

“Integrity and Character. Good soldier – good man?”

By Dr Patrick Mileham

‘What the bad man cannot be is a good sailor, or soldier, or airman’¹. General Sir John Winthrop Hackett.

‘The true soldier is the enemy of the beast in man and no other’². Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery.

Background and aim.

The question of the good soldier / good man, or rather bad man / no-good soldier, does not go away. Stated firmly by General Sir John Hackett in 1970, this has been revisited recently by Thomas Grasseby in 2010³. The notion causes continuing controversy amongst US and foreign professors of military ethics. Grasseby is of the opinion that military professionals are like all human beings. They have ‘a unitary, not a bifurcated, consciousness’. However no one can say that men and women cannot see opposites or cope with ambiguity when facing circumstances, events and relationships. Mankind thrives on contradictions.

Alasdair MacIntyre’s ‘study in moral theory’ *After Virtue*, argues strongly that utilitarianism and abstract reasoning seem together to diminish the perceived value of human virtue. He deems the Enlightenment project, which *inter alia* gave conscience back to the individual, has failed. He implies that people do not reckon they have to be accountable to others to the full extent in matters of personal conscience. As free people he is saddened that they think they can self-limit the extent of their conscience, the law only partly checking them from doing exactly as they like. However MacIntyre also diminishes G.E.Moore’s

¹ Gen Sir John Hackett, ‘The military in service to the state, Harmon memorial lecture 1970, US Air Force Academy. A veteran of the 1944 Arnhem campaign Hackett became Principal of King’s College London.

² Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, *A History of Warfare*, Collins, London, 1968, p.587.

³ Thomas B. Grasseby at the Ft. Leavenworth ethics symposium, 2009.

views on 'the good' as a stand-alone, self-referencing abstract noun. In matters of conscience a number of different approaches in the attempt to achieve goodness are valid, including common sense. However Kantian 'good will', as adjective plus noun, is not the same as 'goodwill', where the emphasis is jointly on the two elements of what is one single noun. Generating goodwill is what I shall argue for in this paper, the activity of linking self and others. It brings out the best in people.

This conference is about military ethics and the increasing pressure on individuals in personal and professional roles. This makes any enterprise harder to accord with declared and observed virtues, being abstract nouns, and ethical behaviour which is achieved by people doing things as active verbs. I myself have written variously on the distinction between 'institutional and operational ethics'⁴ in the military, as well as on 'professional integrity' and on the 'conscience and the soldier'⁵. In this paper I aim to bring arguments together about innate personal virtue and how virtue may mature progressively within a person - or indeed regress - in accord with those professional virtues expected in soldiers, sailors and airmen of all ranks. The specific notions I shall explain more deeply than usual are 'integrity' and 'character', linked to the dynamics of 'altruism', 'trust' and 'conscience'. Is it the individual human-being as soldier (to use a generic word), or the professional soldier who is more useful to society and the profession of arms? I believe the link is between an individual's inner life - soldier or otherwise - and his or her outward actions in conjunction with others.

Virtues, law and current military operations.

We know virtue means goodness, moral excellence. Virtue is broken down, artificially as some people contend, into constituents and categories, the virtues being attitudes of the human mind which, prior to actions and events, guide their conduct. Afterwards the recognizable quality of goodness then becomes the substance and means of continuing internal reflection by individuals and external scrutiny by observers, bringing degrees of satisfaction or otherwise. Anyway, the virtues are useful methodological expressions to assist responsible

⁴ Patrick Mileham 'Moral Dynamics and military Operations, in *Defense and Security Analysis*, Vol. 25, No 1, March 2009, p. 81.

⁵ Hull military ethics conference 2006, Amsterdam conference 2007, University of Reading Conference 2012 and Euro ISME Conference, 2013.

authorities, including military leaders, as well as researchers in the humanities in analysing people in communities and their actions.

A few words are necessary about 'contemporary challenges' in the conference title. We also know that the law, both domestic and international, is derived directly and indirectly from moral philosophy. By defining the opposites, law purports to uphold what is right, good and just. Military operations conducted by democracies are explicitly authorised to put right wrongs and injustices, many of which nowadays are severe infringements of human rights, codified in International Human Rights law (IHRL). The conduct of military operations - being the use of lethal force to defeat enemy forces, terrorists and insurgents, directly or remotely (such as with UAVs); or using non-lethal means, for example information operations and cyber warfare; as well as promoting security by benign means, including operations in support of humanitarian relief - are deemed to be virtuous methods, used to counter already wrongful activities and resolve dangerous circumstances, leading to bloodshed. Beyond obvious breaches of international law, the UN Responsibility to Protect project more or less defines such circumstances.

We have to admit that the world is not safe for pacifism. The 'challenges' suggested in the conference title reveal that the reasons for military interventions are far from clear, and particularly their effectiveness, even if the offences might make metaphorical angels weep, such as the use of chemical weapons in the Summer of 2103 in Syria. Much of the world does not recognize a belief in the human rights and inclusiveness of humankind.

We can call our interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, 'expeditionary wars' if we want, but in hindsight, I suggest that they be termed 'experimental wars'. We seem now (October 2013) not to wish to experiment with hard power in Syria. We recognize that some nations, perversely and forcibly, hold political power in order to maintain the denial of freedoms for some or most of their populations, with arbitrary laws of their own making, many being contrary to IHRL. However the paradox of all paradoxes is to use lethal force to prevent and stop lethal force. Sometimes, maybe often, it works. Are we looking for armed force therefore sometimes to be an intrinsic, self-justifying virtue, not just a sometimes-virtuous activity? Or is force merely a manifestation more or less of

Realpolitik? As In his keynote speech at this conference Professor MacIntyre tells us, as thinkers, we have to find the truth, not just be realistic.

What is moral? Why ethical?

Military virtues have long existed, recognizable in even quite primitive and early fighting men. A pertinent question is how close are they to personal and civic virtues? For a start there are a number of difficulties in expressing in what the virtues truly consist. Many lists of today's institutional and particularly military virtues can be found and, while there are similarities, there are differences consequent on the dynamics of community and national cultures. There are also differences of meaning, sometimes subtle and significant, in translating from one language to another.

Added to which there is a difficulty, compounded by participants and scholars, with the often haphazard way we express the narrative of human conduct. Whatever the intention and outcome, what people do is achieved expressly in verbs. Verbal activities, I believe, are first order activities and expressions of conduct. Moral conduct or ethical conduct? The adjectives and corresponding adverbs, what is 'moral' and what is 'ethical', denote the quality of what is done. It follows that the adjectives and corresponding adjectives are second-order. Thinking about abstract nouns, such as good and right, is a third order activity. These words, I argue, should be used much more clearly and distinctly to make any sense of what in truth is right and good in human behaviour, or wrong and bad.

Since we are investigating what is the quality of actions, I deal firstly with moral as adjective, linking the thought process (third order activity as noun) with the first order verb of doing whatever is the activity intended to be right and good. The adjective moral is from the Latin *mos*, (plural) *mores*⁶, and is best understood to describe the details of daily living of a particular community and its cultural dynamics. The word moral identifies and interprets the habits, customs, physical actions and behaviours found in the vast number of activities and details of individuals' daily lives when interacting with each other in a community or with other communities. Moral also articulates the corporate

⁶ The word is used directly in the English language, meaning 'the customs and conduct which embody the fundamental values of a social group'.

ambitions and expectations, the mental, political and religious views of the world in which a community lives and believes in, their *Weltanschauung*, their world view.

So moral behaviour is socially and culturally conceived. It defines a community and distinguishes it more or less from others communities. Social norms, what is normal and even normative research methodology, does not necessarily mean that the substance of action that seems right is necessarily good. Furthermore when communities exert significant moral influence on each other each other, whatever are the means, social, political, religious and economic, the effect can be described as 'soft power'.

The point is that communities made up of more or less willing individuals, have a local external life. The shared *mores* become internalised, rightly or wrongly, as the nurture of early years, maybe fixed for a lifetime. Some of a community's activities and behaviours, prompted by the internalised life borne of shared *mores*, attain the highest universal standards of goodness. Other actions might be right for one community or organisation but not necessary for another community or organisation, particularly when they are in competition, for social, cultural, religious, political, economic, religious or, indeed, military reasons. So I believe that the adjectives right, wrong and moral are better reserved for subjective and descriptive use, as in 'moral behaviour' – based on shared values, not necessarily in accord with universal, fully reasoned virtues. The nature of values, is of course, that they are variable. In sum, we can speak of the moral forces that motivate people sharing a common cultural understanding, the *mores* of their community.

Turning to what we mean by ethical, from the Greek *ethos*⁷, *ethikos*, we infer not only from an individual's actions but more notably his or her character, and the collective effect of a large number of individuals' characters, how they interact with others much more widely and significantly than just their own community – including opposing communities and enemies. Thus the ideals, identity and collective actions of a diverse and broadly-conceived rather than a

⁷ A fine distinction has to be drawn because there are two spellings of *ethos* in Greek. The one beginning with *eta*, is close to the Latin *mos*, *mores*, the habitual behaviours of a community and its culture. The other is spelt with an *epsilon*, from which *ethikos* is derived, being what we understand as ethics, based on character and conduct beyond community and culture.

narrowly formed community, bring about the good or the best spirit of that community in terms of human virtue and goodwill.

So a true ethical understanding is obtained by our knowledge and understanding of people, and particularly the high degrees of selflessness and altruistic actions they show, or otherwise selfish and base actions. Ethical actions and characteristics should be understood as those rising above mere habits, customs and group loyalties to reasoned, universal values, deeply felt beliefs about goodness and goodwill, and the ideals and actions of selfless altruism. The inner life of the community accords, as far as humanly possible, with the highest of ethical principles.

It must be emphasised that the ethics of human life are derived from cool reflection and abstract reasoning, suggested by Immanuel Kant. Aristotle and others recommend the belief that ethical conduct is about good people, those who habitually do good, so that it becomes a predisposition, virtues residing in good individuals, such as is codified as virtue ethics. It is also about the Aristotelian mean between extremes, fostered by the spirit of practical wisdom, owing little to utilitarianism, which is culturally based.

While still on the use of language, I believe we must conclude that the corresponding abstract nouns, morality and ethics, are not equivalents. 'Moral courage' is not only the mentality of bravery in front of one's own group. It can include challenging⁸ and standing against actions and methods of the group, because such actions when more deeply considered, are unethical, unacceptable and maybe unlawful in the wider context. In a word, whistle-blowing. Likewise if you were to use the expression 'military morality' in Britain, you would expect to expose a mind-set verging on extremes of regimented customs and aggressive militaristic habits, with a do-it-yourself moral code. Militarism is unprofessional behaviour in the armed forces of liberal democracies.

In sum, a firm distinction between moral behaviour, which distinguishes what culturally is right or wrong, and ethical conduct, which expresses what is good and true - or exposing what is evil and false - should be constantly borne in mind

⁸ While challenging is a current and much over-used metaphor, it is a strong one when used in its true military context.

when we, and particularly our armed forces, act. The former is best used descriptively, the latter normatively. Language is important, because if wisely used it helps our minds sorting things out into the relative categories of human action and understanding. If casually used, language can it hinder our understandings

‘Moral Forces’ – Fighting spirit

Do good people fight? The short answer is yes, supposing that the specific fighting is right and somehow generates ends-based goodwill. However as an answer it is inadequate. Alasdair MacIntyre speaks about military ethics in crisis. To return to our main concern, the purpose of armed force comprises three moral dynamics. The first two I have in mind are corollaries of each other. Briefly they are about

- Getting our people to fight, and
- Stopping the enemy from fighting. The third is about

- Fighting justly, the subject of the next section.

The first is the mental attitude, will-power and conative determination, which reflects the desired habitual and customary *mores* of armed forces and governments to be bold, brave, courageous and if necessary face injury and death on operations in pursuit of lawful objectives and missions. As induced by their particular military culture, their institutional *mores*, participants display a spirit and habit of aggression and fierce resistance or, of course, the reverse, passivity and weakness. Military success or failure may be characteristic of their military culture, albeit there are many other physical and mental factors which multiply or divide the effectiveness of armed force.

At best, the moral strength of members of professional armed forces is about the institutional determination to compete, win and if necessary die to achieve military success. It is about the possession of personal courage and fighting spirit, particularly important military virtues. Meanwhile using lethal or coercive force, the intrinsic goodness of actions, according to ethical codes, may have to be temporarily suspended and intrinsic evil be committed, yet maintain

ultimate goodness. I mean to harm, kill and destroy humanely – a statement which must be the oxymoron of all oxymorons.

Part of the fighting spirit of armed forces is connected with risk assessment, mathematically calculated or intuitive, at both the macro-strategic and micro-tactical levels. Our people will take personal risks and fight better if they believe their lives, health and futures are treated with respect and not recklessly risked by others – others being governments, commanders and comrades.

I must dwell on the expression ‘moral forces’ used by Clausewitz and his exemplar Napoleon. They were of the opinion that ‘the moral was three to one with the physical in war’⁹. As conceived this statement has little to do with ethics. That is why I labour to emphasise the difference between moral and ethical. In regards to risk assessment before battle, the Duke of Wellington had a neat practical riposte, agreeing with Napoleon’s statistical rule of thumb. ‘I suspect that all the continental armies were more than half beaten before the battle was begun’, he told a friend. The margin at Waterloo, he admitted afterwards, indicated on both sides a near equality of fighting spirit. For each the encounter between the two men, Napoleon, the leader and fighter *par excellence*, and Wellington, the supreme military calculator of moral forces in coalition war, proved for each to be their last battle.

There is a warning. While moral forces and fighting may be public goods, extreme forms of fighting spirit are recognised in our modern world as the psychological aberration of militarism mentioned already. It is the opposite of what in liberal democracies we desire either of our society or our armed forces. There is a distinction between zeal (Ge. *Eifer*, *Fanatismus*, and Fr. *zèle* and *ardour*) and enthusiasm (Ge. *Begeisterung* and Fr. *enthousiasme*). The shades of meaning are to be found again in Aristotle’s mean, in this case the attitude which differentiates between the excess or deficiency of fighting spirit.

As stated, most liberal democracies have codes of conduct, or ethical principles for their armed forces, beyond what can be enacted in military law, regulation and discipline. We speak of ‘moral cohesion’ in respect of Britain’s armed forces. We need to get our people to fight collectively and effectively, or use a range of

⁹ See G.F.R. Henderson, *The Science of War*, Longman’s, London 1906, p.173

other less lethal tactics, to achieve their military objectives and political outcomes.

Of course published moral values vary between nations and indeed different armed forces. In Britain the personal qualities and actions of ‘courage, loyalty, integrity, selfless commitment, discipline and respect for others’¹⁰ form the main list. In practice the questions often arise on operations, loyalty to whom? My country, right or wrong? Then the connection between self-discipline, military law and regulation has to be questioned. A deeper meaning of integrity must be established, beyond mere honesty and truth-telling. Above all, the word I tell my people which should be added to the list, is ‘trust’. It has the practical virtue of being both noun and verb – as deep and broad as you can conceive and practise. The ideal form of human interaction and indeed leadership can be summarised in the words of the American writer, R.W.Emerson ‘trust men and they will be true to you’.

One has to admit that this sort of list, which I call ‘institutional ethics’, or the ‘ethics of military service’,¹¹ applies to the desired moral cohesion of all effective armies, including those of illiberal, repressive and militaristic nations. Fighting spirit, bravery, loyalty and discipline are moral factors in a community, even if the means and application of state power to enforce conformity by some regimes is reprehensible, unlawful or unethical in terms of universal human rights.

‘Moral forces’ –disarming the enemy

Those factors lead on to the second of my three dynamics, getting the enemy to stop fighting. Sun Tzu stated the ‘supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting’¹². Clausewitz stated that ‘the final political object ... in which

¹⁰ These ‘Values and Standards’ are shared by the Royal Navy and the Army. The Royal Air Force express their ‘Ethos, Core Values and Standards’ as ‘ Respect, (self- and mutual-respect), Integrity (courage, honesty, responsibility), Service before self (loyalty, commitment and teamwork) and Excellence (self-discipline, personal excellence, in the use of resources and pride)’.

¹¹ I differentiate the two categories as ‘ the ethics of military service’ within military institutions and the ‘profession of arm’ and ‘the ethics of defence’ or ‘operational ethics’, derived from *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post bellum* principles.

¹² Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. vii.

all means are combined [is] disarming the enemy'.¹³ The imperative is to reduce and if possible eliminate the enemy's fighting spirit. Nowadays in liberal democracies, we believe that all our arguments have to be in support of the war or operation being just, in the *jus ad bellum* tradition, sanctioned by the international community and the UN. The truthfulness and integrity of an action should be above reproach.

Once we have decided to use lethal military force within international law, we recognise from other just war criteria that a high chance of success is essential, meaning swift and decisive physical action, with minimum casualties on both sides. That means we induce fighting spirit in our armed forces as a cultural-moral strength of purpose, a winning mentality, a 'moral force' in the Napoleon-Clausewitz meaning of the expression.

But this fighting spirit, I re-emphasise, is a moral dynamic, in which abstract ethical principles may well have to be momentarily, or for the time being, suspended. Our military professionals often face very tough enemies. In view of the enemy's use of lethal force, we can use 'hard power', 'shock and awe', 'kinetic force' deliberately to tip the balance of fighting spirit in our favour. We first think of winning as our immediate aim, but with a strong connection with our ultimate end, to bring about peace.

Our peoples' fighting spirit has to be proved in physical action to be stronger than the fighting spirit and 'moral force' of the enemy. By having an irresistible strategic plan; accurate intelligence of the enemy's intentions and activities; achieving overwhelming force – but emphatically not extreme and disproportionate – outgunning, outmanoeuvring and defeating a range of nasty defensive tactics and tricks; all these activities, might bring us eventually the effect of disarming the enemy in both a physical and moral sense.

So in theory good can be achieved by swift, determined and spirited action resulting in some killing and destruction, which of itself is intrinsically evil. Of course intrinsic and extrinsic goodness and evil become confused. There are endless incongruities and paradoxes. Counter-counter-intuitive judgements have to be made. Indeed the spirit and purpose of double effect – when collateral damage, harm and death is inflicted - contains a severe internal

¹³ Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Ed. Anatol Rappoport, London, Penguin, 1968, p.124.

contradiction, which needs double intuition to resolve. How much power is needed to do just enough killing and destruction? Once again the Aristotelian mean between extremes recommends itself to those who hold command and office in armed forces, using deliberate but restrained humane killing, injury and destruction.

Stopping the enemy from fighting is, of course, shorthand for a large number of physical, cognitive and psychological-moral factors applied in forcing an enemy to restrain their activities, eventually bending to our will. When is the end in sight? Tolstoy in *War and Peace* refers to the 'moment of moral hesitation which decides the fate of battles'¹⁴. This is principally about moral effect, but arguably it is ethical conduct when a war of national survival is being fought, and the promotion of human rights and liberal democratic ideals makes for a safer peace.

Obviously all our actions should lead to a favourable outcome for all sides. In the end, as teleologically conceived, our peoples' fighting spirit and unstoppable determination should be stronger than that of the enemy, enough for him to disperse, ceasefire, and / or surrender to our superior understanding of what is best, greater will-power and applied physical capability. That so far is the theory; the ideal, normative expectations before and after conflict.

It certainly must not be forgotten that our people have a moral and ethical relationship with the enemy. In terms of humane harm and killing for ultimate good, how respectful and loyal have they to be to the enemy? How truthful, how perfidious are our plans and actions in our enemies' eyes? The categorical imperative is to achieve by physical means the maximum long-lasting effect of good with minimum casualties. This leads on to the need to fight justly.

Fighting justly – operational ethics

My third moral dynamic is fighting justly, fighting fairly, as a means of stopping the enemy from fighting, because the end-state of a safe peace is the right state, one hopes eventually meeting universal standards of goodness. To fight justly

¹⁴ Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Oxford University Press, 1989, p.196. 'Tipping point' was used in the chronology of the Iraq invasion in 2003.

the begin with the *jus ad bellum* criteria being of just cause, right authority, right intent, relative justice, proportionate cause, limited ends, reasonable chance of success and last resort need to be applied. Those of *jus in bello* are proportionate means, target discrimination, humanity and military urgency. I like to reflect on an extraordinary prescient Shakespearean statement about peace, written some decades before the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which applies particularly to the conduct of modern military operations,

‘A peace is of the nature of a conquest,
For then both parties nobly are subdued,
And neither party loser’.¹⁵

This ideal state of affairs can be extremely difficult or seemingly impossible if force-on-force, lethality against lethality is nearly equal. Eventually one party has physically to win while the other has to be made not to feel that they have lost in the psychological battle for superior will-power.

So how is military force justified? Hitting the enemy hard, within the rules of engagement and international law, using judgement based on the ethics of what is universal good, needs to be clearly reasoned in the Kantian fashion. Again are we fighting for humanity through intrinsically inhumane methods? Can we use the expression mercy killing? Is this the same as the divine commandment ‘render to no man evil... but overcome evil by good’¹⁶?

It is interesting to note that within three days of the NATO air offensive against the Gaddafi regime in Libya in 2011, the British newspapers carried the headline ‘What is our exit plan?’ This sort of question would not have been so quickly stated in previous times. We seem to be more sensitive than ever in using force, sensitivity being an intrinsically good thing for many reasons. We acknowledge the UN’s agenda of a Responsibility to Protect a repressed people, even if we in the liberal democracies in truth seldom intervene to save such people from malign governments. We learn to draw more perceptive military-technical, political, legal and moral lessons from each new military intervention. Was hesitation over intervention in Syria during the late summer of 2013, right and

¹⁵ Henry IV Part II, Act IV, Scene 2, lines 89-91.

¹⁶ American Standard Version and King James’s Bible, *Romans*, Chapter 12, verses 17 and 21.

good, as thousands died? Britain's Parliament gave a 'yes we can do', quickly followed by a 'no we won't'. History will tell us whether we missed an opportunity for good, but as likely as not we might have compounded an evil that was going to continue anyway.

In all our discussions about military ethics we are attempting to achieve counsels of perfection, by linking together the inner life of communities and nations via their outward action. However we have to ask the question are we merely achieving double standards? Persuading and disarming the enemy when he doesn't want to be disarmed and may be prepared to die for his duty of fighting for freedom or to uphold repression, is a moral and ethical activity much easier said than done.

Professional and Personal virtues

So far I have concentrated in people doing good. I need now to comment on good people and good soldiers, when good is intrinsically a predisposition to act in ways to achieve what is good. The hierarchy of virtues, beliefs, principles, values and standards should first be differentiated¹⁷ between the professional (reflecting the nature of the profession) and the personal. A right act as intended professionally, may be objectively good in the great scheme of the operational mission in the use of force. An agent using military means can be deemed to be performing the actions of a professional person, more or less faithfully accomplishing his or her obligations and duties. However these are difficult assumptions to maintain if, on military operations, other peoples' human rights are infringed.

Existing national codes of military conduct, numbering already some forty-five, are currently being gathered for an academic exercise¹⁸ to compare, contrast and seek possible convergence. Each list of intended virtues and quality of actions purports to show active interrelation of its parts. There is of course an interrelationship between the many lists. However, as noted above, the greatest difficulties lie in language and cultures represented in reaching any

¹⁷ Grassey op cit. emphasises, 'strongly differentiated'.

¹⁸ St Cyr-Coetquidan research project, supported by EuroISME members (of which this author is one) will be reporting on their findings at the 2014 EuroISME conference in Koblenz Germany,

conclusion or, as is hoped for, a list of virtues and intents with which every nation might come to agree.

As they stand, these lists are also thought to be more about 'the ethics of military service' rather than 'the ethics of defence'. Stronger emphasis is given to the 'moral cohesion' of national armed forces, less emphasis on their conduct of *jus in bello*. What professional military persons do on operations is usually thought to be adequately covered in the law of armed conduct and rules of engagement appropriate for the operation. This may not be so. Sometimes conduct has been found to fall short of what is wanted in truth, the categorical goodwill required to bring peace after fighting.

Furthermore, having lists of virtues and codes of conduct denoting intent, as well as military oaths taken by individuals on joining, does not automatically mean the virtues will be faithfully adhered to at all times in all circumstances, even amongst well-trained armed forces in liberal democracies. Professionalism denotes achieving, in reality and truth, desired standards of right conduct and good outcomes.

However encouragingly, the mere fact that there are now so many published codes of conduct for the military, when 25 years ago there were none to speak of, shows an increasing understanding for the need for commitment to professional ethics and standards of conduct, as a common denominator or imperative. This reveals a firm international aspiration to use force for good beyond the constraints of *Realpolitik*, a creative endeavour far wider than narrow national political agendas. Thus ISME has a strong medium-term future, despite MacIntyre's worry about a crisis in the discipline of military ethics.

I now consider personal virtues. Such virtues are those where intentions and actions are owned by the individual in the modern-day usage of the verb. While military persons may act according to codes of professional conduct suggested, the same person is a citizen and will return to being a private person and ordinary member of humankind, when relinquishing his or her public office. Virtue comprises many attributes and attitudes of mind.

Of course a man or woman chosen for professional military service, should possess a temperament and personality that can cope with the rigours and ‘strong differentiation’, in Grassey’s phrase, between military service during peacetime and on operations. This requires a certain depth of character, meaning powers of introspection, of what is right and wrong, good and bad, sufficiently conscientiously to take responsibility for his or her professional actions. For continuation in service he or she should be assessed, not only for competency and determination, but also for integrity, a wholeness of character consisting in the possession of true conscience and utter reliability, character traits much deeper than conscientiousness.

The question is how far these personal character traits once codified, are discernible and assessable in an individual, particularly if the individual has not been put under severe operational strain over time: it is a matter for the quality of assessment and at each stage of promotion within the profession. In liberal democracies is a person believed to have unquestioned integrity until proved otherwise? Or can a profession assume that an individual has to prove integrity before initial admission and subsequent promotion? National customs vary.

Inner life - altruism and conscience

While military persons hold office and are trusted to perform fiduciary roles¹⁹, there is a necessity that they understand what are virtues, beliefs, principles, values and standards of conduct in action, drawing on the study of philosophy and ethics. In the background lies their religious knowledge, other belief-systems and up-bringing, chiefly about comprising acting in good faith. Fidelity and confidence is about understanding what are truly reciprocally faithful relationships.

This brings how far their character and goodness can be legitimately developed in individuals, to comprehend what they need to know personally and do professionally without invading their human right of freedom of conscience. No military institution in a liberal democracy can legitimately take away the character or stretch an individual by ordering him or her to do things against

¹⁹ Author’s papers at the EuroISME Shrivenham Conference, 2012 and Vienna Civil-Military Relations Conference 2012. I also explained the differentiation between ‘moral and ‘ethical’.

conscience. Military people can find themselves in moral danger, as well as physical danger.

Freedom of conscience can mean a person may have a deep and lasting conscience, or a shallow, little or no conscience at all. One has to ask is moral discipline and self-discipline sufficiently explained for practical military purposes by military authorities drawing, for instance, on Kohlberg's²⁰ work on the 'stages of moral development'? He writes of moral development as recognizing

- Right and wrong discernment, determined by punishments and rewards, and
- Obedience and punishment orientation of individuals, leading maybe to developing a
- Self-interest orientation, which may progress to
- Interpersonal accord and conformity, rising to
- Authority and social-order orientation, formalised into
- Social contract orientation which, at best, leads an individual to accept
- Universal ethical principles orientation, when he or she has attained a fully developed and principled conscience.

The morality of the politics of nations are a complete mixture of the above, all stages combining in *Realpolitik*.

While Kohlberg's work, and that Piaget on the same subject, was about the moral development of young persons in a civilian context, I believe that not enough attention is given to judge the moral development of soldiers on entry in armed forces even of the liberal democracies. Traditional discipline, as imposed in the barrack room, on the drill square and at boot camp, assumes everyone needs to be put through the rigours of reward and punishment. Not enough is given to moral self-development and self-discipline. Many people regress, even very senior military people, particularly when no-one is thought to be a witness, motivated by self-interest.

²⁰ Kohlberg, Lawrence (1981). *Essays on Moral Development, Vol. I: The Philosophy of Moral Development*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row.

I consistently argue that professional armed forces develop a strong morality and have a fiduciary role²¹. Military professionals, from commander in Chief to corporal, have the status of holding military office. They are persons of double trust. There can be a tension between what is moral and what is ethical – the professional and the universal. The bringing together, the uniting of personal virtues and military virtues, when embraced by members of professional armed forces, makes such convergence of virtues into public good. Professional competence, the character of a person, his or her goodness, altruism and integrity – or relative failure - remains uniquely with the individual. Conversely such virtues can be turned to good effect in military service for the greater good of mankind, in promoting trust amongst the nations.

The search for integrity

In liberal democracies professional virtues are of secondary place to the personal, so closely are both part of an individual's human identity. The oath of service is a means of attaching prior intent more strongly to individual conscience – an oath being a solemn, moral and legal promise which predispose the person to a place of double trust²². While remaining citizens, they take on a quasi-military identity, which may only reflect a short episode in their lives. People have to live with themselves, comfortably, for their whole of their life. People remember. People often find fault with themselves years later.

The dictionary meaning of 'integrity' derives from *integer*, 'oneness'. Thus personal integrity is the goodness in people, their innate or tutored grasp of what is universally best conduct. Looking to its Greek roots, *ethos*, *ethikos* starts with individual character. Integrity is a word itself included in many military and civilian professional codes. It should be understood to mean much more than mere *prima facie* honesty and truthfulness; it indicates character, *ethikos*, distinguishable from cultural habits, *mores*. The extension of these arguments leads one to reach a definition of 'integrity' possessed by a person with a strong attitude of 'selfless commitment' to service, together with 'respect'²³ and

²¹ Patrick Mileham, 'Fit and Proper Persons: Officership Revisited', *Sandhurst Occasional Paper* No 10, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, 2012.

²² This I consistently maintain is the nature of the oath taken by most military persons and in the commission held by officers. See footnote 21.

²³ These are three of the six 'values and standards code' of British military service noted above.

goodwill towards others, including opponents and enemies²⁴. I believe integrity particularly incorporates altruism and conscience as the dynamics of interpersonal trust.

These subordinate virtues are of course variables across the community of individuals and in the daily life of an individual. Codes of conduct demand professional people who can be trusted, who are not duplicitous and are motivated by service to others. And as hinted above a good soldier should be good not only amongst his friends, but also to his enemies. That is a more difficult test, to achieve the wholeness and integrity of character reflected in the nature of his or her actions. Virtue is virtue, and implies but does not prove an absolute, whereas the word integrity does imply an absolute and has no degrees. That is what Hackett and now Grasseley are saying. If in difficulty one might draw on Heraclitus, who wrote of the 'unity of opposites'. People frequently have to reconcile two contrary actions in one.

So to the unique individual, John Adair, in studying leadership, writes that 'Integrity ... means adherence to a set of moral, artistic or other values, especially truth, that are so to speak outside oneself'.²⁵ The opposites and contradictions, particularly those leaders face, somehow have to be united, and simplified as Heraclitus noted, in the change-process. That is a particular feature of leading; managing the process and dynamics of change, usually and additionally implying risk. 'A person of integrity', Adair judges, 'then is honest to such a degree that they are incapable of being false to a trust, responsibility or pledge – or to their own standards of conduct'²⁶.

Strength of character has the inextricably linked dependent variable of conscience. Integrity, at the personal level, is that faculty of our character whereby what we say, we do; what we promise we deliver; what we believe in - in all conscience - we practise openly in our lives; our private behaviour and our inner thoughts are outwardly manifest in actions of good faith. Moreover

²⁴ These two categories are what I earlier differentiate as pertaining to 'institutional' and 'operational ethics'.

²⁵ John Adair, *Confucius on Leadership*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2013, p. 111

²⁶ John Adair, *op cit.*, 2013, p. 111.

what we say we will not do, for good reason, we do not do. Shakespeare had words for it too.

‘This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not be false to any man’.²⁷

On the face of it this seems deliberately paradoxical. However, a person of character and integrity has the predisposition for altruism, as asserted by Aristotle, conscience being the Kantian imperative. Genuine and sincere, a good person must be at one with himself so he can be at one with others. Truth and integrity go together, so does trust; the opposites are duplicity, selfishness and fear. Such a person is one who generates goodwill and trust, trusts others and by them in turn is trusted. Give and take, trust is the currency, how people come to value each other.

Conclusions

In conclusion, far from being a negative, destructive profession, I believe military professionals should create three things, to

- Prepare for the use of armed force;
- use violence in operations if necessary, to eliminate violence; and
- Achieve a lasting peace.

Looking to the creative task. Does the Heraclitan unity of opposites include the enemy? Shakespeare again had the answer in his *post bellum* maxim ‘neither party loser’.²⁸ This act of convergence, reconciling and integrating moral forces with enemy is creative and imaginative. If achieved it is an act, maybe the supreme act, of human agency, when a former enemy trusts you enough, as Clausewitz suggests, to persuade ‘our enemy to do our will’²⁹.

²⁷ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I, scene 3, lines 78-80

²⁸ William Shakespeare, *Henry IV part 2*, Act IV, scene 2, lines 89-91.2

²⁹ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton university Press, N.J., 1776, p. 75.

Implicit in modern-day interpretation of *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post bellum*, is the integrity of conduct before during and after the fighting. This relies on the professional soldier of any rank, understanding, the teleological integrity of cause and effect in military operations. Similarly moral behaviour as a group / institutional / national manifestation of cultural phenomena must bear integrity with universal categorical imperatives of ethical norms and lead to idealized conduct on military operations.

Hackett made his assertion in the negative. A man or woman of no goodwill and bad faith, with bad or no conscience, selfish and lacking in altruism, in short a person of no recourse to an wholesome, inner life of character should not be employed in the armed forces of liberal democracies. A remorseless, unhesitating and objective professional who can be relied upon as a brave, efficient and effective killing agent may be useful in intense combat, to apply shock and awe, as moral force. But his usefulness was diminished by the Nuremberg tribunals of 1945-6, calling on the world to reconcile individual conscience with the conscience of the world. Minimum casualties in the swiftest time is the only justification for war in 2013 and the future.

In that activity we seek to prove that morally what is right coincides with ethically what is good. Military communities seek to place their morals in line with universal ethics. The integrity of self and others in seeking peace, we understand requires high degrees of self-discipline, self-guidance or self-leadership, *Innere Führung*. Such cannot be achieved without conscience and the moral courage based on goodwill and altruism. 'Courageous restraint'³⁰ in Afghanistan accords with the 'true soldier'. Such virtues form character and comprise integrity, ready, predisposed for the next ethical problem to be resolved with confidence. That provides for truth in human conflict and indeed all human affairs and enterprises.

Achieving unity in the power of the human will is about bringing together the inner life of many communities and nations with their external actions by means of goodwill. It is the uniting of all that is subjective with all that can be objective in human reasoning. This is what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set in motion in the phrase in Article 1 - 'men of reason and conscience' - and the Marten's Clause asserted as 'usages established among civilized peoples, from

³⁰ As taught to NATO forces in 2010-11.

the laws of humanity, and the dictates of the public conscience'³¹. We can thus conceive of the integrity of humankind, of our common humanity upon which all depends for our future life on earth.

Hackett concluded his 1970 lecture with '... the conviction that the highest service of the military to the state may well lie in the moral sphere, 'and the awareness that almost everything of importance in this respect has probably still to be said'. Forty years on we have made much progress in codifying the integrity of the profession of arms. There is more to do.

³¹ Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague IV), 18 October 1907