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MILITARY ETHOS IN THE CULTURE OF RUSSIAN SOCIETY: HISTORY AND MODERNITY

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The purpose of the article is to explain the main cultural and anthropological aspects of the military ethos corresponding to the leading trends in the development of the culture of modern Russian society. It has been established that the military ethos, which prevails precisely among the Russian military, continues to be a largely conservative form of national culture and also plays a key role in the development of modern patriotism including providing mass culture with elements of positive entertainment based on explication fundamental for our country military-historical events of the past. The scientific novelty of the study lies in the totality of the results obtained revealing the role of the military ethos in the culture of modern Russian society taking into account both technological and socio-cultural innovations, as well as the military-historical past of the country.

Key words: military ethos, military culture, military innovations, Russian society, cultural heritage, existential aspects of military service, war robotization.

[А.А. Казаков Воинский этос в культуре российского социума: история и современность]

Цель статьи в экспликации основных культурно-антропологических аспектов воинского этоса, соответствующих ведущим тенденциям развития культуры современного российского общества. Установлено, что воинский этос, преобладающий именно в среде российских военных, продолжает оставаться в значительной степени консервативной формой отечественной культуры, а также играет ключевую роль в развитии современного патриотизма, в том числе обеспечивая массовую культуру элементами позитивной зрелищности, основанной на экспликации фундаментальных для нашей страны военно-исторических событий прошлого. Научная новизна исследования заключается в совокупности полученных результатов, раскрывающих роль воинского этоса в культуре современного российского социума с учетом как технологических и социокультурных инноваций, так и военно-исторического прошлого страны.

Ключевые слова: воинский этос, воинская культура, военные инновации, российское общество, культурное наследие, экзистенциальные аспекты воинской службы, роботизация войны.

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Introduction

The military ethos, which can be found among professional soldiers and officers representing a wide variety of armies and military corporations, makes it possible to regulate violence, paradoxically limiting its unbridled force against, at least, civilian population. In this regard, we should not forget about the civil defense volunteers who are ready to risk their own lives when their country experiences crisis.

At the same time, the bearers of military ethos have an opportunity to discover an existential dimension of their own personality. This dimension is directly related to their ability to take risks and overcome fear of physical death. That is why they often acted as a role model in upbringing young men: they were endowed with special courage, valor, the ability to sacrifice themselves to protect their native land. However, it is important to note that in previous historical epochs, the bearers of military ethos were attributed special glory for conquering other lands and peoples, so the soldiers were idealized as obvious invaders as well.

In general, Russian culture turns out to be very rich in military traditions, which can be interpreted in many ways as state-forming. For centuries, the Russian army has acted as a guarantor of security on the entire Eurasian continent, so the "military spirit" and heroism of Russian soldiers are deeply rooted in the national culture and self-consciousness.

Literature Review

In the works of Russian philosophers of the first half of the 21st century (Berdyayev, 2012; Ilyin, 2003; Snegarev, 2013), the consideration of military ethos (to a greater extent, the study of war phenomenon) was treated as a phenomenon of ethical conduct, however, associated with ontology of the "fallen" world.

In modern Russian philosophy, war in the context of violence problem has received its interpretation in the works of A.D. Kumankov, A.V. Artyukh, S.N. Borisov, V.P. Rimsky, S.V. Reznik (Kumankov, 2019; Borisov, Boyanich et al., 2019). In philosophy of the modern researcher P. A. Sapronov (Sapronov, 2001), the military ethos was studied in connection with historical shifts and changes taking place in structures of the current government.

In the studies of R.V. Aristov, E.V. Geiko, P.V. Didov, A.V. Yarovoy, A.A. Romensky et al. (Aristov, 2004; Geiko, 2014; Didov, 2015; Yarovoy, 2011; Romensky, 2019) they interpreted the military ethos through the prism of national culture, spiritual traditions of military affairs and patriotism.

In the works of A.P. Petrova, V.A. Remizov, L.G. Larkin, M.V. Kirchanov, A.I. Davydov (Petrova, 2020; Remizov, 2014; Larkin, 2014; Kirchanov, 2021; Davydov, 2019) they considered the aspects of military ethos represented in modern popular culture.

Materials and Methods

In this article we used a number of research methods:

- *historical and philosophical method* that allows to reconstruct the concepts of "military ethos" and "military culture" as fundamental categories of anthropological reality;

- *the method of typologization* opens up the possibility of classifying certain aspects of military ethos formation in the context of war and peace practices transformation;

- *the method of comparative analysis* that allows to determine the main similarities and differences between representation of military ethos in "traditional" and "modern" cultures;

- *hermeneutical method* of text analysis, which allows to extract the appropriate meanings necessary for further interpretation of military ethos in the culture of modern society;

- *the method of philosophical dialectics* was used to consider the formation of military ethos as a contradictory process in which the interests of various classes of society collide in the struggle for power.

Results

We focused on the concept of "military ethos", which is closely connected with the phenomenon of war, military art and culture. In this regard, it would be logical to assume that with historical transformation of wars and the nature of their permanent participants

(the "professional" military, acting as the main subjects of military operations and participants of the most historically significant battles) also changed. On the other hand, it can also be assumed that, despite the change of historical epochs, strategies and means of warfare, in the ethos of warriors they can still find a cultural and existential core that persists throughout the entire period of human civilization.

The very concept of "ethos" (Greek: ἦθος – character, disposition, mental disposition) turns out to be quite relevant for fixing the specifics of some social, anthropological and cultural phenomena that reveal the behavioral attitudes, preferences and inclinations of individual social classes: in our case, of the people who have mostly voluntarily chosen the practices of military service and affairs.

Perhaps, in this regard, we are talking about professional military personnel, also belonging (in historical retrospect) to military castes and estates. These groups of the population have their own culture and traditions that can be preserved for a long period of time. Military traditions are often based on a sense of special cohesion, an experience of common unity, as well as the principles of camaraderie and brotherhood. Almost all the representatives of professional military communities of both the past and present times have fairly strict codes of honor. Analogs of warrior ethos can be traced back to Paleolithic hunter unions. Moreover, military culture as a school of courage can have a definite impact on other spheres of human culture, such as religion, politics and scientific creativity. For thousands of human history years, military ethos and culture have been the core of patriotic education for many generations of entire nations, despite the fact of military men being at the origins of many state entities.

For centuries, war has been a form of communication and a means to vent rage on the "others" and "strangers", that is, enemies representing other human communities. Participation in war strengthened the concepts of "one's own" and "someone else's", contributed to distinction between the internal (intimate) and external sides of communication. For example, a warrior of the heroic era showed his temper in different ways, he was merciless on the battlefield, but fair and calm with members of his own community. At the same time, there developed ethical norms and rules for dealing with and even respect for the worthy and brave opponent.

Thus, war and everything connected with it in various (sometimes indirect) ways is reflected in any culture. Regardless of moral condemnation of this process, war remains one of the most important factors in development of history and civilization. Without idealizing or even romanticizing the war, it is important to note that it is able to open up a rather extreme dimension of human mentality.

Technological progress in the field of military technology impacts the military ethos too. It is obvious that the management of war and formation of the modern warrior's ethos to a greater extent (compared to the past stages of mankind historical development) is determined by the essence of technology. Scientific progress increasingly determines the nature of wars and, at the same time, the image of future soldiers. Moreover, the further introduction of machines and other innovative means of digital control is fraught with the problems that can clearly manifest themselves in the sphere of human freedom. Through cybernization of man and his corporeality, there can occur a fracture of anthropological reality. As a result, we may witness a hybrid of man and machine.

Moreover, the global society cultivates innovations in the most conservative spheres of public life, be it family, religion, sexual identity or the army service itself. In many Western armies, the gender agenda is being updated, taking place against the background of traditional military units' reduction (for the last century). On the other hand, the technological superiority of the most modern armies in the world opens up the possibility of experi-

ments in the field of "open society", when the military men are represented as "ordinary" members of society, subject to the same tendencies and weaknesses.

In popular culture, the heroic discourse of military ethos explication is used almost exclusively in the mode of self-irony. Infantilized images of military men primarily demonstrate the traumatic nature of their mental experience. In this regard, there is a tendency to completely abandon the explication of a full-fledged military man acting as an integral, moral person in the framework of serious discussions. In an entertaining movie based on comics, the image of a warrior is displaced by a fantastic ("wonderful") superhero (mutant, as a rule) with not just superhuman, but inhuman abilities as well.

The ethos of Russian military has demonstrated traditional or even partly "patriarchal" forms of gender orientation, whereas in modern Europe and North America, the syndrome of gender disorientation or gender dysphoria began to acquire a mass character. Some persons experience discomfort or stress, feeling that their gender identity and biological gender determined at birth do not coincide (Klimashevskaya, 2020). In this regard, it is difficult to imagine that transgender people etc., may appear in the Russian army, especially among the generals. Thus, the army remains a conservative force in terms of moral norms and anthropological constants of human existence. At the same time, it is quite progressive in terms of modern types of weapons. The Russian army is still an army of men, and the nature of the military as a whole rejects implementation of gender innovations, or at least significantly restricts them, which allows to say that in general in the near future it is unlikely to become a conductor of "Western" values.

At the same time, the challenge of modern technology continues to be an important factor that can transform the military practices of most armies in the world. In this regard, we should first of all talk about safety and saving lives of personnel in extreme situations. In the future there may also arise a question of shifting responsibility for physical destruction of the enemy (from humans to artificial intelligence). The opinion about the greater rationality of artificial intelligence systems is rooted in the minds of digitalization supporters. The fascination with technology did not appear yesterday. It arose during the leap in development of machine technology of the century before last. People are fascinated by technology. Machines are designed to serve a person, and if a person prefers to transfer the whole question of how to use them to a machine, because of blind machine worship or unwillingness to make a decision... we are asking for troubles ourselves (Wiener, 1983). Currently, war at a distance, when innovative armies practically do not suffer losses in combat is the ideal form of warfare. Nevertheless, it is impossible to completely exclude losses, otherwise it would be possible to talk about invulnerable, perfect soldiers.

Thus, despite the fact that we often deal with fantastic scenarios of the future (for example, in movies and fantasy novels), there still remain risks of transferring the combat vehicles control to artificial intelligence centers. At least, even if such risks cannot be considered quite realistic, they are actively mythologized and exploited by mass culture. It is also impossible to deny connection of military culture with "chauvinism" and discourses of national exclusivity, which turns it into an object of attack by "leftist" activists and supporters of transgender equality.

Developing the modern weapon, they focus on exoskeletons capable of endowing the future soldiers with superpowers. Thus, not only military robots, but combat cyborgs themselves are an important subject of cultural and philosophical discussions of our time, not least mediated by the influence of mass culture. In this regard, the topic of a "universal soldier", combining components of a biotic being and a military machine, remains quite controversial and ethically tense. Therefore, it is from this sphere that we can expect shifts in formation of military ethos associated, ultimately, with changes in service conditions.

However, the most radical transformations in this sphere of human culture and existence can occur only if a soldier is completely replaced by a combat robot.

We have already noted that military activity is the most concrete access to existence, which is marked for each person by the need to die. In relation to a warrior, it is also characterized by the possibility, and quite honorable, to die the death of the brave on battlefield. The willingness to face death is a key aspect of warrior ethos. However, modern ideologists of transhumanism put forward a strategy of spiritual, scientific and technological breakthrough, evolutionary transhumanism, on the basis of which humanity will be able to move to consciously controlled evolution for the first time in its history (Ishkov, 2014). The humanity will strive for technological immortality, or at least for a leap in the field of increasing life expectancy. Thus, futurists dream (among other things) of creating a universal soldier, who will not be vulnerable to most potential opponents. However, the prospects for such a soldier of the future remain rather vague, which is due to both ethical problems and the possibility of its economic profitability.

The question of how deeply computer systems will be able to penetrate into the human body and key components of a biological being, remains relevant. For example, F. Biocca (a modern scientist researching the possibilities of machines penetration into a living body), believes that technological progress entails immersion of sensorimotor channels into computer interfaces through a closer connection, carried out by penetration of various sensors and displays into the body (Biocca, 2006).

Thus, we can already discuss the "progressive embodiment" of mechanical organs and "prostheses" that allow to effectively overcome loads that the body cannot withstand under normal conditions. It is quite obvious to assume that such transhumanistic innovations are among the interests and projects of leading military-industrial corporations and defense programs of the state. At the same time, it is clear that in popular culture (perhaps, anticipating future transformations) the "fantastic" image of a "universal" soldier of the future, endowed with technical superpowers, is being actively exploited.

Discussion

As a part of the country's security strategy development, it is culture that turns out to be a "soft power" capable of bringing patriotism to the level of competitive development. It's well known that alternative patriotic projects can be implemented in modern culture. In this regard, researchers note that culture is one of the important factors of national security in the modern world. Culture creates a common "background" associated with sacralization of significant historical events and names, a set of positive social symbols, the maintenance of traditional values and meanings of culture, formed in the long process of its genesis and transmitted through educational institutions, channels of mass communication and mass culture. Reliance on the mechanisms of culture, on information, communication and humanitarian methods, on the capabilities of civil society – all that forms the basis of "soft power tools", which has become an integral part of modern international politics (Kostina et al., 2015). Thus, the struggle for patriotic education of the country's population should not be carried out in imposed and directive forms or propaganda. It should be based on the quality of the proposed aesthetic and intellectual works or historical events that can cause (at least) pride in one's own country.

Thus, it is worth recognizing that "militarism", which we propose to use in a neutral sense, is one of the key factors in formation of national culture. During the crisis epochs of our country (not as a result of "hot war"), the army was subjected to collapse, which immediately and negatively affected the entire culture of the state. For example, the crisis of the Soviet army, which followed destruction of the USSR, affected all the aspects of national life of the future Russia, giving rise to cultural anti-patriotic tendencies. As a result, the so-

ciety has developed an extremely suspicious and negative attitude towards the army and military personnel, which was immediately expressed in the cinema. It turned out that the Soviet soldier has lost his face for a while, and the image of Russian military which incorporates the best traditions of all historical eras has not yet been fully formed.

Especially against the background of the first Chechen war, parts of the army were forced to participate in police and anti-terrorist operations on the territory of their own country (these actions very soon took on the features of a protracted ethnic conflict). Under the circumstances, the army experienced enormous pressure from the civil society and mothers' unions, as well as, not least, numerous foreign agents trying to discredit domestic military traditions. Therefore, only after the second Chechen campaign, normalization of peaceful life in Chechnya and restoration of its local authorities, it was possible to talk about formation of an innovative Russian army capable to reproduce social patriotic patterns.

Patriotism in Russian culture is primarily associated with the experience of creating armed forces capable of responding to global historical challenges. Even now, when Russia occupies approximately the 10th-11th place in the world economy (according to the main economic indicators), its army, military and technical potential dominate in a number of positions. The formation of military traditions and ability to get out of crisis situations is the stock of cultural and historical strength, a constituent feature of the modern Russian army. We can say that restoration of Russian army automatically led to stabilization of the country, so the army is a state-forming institution, which role significantly exceeds the functions of the Western countries' armed forces. Of course, one can also make a critical remark that due to the underdevelopment of many other institutions (for example, the legal ones), the armed forces (and the "security forces" in general) assume additional functions to replenish the sense of justice in society.

The modern military patriotism must necessarily take into account the requirements of technological environment imposed on the military ethos in its innovative edition. The introduction of electronic systems in army management and trends in digitalization of military art lead to a synthesis of military ethos with the most advanced security technologies. As a result, there arise a type of military men competent in information security issues, able to anticipate risks in the field of military and civilian disinformation. The desire to inflict destruction and losses is replaced by the seizure of strategic initiative, frustration of the enemy, moral crushing, confusion in the circle of decision-makers, suppression of will, critically incorrect decisions (Neklessa, 2018). Therefore, we can talk about expansion of military ideology, as well as its noticeable penetration into the ways and forms of everyday perception of information. In the context of information society development, ideological pressure on a military man is growing (including from pacifist-minded communities that deny or significantly underestimate the role of military patriotism).

The high qualification of modern military personnel remains attractive to the most groups of population who want to gain additional knowledge in the field of technical equipment. Therefore, the army can no longer be as "popular" as it was, for example, during the period of forced construction of the Soviet people community, especially at the present time, when the army is based on special operations forces, operators of combat drones and representatives of engineering, rocket and space units.

At the same time, representatives of the military ethos are largely associated with the state and its bureaucracy, which in turn increases attacks on patriotism by opposition forces. As a result, the army and the "security forces" become an easy target for opposition media and various propagandists trying to present Russia as an extremely aggressive country in international arena. Therefore, we are currently facing pressure on the Russian

army from potential Western opponents who are trying to present Russia as the main international aggressor. But on the other hand, the army will always be more or less identified with state power, and in many ways forming the latter, especially given Russia's military status in international policy. Therefore, we should not forget the huge role of Russia (a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council) and its army in terms of responsibility and preservation of global security.

Conclusion

In general, we found that, despite the spread of transhumanism ideas in modern culture, the military ethos associated with traditions of the Russian army is presented in its rather conservative forms that prevent penetration of "innovative" anthropological trends aimed at "reassembling" a person's physicality and transforming his gender identity into the army environment and military culture. Thus, acting as the guardian of military ethos, the army remains an educational and cultural institution that supports traditional values in the field of gender relations, thereby being a "school of courage".

In Russia, military ethos plays a significant stabilizing role in the system of national culture, practices of youth patriotic education and inter-ethnic relations. Thus, it turns out that in conditions of digitalization of modern culture, the army performs an important function of maintaining social solidarity (given that the bearers of military ethos in a certain sense are both former military men and veterans of special services who continue to work in various spheres of culture and society).

In this regard, our paper also explicated the significant role of military ethos bearers in patriotic education of youth based on the historical past, rich in its military victories and collective memory of the Great Patriotic War. The preservation and further introduction of military ethos into the modern Russian culture can also become a barrier against the continued growth of uncontrolled youth violence, as well as contribute to education of attentive and respectful attitude to civilian weapons.

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