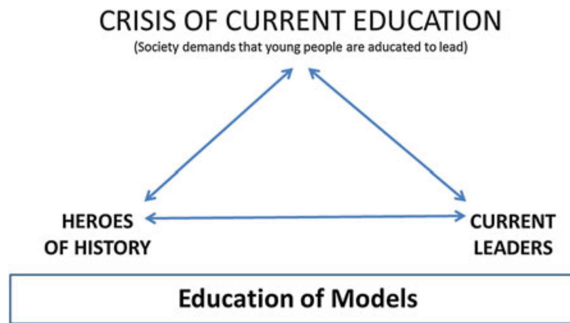

Fig. 1 Crisis of current education and education of models (Gorrochotegui 2015)

inheritance in their temperament, but they also specifically provide them with their own way of being and acting, and even of thinking. They provide guidance, instructions and ideas. They teach them how they should eat and dress, how to speak, how to act. They constantly correct them. They give them their first piece of advice. They read to them out loud for the first time. They recommend the first books. They somehow "mark" them forever.

Maybe this is not the case for all the boys and girls who become leaders at some point. Some may have lost their parents at an early age or simply had absent parents and were educated by a mentor inside or outside the family. But they were equally marked. From each other, their parents and tutors, they acquired the seed for their future qualities, qualities that, in time, would be the sum of their natural temperaments and the habits that they had to develop as part of their educational process. In the end, authentic leaders have their own personal style that is the result of that mixture: what they received from their closest environment and their own way of being and living.

We can say that Arturo Prat received from his closest environment what Vial (1995, pp. 23–33) expresses in his biography: "Chilean Prats were obstinate. Stubborn". Or "The Chacóns provide him with political and ideological passion, equanimity and human goodness". Or "Arturo Prat was the most Chacón of the Chacóns: a family of generous and happy friendship, of permanent closeness". Or finally: "From his family of origin, the Prats, the Chacóns, the Briones, the Sanhueza Palafox and the Barrils, the Carvajals, would come his religiousness, calmness, tenacity, moderation, sobriety, enthusiasm for work and sense of duty…".

Similarly, on May 14th, 1880, Carmela Carvajal wrote a long letter to Uncle Jacinto Chacón, where she expressly declared her personal biographical vision of her deceased husband. There, she provided the following details regarding Arturo Prat's nature when he was a child:

> He stood out for his immense affection for his mother. Many times, in order to calm him and his siblings, she would tell them that she loved the most whoever stayed with her the longest, and she was sure that Arturo would stop playing and spend long hours with her in order to be his mother's favorite (Iturriaga 2011, p. 222).

Although this is a family scene, filled with the sweetest description, befitting a woman, it shows that seed that was already planted in the future leader: his natural tendency towards being there for others.

These qualities give Prat his authenticity, as he always puts them into practice. Precisely, an authentic leader is one that is genuine, confident, reliable, real and true, one who is consistent with what their family contributed, shows it and puts it into practice. The authentic leader accepts their genetic makeup and life experience, and is open to development and change. Therefore, they have self-awareness and exhibit self-regulated positive behavior that stimulates self-development. This leadership is thus confident, inspiring, optimist, strong, transparent, moral, future-oriented and focused on the promotion and development of the collaborators so they can be leaders themselves (Luthans and Avolio 2003). Personalities as renowned as Gandhi and Nelson Mandela have stood out in these aspects.

Now, let us talk about 'service', a term that, in my opinion, accompanies authentic leadership. A service is an action that is provided as an asset to another person or that is given as an asset for a cause. Arturo Prat served his homeland, his men, his institution and his family. And remembering a quality that is ancient but also new seems to be enriching in a century like this, where serving is one of the most expected assets or qualities. Dare I say that it is one of the most humanly needed and expected qualities. We live in a society where services make the difference.

Today, there is much talk about serving. But in reality, the dominant culture displays an appearance of service. Many times, we are supposedly served, but as the effect of an action that is perfectly planned to attract clients or consumers. There is even so much desire to reach high positions out of vain glory or vanity that many times an attitude of careerism is installed, disguised as service, filled with personal interests that have nothing to do with authentic service. It is not a coincidence. "The predominant culture is concerned with the exterior, the immediate, the visible, the fast, the superficial and the provisional. What is real yields to appearance" (Francisco 2013, No. 62). In these current circumstances, concrete examples of authentic service are needed.

Finally, we need to ask one question: who provides an 'authentic service'? And the answer comes soon enough: each person separately and in their maximum singularity. "Service not only has to do with performing a task, but also influences how we treat and relate to others…. It is not possible to separate service from the person who provides it, as this person, when providing a service, exhibits different character features and style" (Lescano 2012, p. 41).

Service, devoting oneself to another, offering an asset, stamps the way of being of an authentic leader. What provides a genuine seal to each leader is their constant dedication on behalf of others and the common good. One cannot be truly authentic if he/she does not serve. Mother Theresa of Calcutta used to say: "One who does not live to serve, does not serve to live". This is the foundation for someone who has to experience several difficult circumstances throughout their life, and also the foundation for facing an exceedingly extreme circumstance like the one that Prat defied at the end of his life, when he died heroically in the Battle of Iquique on May 21st, 1879.

4 'Magnanimous Valor' in the Life of Arturo Prat

We have seen the life of Prat and we have studied his authentic service leadership. Let us now observe how this leader developed the condition that made him so famous: 'magnanimous valor'. To do so, we will focus on several events before his death that shed light on the existence of this quality, at least initially. This condition develops only in the unfolding of a life knitted together by several incidents. Then, we will highlight the way in which magnanimous valor motivated Prat's final dedication to his homeland. Finally, we will provide a summary of the moments in which Prat showed this quality throughout his life, some questions to reflect on and some suggestions for improvement.

In 1856, as was already mentioned, Arturo Prat entered at the age of eight the Escuela Superior de Instrucción Primaria of Santiago, better known among the neighbors as the "school with the bell". It was located on the third block of San Diego Street, where the National Music Conservatory had operated before. The building was crowned with a tower where a bell rang, and its ringing could be heard from many blocks away. He studied there for only two years, until 1858.

There is a relevant event that occurred in this school and accounts for Arturo Prat's premature valor and courage. One day, he was threatened by some older students armed with wooden swords. Prat, in retaliation and looking for a more appropriate time, borrowed from a neighboring storekeeper a knife to cut or split blocks of sugar. When he met the boys, he flourished the weapon amid the rows of his contenders, who immediately surrendered their swords accusing Prat of "having brought a knife from home to hit us".... Prat defended himself saying: "It was to intimidate them". The director wrote down the final sentence for everyone: "punishment for the assailants for their cowardice, and punishment for the assaulted for his valor" (Fuenzalida 1974; Vial 1995).

Twenty-three years later, the term valor would be expressed again in writing by Rear Admiral Miguel Grau, who sent a letter to Prat's widow:[4]

> I have a sacred duty that authorizes me to write to you, despite knowing that this letter will deepen your profound pain, by reminding you of recent battles. During the naval combat that took place in the waters of Iquique, between the Chilean and Peruvian ships on the 21st day of the last month, your worthy and valiant husband, Captain Mr Arturo Prat, Commander of the *Esmeralda*, was, as you would not ignore any longer, victim of his reckless valor in defense and glory of his country's flag.[5] While sincerely deploring this unfortunate event and sharing your sorrow, I comply with the sad duty of sending you some

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[4]I would like to highlight that the text written by Grau has a very high human value because it displays a deep attitude of respect and consideration, as well as the most elevated gesture of gentlemanliness from a military enemy towards his adversary. It even indicates a quality that is proper of a hero because, as expressed by Johnson (2010, p. 26): "a true hero always finishes the battle thinking of the dead, even if they are the defeated enemy".

[5]For the reader who is not aware of the outcome of Arturo Prat's death, we recommend reading Sect. 7, which includes some details of the Naval Battle of Iquique where he played the lead on May 21st, 1879.

> of his belongings, invaluable to you, which I list at the end of this letter. Undoubtedly, they will serve small consolation in the middle of your misfortune, and I have hurried in remitting them to you (Iturriaga 2011, p. 195).

Arturo Prat has been described as a person with valor twice in writing: once during his childhood and once at the end of his life. The word 'arrojo' (valor, fearlessness) started to be used in the Spanish language around the mid-17th century. It is a derivative of the word 'arrojar' (to throw), which has been used since the 13th century and is in turn a derivative of the Vulgar Latin word 'rotulare', which means to roll, to make something roll or to throw something that rolls (Breve Diccionario Etimológico de la Lengua Castellana 1996). In our Diccionario de la Lengua Española (Dictionary of the Spanish Language 2014), we understand someone with 'arrojo' as a person with boldness and intrepidness. In turn, boldness is audacity and determination. And intrepidness is having courage in danger. The synonyms of 'arrojo' are: 'audacia' (audacity, understood as boldness), 'coraje' (courage, understood as impetuous determination and spirited effort), 'denuedo' (boldness, understood as spirit, effort, intrepidness) and 'valentía' (courage, understood as a vigorous zealous action that seems to exceed the force of nature).

In the Spanish usage dictionary by María Moliner (2007), it says that 'arrojo' is a quality proper of someone who does not stop in the face of danger. It can also be called audacity, intrepidness, determination and courage.

From the aforementioned, we can understand that being 'arrojado' (daring) or having 'arrojo' (valor, fearlessness) is a clear personal disposition to initiate a courageous action, closer to courage, as it requires spirit and especially being determined. 'Coraje' (courage), in turn, is defined as a self-sacrifice that intends to reach a fair and sensible goal. In this concept, the relationship between the self-sacrifice and the nobility of the purposes to be achieved is vital (Harvard 2007). 'Coraje' (courage) and 'arrojo' (valor) are therefore closely related. The latter requires the former.

The other term that appears several times in this analysis is 'atrevimiento' (audacity), a quality proper of someone who is bold and daring. Indeed, in Breve Diccionario Etimológico de la Lengua Castellana (Brief Etymological Dictionary of the Spanish Language 1996), it is said that 'atreverse' (to dare) means to "feel capable of doing something that might seem risky". This word comes from the ancient 'treverse', which means "to trust in something", "to dare". This term helps confirm that 'arrojo' is the spirit that initiates, that triggers a set of actions of high value or risk.

In the previous analysis, we can observe two dispositions in someone with 'arrojo': the ability to undertake brave and risky actions, but with a previous resolution. In fact, resolution always comes first, as whoever dares to initiate an arduous action must have previous motivations to do so. Therefore, in 'arrojo' there is not always a hasty attitude, but rather a premeditated and resolved manner to act in accordance with some feelings or values. It is possible for it to be reckless when the person does not have much experience or training. In Prat's case, this can be observed when he was only an eight-year-old boy and borrowed a knife in order to try to intimidate some older kids that were armed with wooden swords. In the mind

of that child, intimidation was merely a response to a clear sense of self-preservation. This is excusable in the life of a child. Therefore, we can speak of 'child and youth valor'. In fact, the young have a tendency towards valor in their lives. They need adventure and therefore valor to face this adventure. But on the other hand, not every child naturally has valor. This quality can be more natural in some children than others. There is no doubt that as a child, Arturo Prat showed a very marked tendency to react almost intuitively when faced with injustice or something that required courage and effort. Prat configured this seed of valor throughout his personal life; especially during the training he would receive in future experiences.

When someone is trained over time and acquires experience and maturity, because they have internalized certain convictions and made them their own, these qualities can provide them with the motivation to act in accordance with these convictions, moving them towards brave and risky actions. Many times, these actions, seen from outside, are not understood and tend to be judged as reckless or hasty.

Based on the aforementioned, we can say that in other actions of his life, Arturo Prat showed a valor that we could describe as magnanimous. This is how authentic leaders, who are also almost always valued as heroes, have something that defines them in their essence: their magnanimity.

On May 24th, 1875, something occurred that is only natural in the case of someone with that quality. There was a dangerous storm on the coast of Valparaiso. The *Valdivia* broke its moorings and crashed into the *Esmeralda*, which was tied with chains to a buoy in the western end of the port. The corvette also broke loose from its moorings and collided with the *Maipo*. Soon the *Esmeralda* would be wrecked. Lynch and Prat, first and second commanders respectively, arrived at the beach. They were both on leave, but the latter, our hero, was suffering from a high fever. Lynch managed to arrive with much difficulty after negotiating for a long time with the boat that took him. When he reached the corvette, someone threw him a rope and he was hoisted to the deck. Then, a struggle began inside the ship in order to save it. Prat also had to tenaciously negotiate with the pilots of a boat, and once he was on it, the surge prevented him from reaching the ship; however, he jumped into the sea and swam, reaching the deck with the help of a rope, just like his commander. Once he was on the ship, he tied himself to a mast by the waist and directed the rescue maneuver in this manner. He arrived just as exhaustion was starting to overcome Lynch. The corvette was saved. And later, Lynch would remember Arturo Prat's immutable serenity before danger (Vial 1995).

Tomás de Aquino (2001), in his Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, in Book IV, Lesson VIII, No. 500, where he explains 'Magnanimity', says that a man with this quality is worthy of the greatest things, of which he deems himself worthy. He is known as a person with a great spirit or great soul, generous in any definition, and therefore, "if the danger is great, the person with a great spirit will want to provide the means to protect the good that is being threatened" (Marín-Porgueres 2007, p. 13). And indeed, the magnanimous person does not complain and has a strong attitude of hope, trust and the perfect calmness of a brave heart (Pieper 2001).

Nonetheless, magnanimity requires having an elevated perspective. Aspiring to great things is only possible in someone who is aware of the dignity and nobility of that to which he aspires. For this reason, magnanimity is a virtue that is proper of an authentic service leader. Someone who is magnanimous acts focused on clear and deep convictions. They are far-sighted because they do not let themselves be swept up by petty or small things, which would cause them to be pusillanimous. They have strength, as they must resist an adverse environment and undertake brave actions.

Another act of magnanimity in Arturo Prat was his decision to pursue a civil career. He became a lawyer when he was 28 years old. He started studying in 1870 and finished in 1876. He was the first lawyer in the Chilean Navy. He made great efforts to obtain his degree. He had to study during the free time that his obligations as a seaman left him. He studied in public libraries, ships' cabins, railway cars, provisional rooms in Santiago (Vial 1995). All of this is corroborated by his wife in a letter to Arturo's uncle, Jacinto Chacón, whom we have mentioned above: "Nobody knows better than you how many difficulties he had to endure in order to fulfill his purpose of becoming a lawyer" (Iturriaga 2011, p. 195).

Arturo Prat was also magnanimous in the way he handled the cases in which he was a defense counsel in war trials, as he displayed a severe objectivity and imperturbable ethical rigor with the deliberate risk of becoming enemies with superiors and important people (Vial 1995).

Subsequently, the biggest example of this virtue, which is also the height of his biography, is the most surprising act of sacrifice ever to be seen in a seaman: his personal immolation during the Battle of Iquique on May 21st, 1879, one month after turning 31 years old. Arturo Prat had already made the premeditated decision to board the enemy ship. When he bade farewell to Admiral Williams, the highest Chilean authority in the Navy at that time, he said firmly: "If the *Huáscar* comes, I will board it" (Vial 1995, p. 181). This was not bluster, but something much more serious and deep.

Boarding the enemy ship was the only feasible way out given the differences in war possibilities and technological development of the two crafts. It was like David facing Goliath, and not precisely due to size, but because one ship (the enemy ship) was steel-plated, much faster (it could reach 11 knots) and had two efficient 300-pound cannons in a rotating Coles turret, in addition to a lethal *Gatling* machine gun; and the other (the one commanded by Prat) was a broken-down wooden machine,[6] slow (7 knots), with cannons of 32 and 40 lb respectively and with many problems in its boilers. The ram of the former would sink the latter, and its giant cannons would cause a painful bloodbath on board (Tromben 2011).

Lieutenant Luis Uribe Orrego, a survivor of the battle, wrote on his official report, dated May 29th, 1879, the words that Prat, as a harangue before the fatal outcome, offered to his men as motivation. He started with the following: "Lads, the battle will be unfair" (Robles 2011, p. 103). Prat knew they were inferior. He had

[6]Mellafe (2011) claims that by 1879, the *Esmeralda* was already a very old ship, "overworked", full of imperfections and with little military value.

pondered much about the situation. Here we can see another face of true magnanimity: only the humble can be magnanimous. Only the humble who accepts reality as it is, knows that their condition is limited. And that is why they discover their greatness, and even their dependence on God (Marín-Porgueres 2007). This is where their position lies faced with something big and difficult. Someone with magnanimity knows what they are facing and is therefore not presumptuous or arrogant.

However, there are also other considerations: the sacrifice during the boarding was the only way to execute with honor something that exceeded the situation. In Prat's case when boarding the enemy ship, there is a sublime act. He knew he had to be an example for his subordinates. He knew that his ship would most likely sink and consequently, the only thing he could do besides resisting was to board the enemy ship in order to try to destabilize the enemy. Ultimately, he knew that this was the most responsible action he could carry out in order to honor the interests of his homeland in that conflict. Pieper (2001) tells us that magnanimity is precisely "the commitment imposed by the spirit of tending towards the sublime" (p. 277). His vision of the common good, of the interest of an entire nation, was above his own personal life.

Finally, the magnanimous valor of a leader can mobilize their collaborators to do things that exceed them. In the harangue addressed to his men, which we started to quote above, Prat finished with the following: "Never has our flag been hauled down before the enemy and I hope this will not be the occasion to do so. As long as I live, that flag will flutter in its place, and I assure you that if I die, my officers will know how to fulfill their duty" (Robles 2011, p. 103). As is well known, the newspapers reported the final chapter of the sinking of the *Esmeralda*: "the Chilean flag was the last to sink into the sea" (Vial 1995, p. 222). And in the official report written the same day as the offensive by Miguel Grau, commander of the *Huáscar* monitor, he expressed with eloquence: "the battle had ended after 3 h. 40 m. of tenacious resistance by the enemy" (Robles 2011, p. 84). Real leaders are "people who help us overcome the limitations of our own individual laziness and selfishness and weakness and fear and get us to do better, harder things than we can get ourselves to do on our own" (Wallace, as quoted in Carlin 2013, p. 183). This is what happened on that day. His men acted motivated by those words and afterwards also by the sacrifice of their leader. And they were able to achieve something that exceeded them: never to surrender and do their country proud.

Figure 2 presents a diagram of the times in which Arturo Prat showed his magnanimous valor.

Our society needs this model archetype. It requires people with high aspirations. It requires people with the spirit to devote themselves to elevated values and that enable the best conditions for the full development of the entire human being, and of all human beings. We need to aspire to great endeavors because that makes us better human beings. It allows us to transcend ourselves and, consequently, to achieve more joy in the midst of the difficulties of our era. We are beings that need to fill our lives with valuable things. With his example, Arturo Prat has left us the possibility to rise above ourselves, to generously devote ourselves to a cause and,

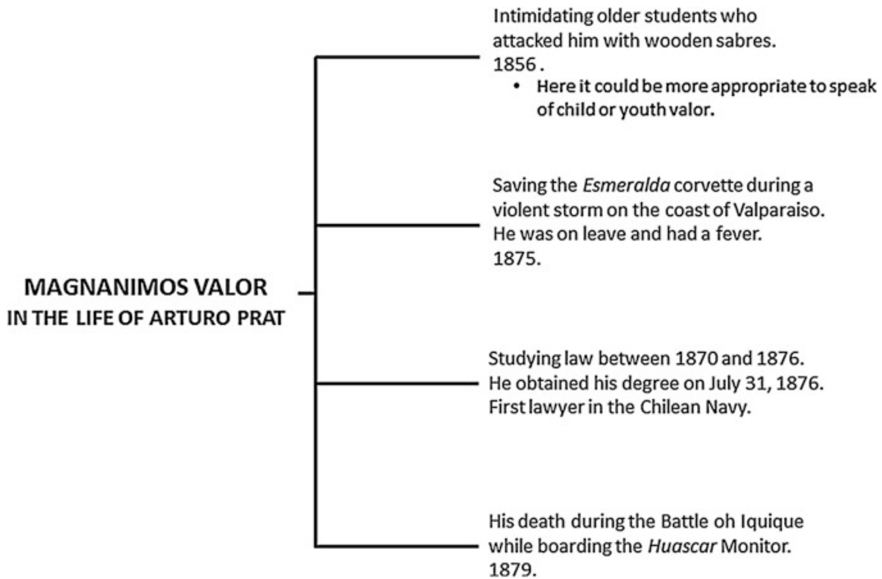

Fig. 2 Times in the life of arturo Prat when he showed his magnanimous valor (Gorrochotegui 2015)

consequently, to aim at significant values that build and promote human dignity and common good.

5 Arturo Prat: An Orderly Life Filled with Ideals as an Inspiring Model: Discussion and Conclusion

"Whether we like it or not, the heroic soldier or seaman—says Paul Johnson—will always attract the admiration of people, maybe more than any other type of great man" (Johnson 2010, p. 130). The great wars among nations or groups of nations, the violent crises within them, are full of heroic actions, remarkable sacrifices, unimaginable efforts and noble attitudes, generally undertaken by military officials.

Authentic heroism and leadership, more than a single action, are the sum of many intertwined actions, displayed in the course of an existence. These actions prepare for something superior. In short, they are actions with a purpose, which allows us to think that the personality of a hero and leader is always imbued with an ethical perspective.

> Humanity has always granted the title of heroism not to vulgar combat, but to an intimate ethical condition, which is what places one man above his peers: a hero is one who endures when others yield; who believes when others doubt; who rebels against routine and conformism; one who remains pure when others prostitute themselves (Mijares 1998, p. 27).

Sometimes, people can feel that they are going against the tide; against what most people consider to be right when it actually is not. But the passage of time ends up siding with those who work and interact with others with honest intentions, without seeking personal gain. There is no doubt that Arturo Prat is venerated by many Chileans because he acted with this kind of heroism.

> The man who does not seek glory, wealth or power; who lives a modest and worthy life, dedicated to his family and his work; who makes an invariable rule of loving his homeland and fulfilling his duty; and who willfully sacrifices his life for this rule; that man—Arturo Prat—naturally incites the veneration of the humble […] The people instinctively dismiss externalities—domination, money, human triumph, fame—and go to the very core of things in order to irremediably discern who deserve to be proposed as ethical examples for all generations (Vial 1995, p. 265).

Arturo Prat is an example and model of virtue for Chile and the rest of the nations in the world. He belonged to a modest, large and honest family. He was educated with specific values, loaded with humanism and a strong and inalterable sense of duty, responsibility and abundant generosity. He developed a career inside a military institution, and through his own efforts, he forged his prestige and achieved the ranks and levels permitted by his age and his circumstances.

Likewise, with boldness and while fulfilling his duties with the navy, he studied law, but not without having to make sacrifices. He went out of his way for his wife and children: he treated them in the best possible way. When he was with his family, he spent a lot of quality time with them. He kept in touch with his wife and was honest with her in the letters he wrote to her during his tedious days on the missions he had to carry out away from his family. He filled his life with meaning through the responsibilities he carried out and the tasks he accomplished with professionalism. Finally, he gave his life for his homeland. And beyond the heroic deed he performed, "those who have studied the life of Arturo Prat conclude unanimously and without any controversy that this deed was the culmination of a life at the service of the highest religious, social and family values" (Armada de Chile 2014, p. 11).

Few nations in the world have such a close and accessible example of an orderly life filled with ideals. Personal orderliness and getting one's ideas and convictions in order, self-development and self-training, true friendship, authentic love for one's homeland and family, and the attempt to fulfill one's duties no matter what it takes are all qualities that are very well illustrated in the way in which Arturo Prat lived and devoted himself to others. In order to build one's character and way of being, we need a person who has many good qualities and therefore acts as a role model. We identify ourselves with that person and as a result, we are able to motivate, inspire, transcend and develop ourselves.

6 Military Officials with Magnanimous Valor: Practical Implications

Prat's example continues to penetrate military life 137 years after the incidents that took place during that epic achievement known as 'the Naval Battle of Iquique'. His publicly recognized image has never lost its natural connotation among the men and women who pursue a military career. And precisely along this path of military training, his heroism is, has been and will continue to be a permanent model of generous and genuine leadership as he did not hesitate to give his life for his homeland.

One might think, as some radio commentators have alleged, that Prat's valor, when he gave his life during this naval battle, was a "suicidal action". But nothing could be further from the truth. Our hero's valor was magnanimous, an action of true courage. Prat acted in a premeditated and deliberate manner. He knew that the only way to achieve a victory was to board the enemy ship in order to control it from the deck.

There is no doubt that courage is one of the most valued virtues in a member of the armed forces. But this courage must be illuminated, nurtured and protected by a trait that can give it strength, direction and meaning. We believe that the magnanimous valor Arturo Prat displayed provides some practical suggestions for military leaders.

Determination. Experiencing magnanimous valor contributes to being a determined, enterprising soldier who acts in a definite, conclusive and categorical manner, someone who decisively takes action, without looking back. Determination, in turn, can help defeat panic, hesitation and fear.

Caution. Even if the time is limited, magnanimous valor allows the decision that a military official will make in an extreme situation to be previously deliberated, known, well-thought. Caution and prudence require previous thought, study, inquiring into the possible outcomes for diverse situations. The valiant action of a soldier is not superficial, emotional or institutive. It requires good previous judgment.

Generosity. The military official with magnanimous valor is extremely generous because they devote or dedicate themselves entirely to the cause. They have a great capacity for self-sacrifice.

Acting according to higher convictions. The soldier with this quality needs to be far-sighted. They aspire to great things because they are aware of the worthiness and nobleness of their actions. The goal of their action is worthy of being achieved because it is deeply human, just and honorable. They know that they are worthy of great actions because they are aware that they can and want to do it. They have, we might say, a spirit that overcomes them, that is above them. A spirit that requires them to provide the means to protect the asset that is under attack or being threatened by the enemy with fortitude and intelligence. This gives them the ability to sacrifice themselves for something that is above individual good. It helps them forget about themselves and, as a result, leads them to transcend and devote themselves to a cause that is greater than them: their homeland, their family, the institution to which they belong, etc. It pushes them out of their comfort zone.

Confidence. Acting with magnanimous valor increases, on the one hand, self-confidence, and, on the other hand, it creates the confidence that the value or objective for which they are acting has an immense, immeasurable value for which it is worth giving up everything. This enables them to maintain the hope that the decision they make is appropriate. In turn, this hope will provide them with a serene and calm state of mind. The person who trusts in their goals because they are sure they are the right ones, even if they require sacrifices, is usually calm and transmits serenity to those who follow them.

Humility. The soldier with magnanimous valor knows and accepts with dignity that they might die performing their generous action in an extreme situation. And this requires humility. Only a humble soldier can be magnanimous, as only the humble, one who accepts reality as it is, knows that their condition is limited. And for this reason, they discover their greatness, and even their dependence—if they have faith—on God. In an extreme situation, one must have the humility of knowing that things could go wrong. Not all variables can be controlled. A humble person is calm because they recognize that they do not know and cannot do everything. And this also gives them serenity. They only know that they act from conviction and have the hope that everything will work out in the best possible way. They are convinced that what they do is done in the best possible manner.

7 Brief Description of the Naval Battle of Iquique: May 21st, 1879

The following is a concise account of the Naval Battle of Iquique so that the reader gets an overview of what Arturo Prat experienced. For this brief description, we will rely on the works of Bravo (2012), Mellafe (2011), Robles (2011), Tromben (2011) and Vial (1995).

Prat returned from Uruguay in February 1879, where he had been carrying out an important military mission since November of the previous year. He returned to Chile right after the conflict with Bolivia and Peru had started. This situation found him without a fixed position in what would be his first line of action. He was sent to be an assistant of the Intendant of Valparaiso and General Commander of the Navy, Eulogio Altamirano.

Faced with this situation, he experienced a terrible internal distress for not being able to be with his comrades-in-arms in the areas where the new war emergency had arisen. He even reached the point of not wanting to wander the streets of Valparaiso in uniform, as his friend Darío Risopatrón would recount: “I have decided to leave the uniform and dress as a civilian. I am ashamed to stay here while my comrades go to war”.

This uncomfortable situation would continue for a month and a half, a time during which he would have to settle for being a spectator of the way in which the events unfolded.

On March 29th, he was finally asked to embark as the secretary of Minister Rafael Sotomayor and head to the northern coast, more specifically to Antofagasta. Although this encouraged him, his two small children were sick. He set sail with his heart divided.

The Admiral of the Chilean Navy Juan Williams instructed Prat and Condell to block Iquique. In May, the Chilean fleet appeared before the Peruvian port of Iquique. Prat was in charge of notifying the blockade. Once again, he displayed his calm yet firm character when he set foot on Peruvian land and advanced by himself, without an escort, until he handed the corresponding document to the competent enemy authority.

The morning of May 21st, 1879 arrived. At the cove of Iquique were the *Esmeralda* corvette commanded by Prat and the *Covadonga* schooner commanded by Condell, who was Prat's subordinate for this military mission. "Each to his duty", exclaimed Prat from his ship. Condell replied: "All right", a reply that received "two hurrahs and cheers for Chile" from the crew of the *Covadonga*, as he wrote in his journal. "How many memories would be brought to my mind—a moved Condell would recall years later—by the eternal greeting that from the post in our ships we exchanged with Captain Prat! How those words, which were an order and a farewell, echo in my heart: Each to his duty".

At the very moment of Prat's greeting, a 300-pound bullet shot by the Peruvian monitor *Huáscar*—the first of the battle—fell between the *Esmeralda* and the *Covadonga*.

The Battle of Iquique took place between the *Esmeralda* corvette and the *Covadonga* schooner from Chile and the *Huáscar* monitor and the *Independencia* frigate from Peru. In a personal maneuver, Condell decided to move away from the site with the *Covadonga*, more exactly to the south of the port of Iquique, and force the *Independencia* to chase him in shallow waters. This allowed him to finish the latter, which ran aground and was completely lost. After this maneuver, Condell was able to reach a safe port and score a naval victory.[7]

Prat, on his part, was left in front of the port of Iquique and spent his final hours in the perfect peace of mind that had always accompanied him. He had time to tell Midshipman Zegers: "When you see my Carmela, tell her that my last memories, my last vows are for her and my little children…. Zegers, keep my commission in mind".

The commander of the *Huáscar* monitor—an iron riveted ship—decided to attack the *Esmeralda* corvette, completely made of wood,[8] with its strong ram. The

[7]Although this naval battle started among these four ships, it was divided into two by Condell's action. The first is the one we briefly describe here, called "Naval Battle of Iquique", between the *Huáscar* and the *Esmeralda*. The second is called "Naval Battle of Punta Gruesa", between the *Covadonga* and the *Independencia*.

[8]Monitors are a type of armoured ship that owe their name to the ship Monitor (1862), designed by the Swedish engineer Johann Ericcson for the US Navy during the Civil War (1861–1865). A monitor combines the characteristics of cheap and quick construction with the power of strong artillery from one or two turrets (Castagneto and Lascano 2009).

Huáscar did so three times until it finally managed to sink its opponent. But not only did it manage to sink it, but it also caused a horrible bloodshed among the Chilean seamen thanks to its two efficient 300-pound cannons in a rotating turret and a lethal *Gatling* machine gun, which shot its bullets incessantly when the ships came closer. When the *Huáscar* came closer in order to ram the *Esmeralda*, the corvette responded with abundant gunfire from its foretops[9] and its rifles, as well as its cannons of 32 and 40 lb respectively, which could not even dent the strong armor-plating of the *Huáscar*. In spite of all this, the Chilean crew remained standing and in obstinate resistance until their ship disappeared into the sea.

Regarding the aforementioned rams, the first resulted in Prat's death. The war briefings, as well as the testimonies of those who survived, mention that the ships were briefly at standstill, the bow[10] of the monitor touching the quarter deck[11] of the *Esmeralda* corvette in an angle of approximately 40°. At that very moment, Arturo Prat yelled: "Stand by for boarding, boys!" and jumped without hesitation onto the deck of the *Huáscar* through the forecastle that was the upper deck located on the ship's bow. The cannons of the *Huáscar*, as already mentioned, were sweeping the *Esmeralda*. The *Huáscar* retreated, taking Prat, Sergeant Aldea and another sailor with it.

The hero's boarding was almost single-handed because nobody else was able to hear him due to the noise of the collision and the fire. In addition, the boarding call of the bugler Gaspar Cabrales was not made because the child, who was barely 13 years old, was dead: a grenade from the *Huáscar* had ripped off his head.[12]

The deck of the *Huáscar* was empty, and access to the turret was closed. The first to fall was Aldea. Arturo Prat continued advancing towards the stern and the tower with his sword drawn and high. The gunshot of an invisible shooter stopped him. He kneeled with his steel still raised. Then a sailor jumped from the tower and shattered his skull at point-blank range with one *Comblain* rifle shot on the forehead; his face remained intact, serene, noble, immobilized for glory.

Lieutenant Ignacio Serrano, very emotionally affected by Prat's death, organized a second boarding of the enemy ship at the moment of the second ram. The division of this boarding brought rifles, sabers and battle-axes; also hooks and ropes in order to tie the ships and prevent them from drifting apart. However, Grau was faster. The *Huáscar* retreated immediately, and only Serrano and a few followers (around twelve to sixteen) were able to board the monitor. They all fell under enemy fire or

[9]Foretop: a board that is placed on the high part of the masts, from bow to stern.

[10]Bow: front part of the ship.

[11]Quarter deck: deck located between the stern and the mizzen mast, which serves as a roof for the high chamber. The superstructure built in this same place is also called this way.

[12]For this event, I have followed the version of Vial (1995), but Rafael Mellafe (2011) provides another version in which the beheaded child is not this one, but another: "the bugler Gaspar Cabrales who was playing charge was shot by enemy fire. His friend, Corporal Crispín Reyes, took the instrument and kept playing until a grenade decapitated him. Then the cabin boy Pantaleón Cortés took the bugle drenched in blood and kept playing without interruption until the ship sank" (p. 35).

jumped into the sea; others, whether injured or not, were apprehended. Just like Prat, Lieutenant Serrano moved towards the rotating Coles turret of the monitor with the purpose of inserting a wedge into its mechanism and immobilizing it. But before he was able to reach it, a shot to his stomach stopped him. He was picked up almost lifeless by sailors of the *Huáscar*, who took him inside, as the wound was fatal.

The *Esmeralda* corvette leaned to starboard[13] due to the second and third ram of the *Huáscar*, which had finished damaging it, and started sinking by the bow. People ran towards the stern,[14] waiting for the right conditions and moment to abandon the ship. Almost all of them were naked in order to swim better; but some sailors were conversely wearing their mess dress uniforms. Isolated shots and cheers for the Chilean homeland were still coming from the ship.

After that, no part of the hull could be seen, only the masts. Then these softly disappeared: first the foremast, then the mainmast and finally the mizzen mast[15] with the Chilean flag on top. The national tricolor was the last to be seen, briefly, stretched out like a blanket on top of the waves. The Peruvian newspapers reported this final scene: "the Chilean flag was the last to sink into the sea."

The Battle of Iquique had come to an end.

Commander Grau, with a humanitarian attitude, rescued all the survivors who were shipwrecked. Likewise, he gathered Prat's personal belongings, kept them safe and sent them to his wife.

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[13]Starboard: right side of the ship from the perspective of one who is facing the bow.

[14]Stern: rear end of the ship.

[15]The foremast is the mast of intermediate height located between the mainmast and the mizzen mast; it is usually the one closest to the bow. The mainmast is the highest mast and the middle one when there are three. The mizzen mast is the lowest and closest to the stern.

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Author Biography

Alfredo Gorrochotegui was born in Caracas, Venezuela (1965). He has a doctorate in education from Universidad de Navarra (Spain). He is currently Director of the Master's Program in Quality Education Management and professor of the School of Services Administration of Universidad de Los Andes. His books include *El docente líder. Ideas para la auto-mejora continua* (*The Leading Teacher. Ideas for Continuous Self-improvement*) (Argentina) and *Cómo asumir el liderazgo de un centro educativo. Una guía práctica* (*How to Assume the Leadership of an Educational Centre. A Practical Guide*) (Venezuela). He has also published a score of articles in specialized journals.