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Transfer of the Normative Model Into the Military Institutions of the Serbian Armed Forces

Serbian Case

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Research Project „The Image of the Democratic Soldier: Tensions Between the Organisation of Armed Forces and the Principles of Democracy in European Comparison“

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyze how does the normative model of the soldier (described in the first research report) transfers into military institutions of the Serbian Armed Forces (SAF).¹ The first research report identified two strands of political/strategic culture in Serbia *civic-democratic* and *national-liberational*. It was argued that these two discourses are struggling for dominance in an emerging democracy in Serbia. From these two cultural strands are derived two different national identities (modern and postmodern) and consequently two diverging and often opposing ideal-types of the military (table 1).

	Civic-democratic ideal type of armed forces	National-liberational ideal type of armed forces
Size:	Small and light	Large and massive
Functions:	Peacekeeping missions, fighting non military security threats (e.g. terrorism, ecological and industrial disasters etc)	National defence, national liberation
Mode of recruitment:	Professional	Conscript
Loyalty:	Civic community	Ethnic community
Strategic orientation:	Europe and the West (EU and NATO)	Neutrality
Democratic control:	Positive	Negative
Conscientious objection:	Positive	Negative

Table 1 Two ideal-types of armed-forces in Serbia

The analysis of how this normative model is transferred into military institutions will be done through analysis of higher military education and training of soldiers, system of advancement and institutions of conflict settlement in the Serbian military. The documents that will be analyzed are laws, strategic and doctrinal documents, education and training syllabi and curricula and public relations work. The observed period is between 2000 and 2008. This period is chosen because the 2000 marks the beginning of the democratization process which has fundamentally transformed and is transforming Serbian society, its military and overall civil-military relations.

In this paper only the first part of the investigation of transfer of normative model (investigative level 2) will be conducted. It will look at how the *field* of education, training and advancement in the armed forces is structured and how the *capital* in the

1 Filip Ejdus, "The Normative Model of the Ideal Type Soldier in Serbia", Prif Research Paper, I/8, 2007. The research report is available at: http://www.prif.org/fileadmin/downloads/Serbien_8.pdf. Also see: Filip Ejdus "Security, Culture and Identity in Serbia", Western Balkans Security Observer, 7-8, 2008. 38-64. The article is available at: <http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=C2CB4920-F6F8-494D-8B3F-EEF506EC9F14> (accessed Sep. 4, 2008).

field is gained.² The third research report will move the investigative level 2 one step closer to the experience-near aspect of the socialization process through participant's observation, interviews etc. That will be needed in order to understand how the soldier's *habitus* is being constructed by interiorizing the norms and values of the *field* but also and informed by the wider societal environment. When completed, the research should provide new insights about how a military is being integrated in a nascent democratic society. In a comparative light, it shall also provide important empirical material for understanding of why democracies don't fight each other and thus contribute to the overall attempt to help devise a more viable democratic peace theory.

2. Education of Soldiers

System of higher military education is the key mechanism for socialization of future military elites into the military organization. It should also serve as a vehicle that carries wider societal norms into the officer's *habitus* thus contributing to the integration of military organization into the civil society. Finally, apart from socializing, during their education soldier acquire social *capital* that they use later on to advance their positions within the *field*. Herein lies its centrality for research about the civil-military relations in any given country. However, analyzing education of officers in Serbia is a challenging task. Due to the fact that the army reform is still in the making, it is a quickly moving target. As an integral part of a wider defense system, higher military education system in the SAF has been reforming ever since democratic changes in 2000. This reform gained a strong momentum with the independence of Montenegro, the end of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and overtaking the competence of the SAF by the Republic of Serbia in June 2006.³ Since then, the SAF obtained new identity, role, and functions through the new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (November 2006), Strategic Defense Review (June 2006), Training Doctrine (2007), Law on Defense (December 2007) and Law on the Armed Forces of Serbia (December 2007).⁴ In short, since the changes are occurring very swiftly and often profoundly, today's analysis may easily be outdated tomorrow. Another important challenge for military analyst trying to grasp the reform process is a relative lack of transparency of the SAF. Although there has been a significant progress in this regard in the course of the last few years, the SAF is still not transparent enough regarding various issues including its training and education system. For example curricula and syllabi at the Military Academy were until recently classified

2 The concepts of field, habitus and capital are developed in works of Pierre Bourdieu. The field is a setting in which agents and their social positions are located. Habitus is a set of acquired patterns of thought, behavior, and taste. Capital is whatever is taken as significant by social agents. For more see: Bourdieu Pierre, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990). Bourdieu Pierre, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992)

3 Referendum on independence of Montenegro was held on May 21. Declaration of independence was made on June 3 while the National Assembly of Serbia declared translation of competence for the Armed Forces to the Government of Republic of Serbia on June 5 2006.

4 Serbia is still short of some strategic documents among which are the most important ones the National Security Strategy and Strategy of Defense.

while today its very difficult to get them.⁵ This is so because Serbia still lacks a modern Law on Classification of Information. Thus, SAF still classifies documents which are normally public in most modern democracies.⁶

History of Higher Military Education in Serbia

The first Military Academy (MA) started to work back in 1837, just after Serbia had obtained the autonomous status within the Ottoman Empire. However, only six months later it was closed.⁷ A decade later, Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjevic endorsed the "Project for setting up an Artillery School" on 18 March 1850. This is referred to as the institutional beginning of the higher military education in Serbia. Following Serbia's recognition as a sovereign and independent state at the Congress of Berlin (1878) the Artillery School obtained its present name, Military Academy, in 1880. After the Second World War, the Academy was disbanded and replaced by the so called Military Schools in 1945.⁸ The tradition of the Military Academy was however continued by the Infantry Military School renamed to the Military Academy of YPA (1952) and then the Military Academy of the Army (1964). When the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) collapsed in 1992, most of the higher military education resources of the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) were inherited by the Yugoslav Army (YA). For the next 14 years there were basically three institutions in the higher military education system: Military Academy, Military Technical Academy and Military Medical Academy. In 2006, the former two merged into a single Military Academy (MA) of the SAF located in Belgrade Banjica while the Medical Military Academy remained to be a separate school providing post-graduate education for medical military personnel.⁹

Institutional and Normative Setup

The legal framework for the higher military education in Serbia is quite extensive.¹⁰ It is worth mentioning here that this legal framework is not always compatible and is

5 It took the author of this paper more than a year and several rejections on the ground that the documents are classified, to finally obtain the syllabi and curricula at the Military Academy in September 2008. They are still not available online.

6 This is not only the case with the Army. Police education and training is also classified. On police education reform see: Jelena Petrović, "Police Education Reform in Serbia" *Western Balkans Security Observer*, no. 1 July-August (2006): 11. Available at www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=09F8BB64-2A92-4161-9018-EEA89D107A17 (accessed Sep. 5, 2008).

7 See: "Istorijat", *Vojna Akademija* www.va.mod.gov.yu/cms/view.php?id=1532 (accessed Sep. 16, 2008).

8 There were 15 such Military Schools [Vojna učilišta] scattered around the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).

9 Apart from education, the Military Medical Academy also provides medical care and conducts medical scientific research. Analysis of public relations material reveals that one of its main goals is to become reliable brand and stake in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration. See official presentation of the Military Medical Academy at <http://www.vma.mod.gov.yu/>

10 The most important legal documents are: Ustav Republike Srbije [Constitution of the Republic of Serbia] (Sl. glasnik RS, br. 98/2006), Zakon o vojsci Srbije [Law on the Armed Forces of Serbia] (Sl.glasnik RS,

sometimes even conflicting with legal framework of civilian education and research.¹¹ Furthermore, the two systems do not mutually recognize one another. This legal tension in the civil-military relations in the field of education is something that the decision makers promised to overcome in the process of the reform of the higher military education. When it comes to competences in the higher military education system, most of them are given to the Government and its Ministry of Defense (MOD). Government establishes higher military education institutions and decides about their integration into educational and scientific-research system of Serbia.¹² The MOD has competence in issues related to education and specialization for work in the fields of defense and security including planning, organization and conduct of military educational system; harmonization of military education system with secondary and higher education system in Serbia; planning, programming and development of scientific-research activities relevant for defense.¹³ The Minister of Defense adopts the educational curriculum at the MA for professional soldiers in the SAF.¹⁴ The General Staff drafts the curriculum and decides the list of basic professional profiles in the system.¹⁵

Institutionally, higher military education in the SAF generally belongs to the Human Resources Sector within the Ministry of Defense, and more specifically to its two subunits, Department of Military Education and Military Academy.¹⁶ The main task of the Department is to “organize the system of military education and publishing activities along with creating conditions for educating military personnel which are in line with the SAF tasks and missions”.¹⁷ It has two organizational units, the Section for Education and the Publishing Section and three directly subordinate units, Directorate for Publishing Activities, Military Printing House, the Office for Graphic Preparations and Printing. The

br.116/2007). Zakon o odbrani [Law on Defense] (Sl.glasnik RS, br.116/2007). Zakon o vojnim školama i vojnim naučnoistraživačkim ustanovama [The Law on Military Schools and Military Scientific-Research Institutions] (Sl. list SRJ, br. 80/94, 85/94, 74/99 i Sl. list SCG, br. 44/2005), Zakon o osnovama sistema obrazovanja i vaspitanja [Law on Basis of System of Education and Breeding] (Sl. glasnik RS br. 62/2003, 64/2003, 58/2004, 62/2004, 101/2005, 79/2005, 81/2005 i 83/2005), Zakon o srednjoj školi [Law on High School] (Sl. glasnik RS, br. 50/92, 53/93, 67/93, 48/94, 24/96, 23/2002, 25/2002, 62/2003, 64/2003 i 101/2005); Zakon o visokom obrazovanju [Law on Higher Education] (Sl. glasnik RS, br. 76/2005), Zakon o naučnoistraživačkoj delatnosti [Law on Scientific Research Activity] (Sl. glasnik RS, br. 110/2005 i 50/2006), Uredbe o osnivanju Vojne akademije [Regulations on Establishment of the Military Academy] (Sl. list SRJ, br. 23/00) i Strategija odbrane Državne zajednice Srbija i Crna Gora [Strategy of Defense of the State Union Serbia and Montenegro] (Sl. list. SCG, br. 55/2004).

10 Sretko Janković, “Naše vojno pravosuđe” Pravni informator, (Sl. list SRJ, br. 43/94, 28/96, 44/99, 74/99, 3/2002 i 37/2002),

11 For an in depth comparison legal framework of civilian and military education and research see Robert Sepi, „Analiza vojnog zakonodavstva u oblasti obrazovanja i naučne delatnosti“ u Pregled zakonodavstva sistema odbrane Republike Srbije, Monografija 159, (Beograd: Institut za uporedno pravo, 2007), 375-411.

12 The Law on Defense, art 12

13 The Law on Defense, art.14

14 The Law on Defense, art 18

15 The law on military schools and military research institutions, art. 24

16 “Departement of Military Education”, Ministry of Defense, Republic of Serbia, http://www.mod.gov.yu/eng/organizacija/sektor_za_ljudske_resurse/uprava%20za%20skolstvo.php (accessed Sep. 16, 2008).

17 Ibid.

Directorate for Publishing Activities consists of two units, The Military Publishing Institute, which publishes *Vojna Knjiga* [Army Book], *Vojni Glasnik* [Military Gazette], *Vojno Delo* [Military Work] and *Vojnotehnicki glasnik* [Military Technical Gazette] and The Center for documentation of military science research, information and library.¹⁸

In sum, as we can infer from its legal and institutional setup, there is a strong civilian control over the system of higher military education. However, although the *field* is dominated by the civilian agents its legal framework is not fully harmonized fully with civilian higher education system. This creates certain civil-military tension which should be overcome in the future reform process.

Military Academy (MA)

Today, the education of future officers and non commissioned officers (NCO) in the SAF takes place within the MA.¹⁹ MA is Education lasts 4 years for branch officers, 5 years for technical service officers and 6 months for reserve officers. During their course of study, future officers have general and specialist military courses as well as practical training within the Academy and in the SAF units. The day of the Military Academy and of military education in general is March 18 which marks the establishment of the Artillery School in 1850. The Academy provides undergraduate, as well as postgraduate education including specialist studies, Master, PhD courses for career officers for all services, branches and duties of the SAF. Moreover, the Academy is a scientific institution that conducts fundamental and applied research. The basis of its curriculum is established in line with the defense policies and strategy of armed struggle, achievements of military and other sciences, results of their application and general goals of education in Serbia.²⁰

The higher military education in Serbia is currently being reformed in line with Bologna process. The main aim of this reform is integration of higher military education system into higher civilian education system of Serbia. In that purpose, the cohort of students enrolled at the Military Academy in 2006/2007 started studying according to the new reformed curricula in line with Bologna standards. Also, in the academic year 2007/8 the first cohort of 30 female students enrolled in the Military Academy. Female candidates can apply for most services except for Armored-Mechanized Units, Engineering and Navy. The mission statement of the Academy is “Through system of military education to build an identity of a professional, officer leader, honorable, loyal, trained and ready for intellectual and ethical challenges of officer’s call in the service of the homeland Republic of Serbia.”²¹

18 Ibid. The organizational chart can be seen at “Organizacija Ministarstva Odbrane Republike Srbije”, Ministarstvo odbrane, http://www.mod.gov.yu/cir/organizacija/index_cir.php (accessed Sep. 16, 2008).

19 Official website of the Military Academy: <http://www.va.mod.gov.yu/> The status of the MA is regulated by The Law on military schools and military scientific-research institutions [Zakon o vojnim školama i vojnim naučnoistraživačkim ustanovama] (Sl. list SRJ, br. 80/94, 85/94, 74/99 i Sl. list SCG, br. 44/2005)

20 The Law on Military Schools and Military Scientific-Research Institutions, art.56

21 Author’s translation from Misija VA, Vojna akademija,

The Military Academy currently employs 39 PhD and 35 MSc faculty members.²² Each year 140 male and 30 female candidates are enrolled on the 4 year undergraduate course. Between 1991 and 2006, there was a sharp decline in quality and quantity of applications for studying at the MA. For example, in 2006, the Academy even had to repeat the call for applications because too few candidates had applied in the first call.²³ However, by 2008 this situation significantly improved and the number of applicants increased tenfold. For example, in 2006 only 20 candidates applied from civilian high schools. In 2007 this figure was 70. In 2008 a total of 220 male and 107 female candidates from civilian high schools applied, together with 105 candidates from the Military High School (MHS). The reasons for this improvement are advanced conditions of studying, introduction of joint degrees with civilian faculties and better advertisement, marketing and public relations.²⁴ The aims of education stress functional and wide education as well as its ethical/moral dimensions. The general goal of education at the MA is

education and breeding of students for professional officers, enabling them to start duties at the level of platoon commander in their branch/service and prepare for intellectual and ethical challenges of the officer's vocation in accordance with the missions and tasks of the SAF. Professional qualifications, moral build up and physical readiness are the basis for the successful realization of the tasks and commanding of units in peace and war, continual development and improvement of officers.²⁵

Specific goals of education, relevant to mention here are:

the development of skills to define a moral problem and apply ethical thinking in the decision making process [...] forming of personality with a wide education displaying individuality, ability and initiative to creatively apply acquired knowledge [...] development of motivation for the profession of officer, professional relationship towards duties and tasks, patriotism, societal, esthetical and other values.²⁶

Very important novelty of civilianization and modernization of the higher military education system is the introduction of joint undergraduate degrees with three faculties from the University of Belgrade in 2007. The program with the Faculty of Security Studies and the Faculty of Organizational Science is aimed at the departments of Infantry, Artillery, Engineering, Armored-Mechanized Units, Air Defense and Air Surveillance and Early Warning. The courses drafted jointly with the Faculty of Transport are for the students from the Air-Force Department. The joint degrees were introduced for two main

<http://www.va.mod.gov.yu/cms/view.php?id=1484> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

22 Mladen Vuruna, Slavko Muzdeka, „Vojna akademija: visoko obrazovanje u sistemu odbrane Republike Srbije“, http://www.ecdlcentar.com/baza/ecdl_informacije/vazni_clanci/y24/15_vojna_akademija.pdf (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

23 The reasons for that were low salaries and the general degradation of soldierly profession. M. Jakovljević, „Neće srbi u vojnike“, Glas Javnosti, 31.07.2005 Available at: <http://arhiva.glas-javnosti.co.yu/arhiva/2005/07/31/srpski/D05073001.shtml> (accessed Sep. 15 2008)

24 „Vojna gimnazija sve zanimljivija srednjoškolicima,“ Radio televizija vojvodine, http://www.rtv.co.yu/sr/vesti/drustvo/drustvo/2008_05_10/vest_62720.jsp (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

25 Author's translation Ministarstvo Odbrane, Sektor za ljudske resurse, Studijski program osnovnih akademskih studija vojne akademije, Beograd, 2006, 3

26 Ibid

reasons. The first reason is that such education should provide cadets with wider knowledge and allow them to be more horizontally mobile i.e. able to find jobs outside the defense system.²⁷ This wider-education is also being achieved by recent introduction of lectures of civilian leaders in the Academy. As Minister of Defense recently put it: “I want that on our higher military schools, our officers, gain not only specialist military knowledge but also politico-diplomatic knowledge [...] we think that our high officers need to have global view on security issues as well”.²⁸ The second reason is connected to the processes of Euro-Atlantic integration which demands officers with much wider education than the one provided by the old system. It is noteworthy that military education, training and doctrine are one of priorities set in Serbia’s Partnership for Peace Presentation Document. In the Document, Serbia expressed wish to intensify “cooperation in this field and raise the level of interoperability of its armed forces with the armed forces of PfP and NATO partners [...] harmonize its doctrines and programs with NATO and PfP Member States and to accede to the PfP Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes”.²⁹

Non military and non technical component of the curriculum, which is interesting here for it serves as a mechanism of socialization of soldiers into a wider military and political culture, makes 26,25 % of the educational program (see table 1).³⁰ Moral education at the MA is also going through a transformation in accordance to the overall attempts to Europeanize higher military education and move the SAF closer to Euro-Atlantic integration.³¹ The basic values of the moral education at the Military Academy are high standards of professionalism, dedication to military profession, loyalty, honor, discipline, integrity, respect of the other, courage, respect of the rule of law, heritage of democracy and civilization. Currently, there are three study programs in the moral education. The first one is a general undergraduate joint degree curriculum which includes one course on *Ethics*. The course is taught in the third semester during 45 hours (30 +15). It consists of Theoretical Background of Military Morale, Maintenance, Functioning and Application of Military Morale and several topics in Rhetoric.³² The second study program is for reserve officers (from March 1, 2006) with the course entitled *Military Morale* course but with only 15 hours of classes. Thirdly, the curriculum of Military Technical Academy

27 There have been some critical voices about it. „We have to be careful. I am not sure that we have to rush so much with the introduction of Bologna declaration and to give degrees which enable people to leave the system. Thus, its usually the best ones who easily leave.” Interview of Chief of Staff Gen.Zdravko Ponoš in *Vreme*, 863, 19 jul 2007. Available at: <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=506320> (accessed Sep10 2008).

28 Interview with Minister of Defense Dragan Šutanovac for NIN, Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije, <http://www.mod.gov.yu/novi.php?action=fullnews&showcomments=1&id=610> (Accessed Sep 16 2008).

29 Republic of Serbia, Partnership for Peace Presentation Document, 27 July, 2007, 8. Available at http://www.mfa.gov.yu/Policy/Priorities/srb_pfp_presentation_document.pdf (Accessed Sep 6 2008)

30 This figure is only an approximation. It is a sum of the time spent in social science field of study (195 hours or 8.125%) and general military field of studies (300 hours or 12.5 %) However, socialization into societal norms takes place also within technical and military courses, though to a lesser extent.

31 Answers provided by the Military Academy, September 2008.

32 Rhetoric as an individual course ceased to exist so it was incorporated in the Military morale module in 2006/2007.

also has the course on *Military Morale* with 43 (28+17) hours of teaching.³³ In 2006/7 the new course on *Ethics* was introduced. Since the 2008, all students in the third semester also have to choose between *Military Ethics* and *Sociology of Morals* as facultative courses.

Leadership education exists in the MA, not through a special Course but through the development of a *leadership spirit*. This is achieved through everyday duties such as formation, inspection and rappsorts in which students are simulating the role of a commander of a platoon. It is also achieved through other activities such as camping, competition in knowledge or sports and in extracurricular activities. The Department of Social and Economic sciences at the Academy proposed recently a new project *Contents of Social-Sciences in the Officer's Education in the SAF needed for the participation of SAF in the international military missions* which will also cover the value system of students.

Area	Field	Number	Course	Regular instruction (Minimal number of hours)
General education	Social sciences			
		<i>Total</i>			195
	Science-Math	...	.....
		<i>Total</i>			90
	Technical	...	....
		<i>Total</i>			45
Military education	General military	...	.....
		<i>Total</i>			300
	Specialistic	...	.....
		<i>Total</i>			1530
Sports	...	.....
	<i>Total</i>			240
<i>Total</i>				2400

Table 1: Structure of the curriculum at the Military Academy³⁴

33 The course *Military Morale* is going to be taught in the same form for the two more years. The nit will be transformed both in terms of the form (including the name) and in terms of substance.

34 Ministarstvo Odbrane, Sektor za ljudske resurse, Studijski program osnovnih akademskih studija vojne akademije, Beograd: 2006

While undergraduate studies are already reformed according to Bologna process, the postgraduate studies are still being conducted according to the old system (*Magisterium* and *Doctorate*). It is expected that until the graduation of the first undergraduate “Bologna cohort” in 2010, the postgraduate course will also be “Bolognized” and the Military Academy will start enrolling students onto Master and PhD degrees.

Until 2006, the graduation ceremony took place within the premises of Military Academy. However, since 2006 the ceremony takes place at the plateau in front of the Serbian Parliament in Belgrade. As this is located at the city centre, the visibility of the event is greatly enhanced. Thus, in terms of public attention and media coverage, it became the “first news event” in contrast to the period before 2006 when the graduation ceremony was a much more low profile event. This contributed to the overall promotion of military profession. But it was also an opportunity for certain groups to try to discredit the Armed Forces. For instance, during the rehearsal for the graduation ceremony of the 126th and 127th class in September 2006 an independent photographer captured senior sergeant from Military Police saluting to a standby citizen holding a real-size poster of a former Bosnian Serb Army general and War crime suspect, Ratko Mladić. The photo, which was published later in one Serbian daily, incited plenty of controversies.³⁵ This image, that according to witnesses was not spontaneous but rather staged, strengthened the belief of some in Serbia and many in the West that it is the SAF who actually supports provides refuge for the former general indicted at the ICTY. While the international community and part of civil-society in Serbia demanded that the military explains why this was tolerated, the Government, and in particular the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Culture criticized the journal for publishing the photo and denied any allegiance to the indicted General on the part of the military. The senior Military Police sergeant was immediately suspended and a disciplinary procedure against his was initiated.³⁶

Military High-School

The Military Academy also incorporates the Military High-School (MHS) which was established in 1970 to educate future cadets.³⁷ In the course of the last few years, MHS also experienced a steep rise in a number of applications. For example a total of 500

35 The photograph of the cover can be seen at <http://i25.photobucket.com/albums/c96/whitenicky/scantx7.jpg> (accessed Sep 4 2008)

36 „Mladićev poster u novinama“, B92, 25.septembar 2006. http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2006&mm=09&dd=25&nav_category=11 (accessed Sep 4 2008) .

37 The status of the MHS is regulated by the Law on Military Schools and Military Scientific-Research Institutions (Sl. list SRJ, br. 80/94, 85/94, 74/99 i Sl. list SCG, br. 44/2005). The earlier name of the MHS was Brotherhood and Unity. It educated future military leaders from all over SFRY. Curiosity is that one same class of pupils in the mid 1980s composed of personalities such as Croatian Army Officer convicted in the ICTY for war crimes (Tihomir Blaškić), former Prime Minister of Kosovo and of its guerilla force KLA (Agim Ceku) and the commander of Bosnian armed forces and convicted for war crimes in the ICTY (Naser Orlić). Their dean was retired Bosnian Serb Army and deputy of General Ratko Mladic, Milan Gvero, now indicted in the ICTY on charges of war crimes. Source: <http://arhiva.glas-javnosti.co.yu/arhiva/2005/07/31/srpski/D05073001.shtml> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

candidates applied for 92 available places in 2008.³⁸ Its curriculum is composed of general courses, special courses and facultative courses. General courses are the same as in any other high school of scientific-mathematical orientation. Specific courses encompass camping, skiing, swimming, survival in nature, parachuting, piloting, tactical-technological meetings and study trips.³⁹ Facultative courses depend on the interest and future professional orientation (branch, service etc) of the pupil. The education at the MHS lasts four years and pupils can decide between general and air orientation. The first three years are the same for both orientations. Following the graduation pupils have to continue their military education at Military Academies.⁴⁰ Given that cadets at the Military Academy have the obligation to stay in the Armed Forces after graduation, or otherwise they have to pay back money for their education, the pupils of the MHS are *de facto* recruited at the age of 15.⁴¹ This impression is not propitiated by the fact that minor pupils at the MHS participate in partial military training. It's all the more striking that minors in Serbia cannot buy cigarettes but they however can use AK47.⁴² All this raises concern about the compliance of the Republic of Serbia with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict ratified by Serbia on February 28 2003.⁴³

Education After the Academy

Following the graduation from the Military Academy, the education of officers continues within the National Defense School (NDS) which offers two types of advanced training. The first is Command-Staff Training for battalion or division level officers. It lasts from September until June and consists of nine compulsory courses.⁴⁴ Secondly, it is General Staff Training, which is the highest educational level for brigade level officers and those who will lead joint tactical and operative operational task forces as well as take high positions within the MOD. The training lasts also 10 months and consists of selected defense courses and study visits in Serbia and abroad and a training course at the MOD

38 "Vojna gimnazija sve zanimljivija srednjoškolicima"

39 Official website of the Military High School is <http://www.gimnazija.mod.gov.yu/> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

40 "Smerovi školovanja", Vojna gimnazija, <http://www.gimnazija.mod.gov.yu/?id=smerovi> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

41 According to some estimation, education of a cadet at the MA costs between 2,500 and 3000 euros and all expenditures are covered by the MOD. If students wish to leave the Military, they has to spend twice as many years in the Military than he has studied (4 or 5 years depending on orientation) if they studied in Serbia and triple if they studied abroad, or payback the money. M. Jakovljević, "Neće srbi u vojnike", Glas Javnosti, 31.07.2005 Available at: <http://arhiva.glas-javnosti.co.yu/arhiva/2005/07/31/srpski/D05073001.shtml> (accessed on September 15 2008). This is stipulated in art. 80 of the The Law on Armed Forces of Serbia, Sl.glasnik RS, br.116/2007 <http://arhiva.glas-javnosti.co.yu/arhiva/2005/07/31/srpski/D05073001.shtml> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

42 For example, see photos from their military training at http://www.gimnazija.mod.gov.yu/?id=galerija_1 (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

43 For the status of ratification as of June 2004 see: Office of the United Nation's High Commissioner for Human Rights, Status of Ratifications of the Principal Human Right Treaties, 2004, p.9 Available at: <http://www.unhchr.ch/pdf/report.pdf> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

44 Bojan Dimitrijević, Serbian Armed Forces, (Beograd: Ministarstvo Odbrane,2008), 30.

and the General Staff. After a decade of break, the Military Academy restarted educating reserve officers. Their education lasts 9 months and is on a fully volunteer basis with the basic requirement being a bachelor degree from any civilian university.

Public Relations: Central Messages

Another way of looking at the reform of the educational system is to conduct discourse analysis of the public relations work done by the MOD and MA. From the observed material we can extract several main messages that are being sent regarding the higher military education system. Probably the most important message is that it is being integrated into the civilian system of secondary and higher education. It means many things. It means that the studies are being reorganized according to Bologna process. Students are acquiring not only military knowledge, but language competences and IT skills.⁴⁵ But it also means that women are also now highly encouraged to apply and study at the MA. MA is presented as an institution that prepares future soldiers for a certain and foreseeable career while the knowledge they obtain is said to be recognized in a wider society. This is also pinpointed by conveying an image of excellent higher educational institutions. The Academy's website contains a long list of reportages about awards, medals, academic achievements etc. However, the Academy's website so far doesn't have one single page translated into English, or any other foreign language.⁴⁶ Thus, it can be assumed that the PR efforts are directed rather towards the domestic population of prospective students with the aim of making the MA more attractive and thus increasing the number of high quality candidates. Also, the MA provides its student an opportunity to study abroad in foreign higher military institutions as well as serve in peacekeeping operations thus contributing to global peace efforts. But the MA is also trying to open itself for foreign students. This should prove (to domestic audience) that Serbian higher military education system has a good international standing as well. Another theme often recurring in PR work is that of humanitarian community involvement. It consists of various activities spanning from giving blood, through paraplegic sporting competitions up to classes in humanitarian law. This is arguably one way to distance the current Armed Forces from the perpetrations done in the 1990s and to inculcate humanitarian ethics in the new generations of soldiers. Finally, an important narrative often put forward is respect for tradition. It comprises of both soldierly traditions but also religious traditions rooted in the Serbian Orthodox Church.⁴⁷ Regarding the military traditions, a general impression is that traditions that are cultivated the most date from pre 1918 period.⁴⁸

45 For example, the MOD introduced English language tests according to standard STANAG 6001 which is NATO standard.

46 As of September 2008.

47 For example pupils at the Military High School, led by priests, recently made a study trip to Orthodox monasteries at Mount Athos. See: „Vojni gimnazijalci na vrhu pravoslavlja”, *Vojna gimnazija*, <http://www.gimnazija.mod.gov.yu/?id=v8> (accessed Sep. 10, 2008).

48 This conclusion is made on the analysis of the official website of the Military Academy, public speeches and official PR material. One example can be found in the photo section at the MA. Out of 17 photos that represent the page about history of the MA, none dates from the post 1918 period. This focus on the pre-1918 traditions is observable in the training process as well, celebrations of important dates in military history etc.

Exemplary in this respect is speech given by President Boris Tadić given to graduates of 128th and 129th class of Military Academy in September 2008.

In 2008 we are celebrating 90th anniversary of victory in the First World War, in which Serbia was on the right side, side of freedom. Back then, Serbian army had high moral position and military honor and dignity were inviolable. Serbian soldier was a brave warrior respected by everyone, he was never perpetrator. These are the values that you young officers and new members of Serbian Armed Forces have to cultivate and thus regain the reputation and respect left in heritage by Vojvoda Misić, Putnik, Bojović and Stepa Stepanović.⁴⁹

As it will be shown later in this report, this focus on pre 1918 traditions is something which characterizes the whole *field* of defense system. This is as an attempt of military and civilian leaders to overcome identity crisis emerged within the armed force following the end of the last phase in the slow-motioned disappearance of Yugoslav state (1991-2006) that of a separation with Montenegro and subsequent restoration of Serbian statehood after 88 years, by grounding new definitions of national identity in the pre-Yugoslav experience.

3. Training of Soldiers

If the secondary and higher military education is the mechanism for socialization of military elites and professional soldiers than training can be understood as the mechanism which encompass the whole military system. In contrast to military education system, training is however more remote from public scrutiny and thus more prone to diverge from wider societal norms and values. For both reasons, it is worth to be closely and carefully studied if we are to understand the soldiers social (collective) and individual understanding of their role and function in a democratic society.

Historical Background

During the 19th century, Serbia was technologically lagging behind its main opponents: Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and German empires. Therefore, military training had a central importance for it had to supersede this shortcoming by investing more in building its human factor through military training. As authors of the most comprehensive analysis of military training of the SAF between 1804 and 1918 argue, moral education of soldiers was always the highest priority.⁵⁰ Among the most important values cultivated by the military and transmitted to soldiers in this period were: Serbian patriotism, Orthodox Christianity, loyalty to ruler, preparedness, military discipline, responsibility

49 Author's translation, „Promovisani novi oficiri Srbije”, Ministarstvo Odbrane Republike Srbije, <http://www.mod.gov.yu/novi.php?action=fullnews&id=615> (accessed Sep. 10, 2008).

50 More on this see in Đorđe Stanić, Zoran Kilibarda i Jan Marček, *Obuka srpske vojske 1804-1918*, (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 2007), 699.

and accountability, military flag, military oath, personal example and warrior traditions of Serbian army and people.⁵¹

Contemporary Training of Soldiers

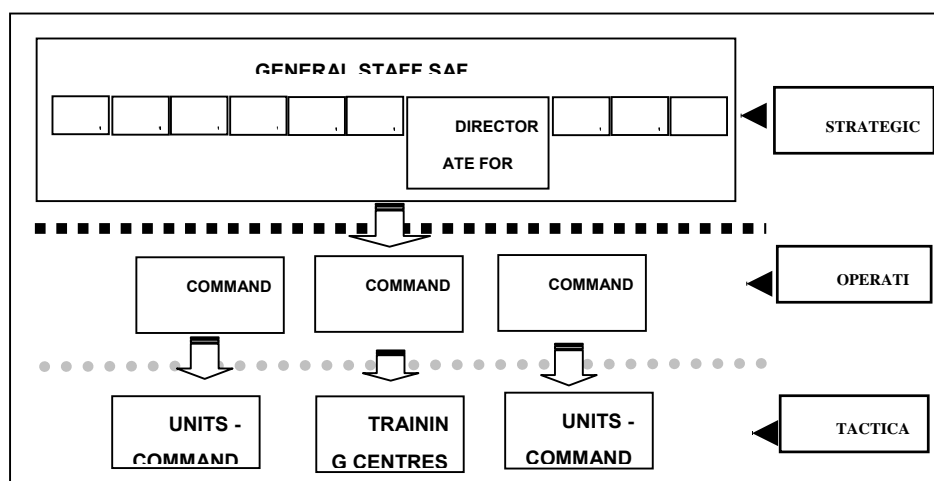
Between 1975 and 2005 little had changed in the training system in SAF. Some minor adjustments were made between 1990 and 2005 due to the shortening of military service from 12 to 6 months, introduction of contract soldiers, organizational changes in the MOD and SAF and changes in strategic perception including identification of new security threats and formulations of new missions and tasks of the SAF. The current training system is a successor of training systems within the Yugoslav Army and then Armed Forces of the State Union Serbia and Montenegro.

Since 2005, the training system has been under deep transformation and reform in three most important respects. Firstly, there is a new institutional setup for the military training in the SAF. Institutions with competences for military training exist on strategic, operational and tactical level. On the strategic level, Military Doctrine and Training Unit (J7) is responsible for inter-branch control and doctrinal planning of the military training at the General Staff. Thus, J7 produced the Training Doctrine in 2007 which is currently the blueprint for reform in the training system. On the operational level, central responsible institution is the Training Command, based in Belgrade, established in April 2007.⁵² Its main task is to control individual training in the training centers (TC) at the tactical level. There are seven Basic TCs five Specialist TCs and a common training ground "Pasuljanske livade" in Cuprija.⁵³ Army Command and Air Force Command are responsible for unit training in Units command. However, in spite of institutional reforms which the creation of Directorate for training and doctrine J7 which took over some competences over training from there are still a lot of overlapping in the training system. For instance, in one way or another J2, J4, J6, Centre for peacekeeping operations and MOD still have some competences in the training process.

51 Ibid, 699.

52 The establishment of the Training Command, as a third Command of the SAF (beside Army Command and Air force Command) is officially referred to as one of the key novelties in the defense reform. See: Training Command, Serbian Armed Forces Official Website, <http://www.vojska.mod.gov.yu/eng/jedinice/obuka/obuka.htm> (accessed Sep. 17, 2008).

53 Basic TCs are located in Sombor, Pancevo, Jakovo, Valjevo, Zajecar, Krusevac and Leskovac. Specialist TCs are Land force TC in Pozarevac, the Air Force TC in Batajnica, Signal, IT and Electronic Warfare Branch TC in Gornji Milanovac, The Center for Specializing NBC personnel in Krusevac, Logistic TC in Krusevac.



Graph 1: Institutions in the training system⁵⁴

Secondly, for a long time the domain of training was regulated by a large number of documents such as training strategies, guidelines for training, directives and orders for training, plans and schedules for training, plans and programs for individual training of soldier- without an overarching doctrine. In 2007, General staff adopted the Training Doctrine which “defines unique foundations of training system in the SAF”.⁵⁵ The doctrine defines military training as a “planned and organized process of gaining knowledge, skills, habits and psychophysical and intellectual capabilities as well as moral features of personality of members of the Armed Forces, units, commands, staffs and organizational units of the General Staff in order to complete individual and collective missions in peace and war”.⁵⁶ The aim of the individual training is the creation of a „self confident and disciplined soldier which is physically able, well motivated, trained in basic skills and who has qualities of a fighter needed to survive on the battlefield and to execute tasks as a member of a crew or team“.⁵⁷

Thirdly, the former training process was often characterized as outdated, rigid, and inflexible. The new system, once installed in accordance to NATO standards, will be much more flexible in that it will provide commanders of units with much more autonomy with regards to what the Unit needs to know. According to the missions and tasks of their unit, Commanders draft a *Mission Essential Task List* (METL) which then serves in training. The focus of training is moved from an individual level to team level and is put in function of commanding much more than it was the case before. The new system of evaluation will change accordingly and will be “more objective”.⁵⁸

54 Vojska Srbije, Generalštab, Doktrina obuke [Training Doctrine] , Službeni list 31/93, 2007, 22.

55 Ibid, 6.

56 Ibid, 8.

57 Ibid, 20.

58 Interview with General Major Petar Cornakov, Director of Military Training and Doctrine (J7), Odbrana 38, 15. april, 2007. 8-10 Available at <http://www.odbrana.mod.gov.yu/odbrana038/08-10.pdf> (accessed Sep. 17, 2008).

The training is divided into individual training (phase 1) and collective training (phase 2). Phase 1 is further divided into basic training which takes place in Basic TC and specialist training in Specialist TC. Collective training (Phase 2) lasts until the end of the military service and it takes place in units. Soldiers spend first 90 days doing basic training in one of the Basic TC. This basic training includes elements of soldierly conduct, marching, addressing superiors and general military discipline and training in using a rifle. Following that period, soldiers move to specialist centers. Forms of training are lectures, seminars, guided learning, external training, distance learning, computer based training, study discussions. Concerning professional soldiers, according to the Strategic Defense Review, Serbia will fully professionalize its Armed Forces until 2010.⁵⁹ Until then, professional soldiers (recruits who accomplished their military service) will continue their education in their units. If the plan for full professionalization succeeds, after 2010 training of professional soldiers will depend whether they are recruits who finished their military service, candidates on voluntary military training or civilians without any military training whatsoever.⁶⁰ NCOs are trained differently depending on that if they are recruited among professional soldiers (leader's course, specialist course, internship in unit, promotion to captain) or among inexperienced civilian candidates (Basic training, specialist training, leaders course, specialist course, internship in unit, promotion to NCO). An officer training is conducted through education, training and improvement.⁶¹

Moral education is an integral part of training within the SAF. For instance, in the training program for infantry, it is ingrained in various activities during the training, either through a special study course or through practicing of traditions, cultural events and meetings of military collective. The goal of the moral education within the training process is to build and strengthen martial morale manifested in readiness of soldiers to individually and collectively consciously and responsibly fulfill soldierly obligations in defense of their homeland but also in military tasks done within the framework of international military integration, peace and humanitarian missions etc. The objective of moral training is to build readiness, motivation and determination of soldiers to defend their country from all forms of threatening, developing a positive attitude towards doctrinal positions of the army and international military integration, patriotism, international peacekeeping missions and humanitarian interventions, affirm libertarian, martial-prone and religious traditions, prepare soldiers to develop resistance to enemy propaganda. The aim of the course *Morale of the AF* is to build positive beliefs and attitudes on belonging to the homeland and SAF as well as place of Serbia in international military integration. The course *Morale of the AF* is taught 21 hours during the training process. During the first period of 4 months, soldiers attend classes which strengthen loyalty and feeling of belonging to their unit, armed forces and homeland as well as

59 However, since the parliamentary declaration of military neutrality in December 2007, the full professionalization halted and is under consideration. More on professionalization of the SAF see: Đorđe Popović, "Serbian Army Professionalization," *Western Balkans Security Observer*, no. 2 (2006): 4-9. Available at: www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=cb2336ab-cca6-4269-971c-37784cbc294b (accessed Sep. 17, 2008).

60 Training Doctrine, 41.

61 Ibid, 42.

martial morale. In the course of the second period, which lasts for 5 months, soldiers are following classes which prepare them to develop resistance to enemy propaganda, understand international military integration, peacekeeping operations and humanitarian missions. Finally, soldiers follow a block of lectures on soldierly personal characteristics as well as challenges posed by drugs, sects and mental disorders. Clearly, from the above it can be inferred that the homeland (national-libertarian component) is a primary referent object of soldiers' expected loyalty while the moral obligation towards international society or global order (civic-democratic component) is at best implicit and secondary, arguably deriving more from technical and legal features of international mission than from a desired sense of community.

Military and political traditions are cultivated in the training process through marking and celebrating important historical events within the unit. These events are the Statehood Day (February 15 1804), the Day of Victory (May 9 1945), the Day of Branch and Service, the Day of Unit, My Garrison as well as celebration of important battles and wars including the Kosovo Battle (June 28 1389), the First Serbian uprising (February 14 1804), the Second Serbian Uprising (April 23 1815), Balkan wars (October 24, 1912-1913), the First World War (August 24, September 15, 1914-1918), the Second World War (April 6, 1941) and Defense from NATO aggression (March 24, 1999). The first thing that draws attention when looking at the important historical dates chosen for remembering is that of 8 dates, 6 are marking pre 1918 period. If we look at the Days of the TCs we will get an even more drastic picture. Out of 13 TC, 9 celebrate their memorial day. In all 9 cases, the historical dates chosen are from the pre 1918 period.⁶² These are the illustrations which clearly show, just like in higher military education, strong emphasis on the pre 1918 traditions.

In 2007, the Armed Forces picked the Statehood Day (February 15) to be also a day of the SAF.⁶³ The choice of taking this date, among 23 proposed historical dates, for the day of SAF was explained by then Director of Human Resource Directorate (J1) in an interview in 2007.⁶⁴ He then stated that:

There are several important reasons for choosing February 15 for the Day of SAF. After several centuries of slavery under Turks, the First Serbian Uprising marks the emergence of first organized forms of armed force, which, irreversibly, led to the creation of the Serbian military. It is the First Serbian Uprising which marks the beginning of the modern Serbian state. *Sretenje* [Candlemas] combines identities of the military and the states,

62 TC Sombor - 13 November 1918, TC Pancevo – 9 November 1918, TC Jakovo – 1 November 1918, TC Valjevo – 15 October 1918, TC Zajecar- 19 October 1918, TC Krusevac - 19 October 1918, TC Leskovac - 7 October, 1918, TC Pozarevac 16 Novembar - 1918, TC Batajnica – 24 Decmber 1912. Source: Centri za obuku, Vojska Srbije, http://www.vojska.mod.gov.yu/cir/jedinice/obuka/centri_za_obuku.htm (accessed Sep. 17, 2008).

63 It is also an important Christian celebration called the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple or in short Candlemas. According to Gregorian calendar it falls on February 15 while according Julian calendar it falls on February 2. More on this see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candlemas> (accessed Sep. 10, 2008).

64 Among other favorite candidate dates were May 6 (establishment of Dukes guard in 1830), June 28 (St Vitus day, Battle of Kosovo in 1389), June 10 (first military law in 1839), January 15(Law on Institution of the Army in 1883, which introduced standing army and marks military modernization). More on the discussion about this see in: Dušan Glišić, "Ponovno čitanje istorije," *Obrana*, br.19, 1. jul, 2006.

which renews their deepest connection [...] Identity of SAF, after a long time, with its symbols and emblems, again unites the military, the nation and the church, without any political connotation.⁶⁵

It is important to add that on the very same day, February 15 1835, Serbia got its first liberal Candlemas Constitution (Sretenjski Ustav). What does such a choice tell us about the struggle between different political traditions discussed in the first research report? It's clear that the date of the Armed Force celebrates key moments of both external liberation (First Serbian Uprising) and internal emancipation (first liberal Constitution 1835). Therefore, the date of SAF reflects equally both civic-democratic and national libertarian tradition with a slight brunt on the latter.

The publishing activity in the domain of training also indicates above discussed focus on pre-1918 traditions. In the preface to the book recently published by the Military Publishing Institute, which covers training of SAF in the period 1804-1918 on 775 pages, its authors remind their readers about the "historical truth, many times proven, especially during the liberation wars (1912-1918) that SAF was, according to the highest military professions at the time, one of the best armies in the world".⁶⁶ However, as the authors complain with certain grief, the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes meant death to an independent Serbian Army and its Armed Forces. The later training was, as they say, based on different, transformed principles. What is more, the later Yugoslav monarchist and then communist leaders "marginalized, disrespected, and sent to oblivion" Serbian history and Serbian values, Serbian celebrated Armed Forces and its officers.⁶⁷

Serbs are in their words now

put in a weird, surreal situation, that after communist, they have to, figuratively speaking, 'study Serbian' and 'discover' long forgotten and suppressed genuine values of Serbianhood, especially exceptional values of celebrated Serbian military. These genuine values surely include military breeding and education in Serbs.⁶⁸

Mere glimpse on other new publications of the Military Publishing Institute also illustrate the return to the pre 1918 traditions. Those publications focus on the war codex of the SAF since the Middle Ages until the First World War,⁶⁹ war diaries between 1875 and 1876⁷⁰ or military thought in Serbia from the mid 19th century until the First World War.⁷¹

65 Author's translation. Interview of Petar Radojčić in *Odbrana*, 33, februar 2007, p.34.

66 Đorđe Stanić, Zoran Kilibarda i Jan Marček, *Obuka srpske vojske 1804-1918*, 11.

67 Ibid. 14.

68 Author's translation Ibid. 15.

69 Goran Milošević, *Viteška vremena: etički i humani kodeksi ratovanja*, (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 2007).

70 Nataša Nikolić, *Ratni dnevnici*, (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 2007).

71 Branislav Đorđević, *Srpski vojni mislenik*, (Beograd: Vojnoizdavački zavod, 2006).

4. Advancement, Norms and Institutions of Conflict Settlement

The system of advancement and conflict settlement is another important dimension of the military *field*. It is the mechanism which not only socializes agents but also manages their mutual conflicts and changes occurring in their social positions.

Advancement in the SAF

During the 1990s, the Serbian armed forces suffered from quite unusually big number of officers with higher ranks (generals and colonels) in comparison with the number of higher rank officers and soldiers. Thus, during Milosevic rule, the Army was commanded by more than 100 generals and “impossible to recount” number of colonels, which in turn were more numerable than lieutenants.⁷² This problem, often referred to as a “reversed pyramid”, was created because during the wartime in the 1990s, Milosevic was rewarding officers’ loyalty with quick promotion. This problem was only to an extent overcome during the reform. For example, according to the latest information (May 2008) SAF has 31 generals.⁷³

The advancement in the SAF is defined by the Law on Armed forces of Serbia (articles 54-67).⁷⁴ Soldiers without higher military education (Military Academy) can only advance up to a rank of a captain. Officers can advance to a higher rank only after they spent three years in ranks of lieutenant or general and four years in ranks of captain, major, Lt. colonel and colonel (art.56). NCOs need to spend four years in one rank before they make any advancement (art.57). On Minister’s of Defense recommendation, President of the Republic can exceptionally promote officers on duty in international military mission (art.59). If an officer’s rank is degraded for disciplinary transgression, officer has to spend the same amount of time in that rank again before advancing to next rank (art.60). President, Minister of Defense and Chief of General Staff can exceptionally promote officers.

Norms and Institutions of Conflict Settlement

Until 2004, the main institution of conflict settlement within the armed forces was military judicature system. The military tribunals had a long tradition in Serbia and Yugoslavia. The first such tribunals were established back in 1839. Their main task was

72 While the international standard is that one general commands approximately 1,500 soldiers, in Serbia there was one general per 800 soldiers. Source: M.B. Jakšić, “Usahnule grančice na epoletama”, Dnevnik online, 6.7. januar 2002. <http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/07-01-2002/Strane/drustvo.htm> (accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

73 According to some estimates there are around 28,000 soldiers. This means that there is one general per 900 soldiers which is still quite unusually high proportion of generals. More about the creation of the “reversed pyramid” problem see Srdjan Gligorijević, “Reforma sistema odbrane Srbije i Evroatlantske integracije”, in Pregled zakonodavstva sistema odbrane Republike Srbije, Monografija 159, (Beograd: Institut za uporedno pravo, 2007) 148.

74 The Law on Armed Forces of Serbia.

to protect the military from criminal acts within or against armed forces. The legal bases for standing military tribunals were the *Constitution of FRY* (1992), *Law on Military Tribunals* (1995) and the *Law on the Military Prosecutor* (1995). There were three military tribunals in Belgrade, Nis and Podgorica and one Supreme Military Court in Belgrade. Each Court has its military prosecutor.⁷⁵ The military judiciary system was abolished in 2004 by the *Law on transfer of competence of the military tribunals, military prosecutors and military advocacy onto institutions of member states of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro* (2004). Consequently, in Serbia their competence was transferred onto District courts in Novi Sad, Nis, Belgrade and Supreme Court of Serbia.⁷⁶ This enhanced the role of military disciplinary courts regulated by the *Law on Armed Forces of Serbia* (2007) and rules about military discipline.⁷⁷ The military disciplinary courts of first instances are formed within the SAF in Belgrade, Nis and Novi Sad. The Higher Military Disciplinary Court is established within the MOD and rules on pleas against the decisions of disciplinary courts of first instance. The Minister of Defense appoints presidents of the Military Disciplinary Court as well as military disciplinary prosecutors. On General Staff recommendations, the Minister also appoints members of the jury in the Military Disciplinary Court.

Serbia doesn't have a military ombudsman. However, if soldier's human rights are violated in any way by state institutions, soldiers can always address their problem to any of the existing ombudsmen. Currently Serbia has one National Ombudsman, one regional Ombudsman (for Voivodina) and more than 10 ombudsmen in different municipalities. During 2007 there were only 5 pleas to National Ombudsman that concerned Ministry of Defense (2,30 %).⁷⁸ This serves as a foundation for assumption, but is definitely not a proof, that human rights of soldiers in SAF are well respected.

Soldiers can be removed from duty in case of detention or imprisonment. They can be called for disciplinary procedures for disciplinary mistakes or disciplinary offences. Some of the disciplinary mistakes are for example constant belatedness or premature leave, unduly absence, disrespectful behavior, breach of norms regarding uniform, alcohol abuse, hygiene problems, disrespect of salutation rules etc. Disciplinary mistakes are sanctioned with measures such as prompt notes and decrease of salary. On the other hand, disciplinary offences could be, among other things, refusal to execute order except in case when it is a criminal act, voluntary desertion of unit, violent behavior, illicit drug consumption, false reports, breach of military or official secrecy, conflict of interest, breach of political neutrality, striking, criminal act against state authorities or international law etc. Disciplinary offences are sanctioned with punishments such as

75 Sretko Janković, "Naše vojno pravosuđe." Pravni informator, http://www.informator.co.yu/informator/tekstovi/vojno_pravosudje_1002.htm (accessed Sep. 19, 2008).

76 "Istorijat okružnog suda u Novom Sadu," Okružni sud Novi Sad, http://www.okruzni.sud.ns.srbija.yu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=23&Itemid=51 (accessed Sep. 19, 2008).

77 The Law on Armed Forces of Serbia, Art 161-170.

78 Ombudsman report for 2007 http://www.zastitnik.gov.rs/attachments/197_redovan_godisnji_izvestaj_2007.doc (Accessed Sep. 15, 2008).

longer decrease of salary, degradation of rank, temporary interdiction to be on command post, temporary denial of advancement to a next rank, rank degradation, revocation of service, revocation of rank. Officers can also lose their rank if they lose Serbian citizenship or are convicted to a prison sentence 6 months or longer. Similar measures and punishments apply for recruits and cadets.

As we see, just like the rest of the defense system, the system of military advancement and norms/institutions of conflict settlement is also experiencing transformation. The advancement is put under (civilian) control while the institutions of conflict settlement are partially being transferred to civilian institutions. This process fits well into the overall picture of gradual civilianization of the military characteristic for the democratic societies. However, to be able to build a big picture of how the Serbian military integrates into its society through the process of advancement and conflict settlement one should gain further insight into soldier's *habitus* through experience-near ethnographic research.

5. Conclusion

This paper outlined the system of education, training, advancement and conflict settlement in the Serbian military with the aim of looking at how the normative model of Serbian armed forces is transferred into military. It has shown that the system of higher military education, military training, advancement and conflict settlement has been under deep structural and normative transformation in the course of the last 8 years. This transformation gained a strong momentum after the creation of independent Serbian state in December 2006.⁷⁹ The system of higher military education is under a comprehensive reform. Its main goals are Europeanization, civilianization and professionalization. Strong emphasis is put on the moral and ethical aspects of officer's education while the cultivation of tradition is focusing on the pre 1918 period. It seems that one of the goals of the reform, so far relatively successfully achieved is to conciliate national-libertarian and civic-democratic traditions in order to smoothly integrate the defense system both into Serbian society and into the Euro-Atlantic structures. Similar processes are taking place in the training system as well, especially concerning professionalization and the needs to adapt the defense system for the upcoming international military integration. However, as it could be expected, due its remoteness from public scrutiny, training system reform contains fewer elements of civilianization and Europeanization. The advancement of soldiers is regulated by the new laws and the problem of inverted pyramid is being solved by the increasing of the number of lower and mid ranks with the strong emphasis on educating and strengthening NCOs. The system of conflict settlement has also recently been partially civilianized and put under civil democratic control.

⁷⁹ This momentum was paused between February 17 2008 when Kosovo declared independence, Serbian Government resigned and new elections were called for resulting in the formation of new pro-democratic and pro-European government in July 7 2008.

Against this background, experience-distant analysis from the first research report will be bridged to an experience-near ethnographic observation that shall be conducted in the future and presented in the next (third) research report.

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