The Repeated Glimpse of a Military ‘Vivid Present’
Methodological Implications of Intertwining Things and Bodies with Minds and Words: Findings from a Danish Field Study

By Claus Kold

What Soldiers Say, and What They Do

For obvious reasons, field studies in theatres of war operations are not common. They are dangerous, it takes time to plan them, and wars are typically not planned. This is partly why field studies are few in numbers – only three have been conducted in operations in which the Danish military has participated (Goldschmidt, 1976; Kold, 2003; Norgaard, 2004). Surveys are more commonly used together with interviews after the fact, the latter sometimes involving a large number of interviewees (Redding, 1994). While a field study amounts to direct observation of specific behaviour, a survey produces indirect observation only, and uses general concepts. Interestingly, the data from field studies differ from the data supplied by surveys, and lead to different theories about the operations concerned (Winslow, 2000). This difference is of vital importance as the political decision-making machinery, the military leadership and information management process rely on getting the right intelligence before, during and after operations.

One central observation in the field study to be presented of the Danish KFOR component was a general difference between what the soldiers said during interviews, what they said talking together, and what they did together (Kold, 2003). Another, no less central observation in the same study was that peace support and war were confused among the soldiers – both as concepts and in practice. The findings indicated that different professional understandings and identities were at work among the soldiers (in keeping with Janowitz, 1971; Franke, 1999/2001). The dominant identities were found to be both traditional (the soldier as ‘warrior’) and novel (the soldier as ‘mediator’) – with the ‘warrior’ winning the competition hands down in their understanding of the central concept of the operation. Such findings have serious methodological implications since if the soldiers give answers in surveys and interviews, these answers will not necessarily reflect what is actually going on in a theatre of operation (Winslow, 2000; Kold, 2003; MacCoun, 2006, p.649). If the soldiers talk about peace support but act as they would in a war operation, how then, will this be registered in a survey? Further, if such is the case, how then can a democracy control its military (Roslyng-Jensen, 1980)?

This last question brings civil-military relations into focus. Two central lines of study address that major issue: one emphasizes esprit de corps among officer groups, the other lays stress on primary cohesion in combat (Siebold, 1999).
The Military Profession, Esprit de Corps, and Unit Cohesion

Samuel Huntington introduced the idea of the military as a ‘profession’, clarifying how this notion controls the civil-military relationship. He constructed professionalism out of expertise, responsibility, and esprit de corps (1957). Morris Janowitz (1960) more or less agreed with Huntington’s definition, but differed as to how it should be used. Charles Moskos presented his thinking in 1972 (Caforio, 2006, p.21) and seemed to be in accord with Huntington’s and Janowitz’ concept of profession, although he did differ on other aspects.

These theoretical points of departure resulted in three basic schools in the sociology of the military: Huntington’s divergent school; Janowitz’s convergent school; and the plural school of Moskos (Caforio, 2006, pp.13-24). It is significant that even if the three schools are based on different understandings of the dynamics of the variables undergirding military ideology, they roughly agree on the components of the construction.

According to these researchers, a professional soldier is defined as one who has gone through training and acquired skills which enable him to perform special services to the State. Janowitz added that the socializing process of becoming a professional includes developing a professional identity: the traditional “heroic warrior” who personifies personal bravery, but also the “manager”, who reflects the pragmatic and social dimensions of modern warfare, and the “technologist” who offers technical expertise. These military identities are central to civil-military relations, and have serious impact on the various rationales envisaged for third-generation peace operations (again, in keeping with Janowitz, 1971; Tardy, 2004).

Parallel to research into officers’ esprit de corps were efforts to probe military unit cohesion. A central study in that regard was that of Samuel Stouffer and his research team. In a situation where more than 16 million Americans saw service in WWII, Stouffer et al. conducted more than 200 studies, including 60,000 interviews with personnel both on the home front and in operations abroad (Stouffer, 1949a, p.12). Another landmark study was authored by Shils and Janowitz. Their research into cohesion in the German army during World War II was in part based on Cooley’s primary group concept and theory (Cooley, 1962 [1909]), and provided a set of components for the measurement of military cohesion. Shils and Janowitz’s basic hypothesis was that cohesion in the German army was a function of the integrity of the soldier’s primary group, and that primary groups were held together by bonds of comradeship (Shils & Janowitz, 1948).

Research development following World War II saw an explosion of small group studies. Almost every variable and combination of variables was examined (Siebold, 1999, p.12). In that research process, cohesion came to include multiple concepts and factors which divide cohesion into horizontal (social) cohesion and vertical (task) cohesion. A central discussion between the two research positions then focused on the question of its influence on combat performance.
Some researchers argue that social cohesion is relevant to performance:

Cohesion has also been defined as a sense of belonging to a particular group with feelings of morale associated with group membership (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990). Manning (1991) argues that military unit cohesion is an important contributor to morale, rather than a synonymous process variable. Cohesion and morale have been found to be associated with combat effectiveness, job performance, overall well-being, and satisfaction (e.g. Belenky, 1987; Griffith, 1997, 2002; Oliver, Harman et al., 1999).

Other authors argue just the opposite: "Researchers have repeatedly found that (1) task cohesion has a modest but reliable correlation with group performance, whereas (2) social cohesion has no reliable correlation with performance and, at high levels ('clubbing'), can even undermine task performance" (MacCoun, Kier & Belkin, 2006, p.647). Yet, whatever unit cohesion consists of, it is of vital importance in peace operations, since they do not offer the same objectives as the war operations for which military units are designed in traditional concepts and training modes (Dobbie, 1994; Ramsbotham et al., 2005).

The concept of vertical task cohesion comes rather close to the concept of and research on esprit. Where task cohesion is key to understanding cohesion in very small units, esprit is a key concept in the understanding of the officers’ military mind (Siebold, 1999, p.15).

The study of both esprit and cohesion seems to rest on theoretical concepts which grant rationality pride of place, and separate mind from body (Mead, 1934). From this theoretical viewpoint, the attitudes and voice of soldiers acquire primary importance, while their body behaviour remains secondary. Such a stance, however, generates problems in the understanding of the concepts, as we shall see in the following presentation of Sorensen’s theory and findings (Sorensen, 1988).

**Danish Research into Esprit de Corps**

If we turn to Danish research regarding the concept of esprit, we find the model of professionalism that is Henning Sorensen’s point of departure – one that is not far removed from the models developed in the above-mentioned theories. It is comprised of seven elements: recruitment, education, expertise, responsibility, group, esprit, and career. Sorensen set out to test four elements of his model: expertise (function), responsibility (measured through role-induced opinions), group characteristics (common professional and trade union behaviour), and esprit de corps (Sorensen, 1988, p.12).

In his research, Sorensen tested Janowitz’s constabulary thesis (Janowitz, 1971, pp.418 sq), which divided officers into the roles of manager, warrior, and technologist. Could these roles also be found in the Danish officer corps and if so, how did the different variables weigh against each other? In order to study this, Sorensen sent out questionnaires to 525 Danish officers in 1983-84, designed to probe their attitudes on various topics.

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1 Maguen & Litz, 2006, p.821.
These officers were statistically chosen from all services, ranks, and duty stations. Fully 80%, or 420 officers, answered the survey in detail (Sorensen, 1988, p.9). The largest group, that is 37% of the officers, described their job as managerial, 27% saw themselves as warriors, 16% as technicians, 14% as teachers, and 7% as having other functions (Sorensen, 1988, p.352). Looking into the reasons for joining the military, 25% of Danish officers explained that they joined the military as the profession gave them a chance to “manage men” (civil motivation) while another 25% had an “interest in the armed forces” (military motivation) (Sorensen, 1988, p.353). When asked what, in their opinion, the Danish officers corps is best at doing, 57% gave the answer “planning, organizing”, while only 9% said “waging war”, and 4% suggested “handling of weapons” (Sorensen, 1988, p.353). It was found that they felt they had a responsibility to their task (50%), their unit (16%), society (13%), the armed forces (7%), and their respective services (2%), with 2% choosing the category of ‘other’ (Sorensen, 1988, p.353). The officers were also asked to select from a variety of answers the attributes that best fitted their case. Sorensen found six officer roles, of which three (‘manager’, ‘warrior’, ‘technician’) were dominant – thus bearing Janowitz out. The other three roles were those of citizen, union member, and fellow human being (Sorensen, 1988, p.179).

These findings show that some officers are more willing to fight than others, which could have implications for corps loyalty and could also create discrepancies between personal loyalty and loyalty towards the officer group (Sorensen, 1988, p.196).

From Attitude to Behaviour

Although Sorensen did not himself construct a model of esprit de corps, he used the concepts of Huntington and Janowitz. While doing this, Sorensen pointed to the fact that both Huntington and Janowitz simply assumed its existence, without testing that assumption: “Huntington argues for it. Janowitz just joins in. Neither of the two tests their common assumptions regarding esprit de corps” (Sorensen, 1988, p.244, translation mine); the same goes for Moskos (1970, p.137) and Abrahamsson (1972, p.68).

Huntington defined the concept as follows: “The members of a profession share a sense of organic unity and consciousness of themselves as a group apart from laymen” (Huntington, 1957, pp.10 sq). According to Huntington, that sentiment is a once-and-for-all given, and comes fully developed. Huntington’s concept of the profession is thus static. In contrast, Janowitz argued that technological development and changes in military organization and society as a whole would affect esprit de corps (Sorensen, 1994, p.604).

Sorensen criticized the two concepts for being vague in that they could include groups that are not professions, and also for being hard to test. However, he went on to argue that the concept could be tested by comparing an officer’s personal attitudes with the same officer’s ideas about the attitude of the officer corps as a whole. Using this method, Sorensen’s showed that on an average, about 20% of Danish officers believed that their personal points of view differed from those of their colleagues; these differences could be explained in two ways: either “mutual ignorance” – the individual officer had an opinion that was not shared by the rest of the corps without his/her being aware of the dominant
opinion, or “recognized deviance” – he/she did not accept what was assumed to be the opinion held by the corps. Sorensen (1988, p.355) further found that mutual ignorance only was found in connection with the “citizen” and the “fellow human being” roles (both positive ones), whereas recognized deviance only appeared in connection with the “professional warrior” and the “pressure group/trade union” (negative) roles. This means, in effect, that many officers who personally relate to human and social values often feel isolated in this respect, while the same officers, who do not identify with the professional role and the pressure group role, believe these values to be commonly shared (ibid.).

Sorensen concluded that the survey did not support the assumption of an ever-present esprit de corps. He also concluded that the model for the military profession had to be changed:

> In the commonly used model of profession, [...] esprit de corps has to be removed, while the three other elements of profession can be sustained. With the exclusion of a common esprit de corps and the inclusion of corps behaviour, it is now possible to explain why officers virtually act alike and have common group behaviour, but simultaneously think pluralistically, showing discrepancy in esprit de corps. [...] A uniform group behaviour is required from above and is complied with, because then the officer group may still appear as a profession. But this behaviour is not always consistent with what all the professional agents are thinking. Presented then, is a uniform agency across disagreeing attitudes (Sorensen, 1988, p.292, translation mine).

Sorensen’s research results thus led him to focus more on the behaviour than the attitudes of soldiers: “It is uniforms, language, organization, in short, group behaviour, which is the basis of group attitudes and not vice versa. The esprit de corps is due to sociological, not psychological, conditions. This means that it is group behaviour, which is the central element of profession, not esprit de corps” (ibid.). Sorensen replaced esprit de corps as an attitude with corps behaviour. He did so without much explanation on how soldiers’ attitudes relate to their behaviour, perhaps leaving this for later research. Interestingly, even if Sorensen pointed to the fact that the concept of ‘profession’ included ‘esprit de corps’ simply as an assumption (ibid., p.244), the concept of esprit is still in active use today and comes without explanations (e.g., Larsen, 2009, p.15).

It can be concluded that there exists a gap between a rational and an empirical description of peace operations. Rational observation, whether it be through surveys or interviews, dominates in terms of numbers, and creates a widespread rational image of the operations, guided by concepts that are of dubious quality: they were born out of former war operations; they are constructed from fragmented data, some of which may – due to different operational method options – contradict other, similarly conceived observations; finally, the notion of a profound difference between concepts and ‘reality’ or practice is only marginally noticed. Direct observation of the soldier’s body and its behaviour in a military context is only sparsely described, and hardly ever closely related to the military mind and its rational concepts: operations are politically characterized by means of rational concepts, which are followed by military practice without much notion of the difference between concept and empirical practice.
A Field Study of the Danish KFOR Contingent

With these conceptual and theoretical considerations in mind, it was decided to do a field study of the Danish KFOR component, which was conducted during the early period of the KFOR mission.

Personnel in different positions were observed during the whole field study: a private first class, a sergeant, a first lieutenant, a major, and a colonel. They were all central actors at different levels of the military chain of command. They were all observed for a week and the observation cycle ended with an interview. Each period of observation in Camp Olaf Rye (COR) lasted five weeks, followed by a period of approximately six weeks for analysis. Then the field was again observed for a period of 5 weeks. Most of the data was obtained from participant observation and from official documents collected in the field. The field observations were written down or recorded. Sound recordings cover approximately 200 hours. Photographs were taken, and material from a range of different battalions’ home pages downloaded. Additional information was collected in interviews with persons selected to create a representative cross-section of the organization in terms of agency, position, function, organization, leadership, and institution. Interviews of KFOR soldiers in the 5 positions, from private to colonel, were repeated thrice. Additional interviews were carried out with 21 of the 130 infantry KFOR soldiers. The questions in the interview schedule were of the open-ended variety (Kold, 2003).

Findings

The results of data analysis were as follows: 1) among privates, uncertainty about the objective of the KFOR mission was dominant. The twin concepts of ‘war’ and ‘peace’ were observed at work in the field, with sharply contrasted qualities: ‘war’ was intertwined with the many military symbols in camp, whereas ‘peace’ was a central part of the discussions among the soldiers. Still, the coding showed ‘war’ to be dominant over ‘peace’. 2) A significant observation was conceptualized as “organizational/institutional inertia”. Such ‘inertia’ was observed in the ‘merging’ of organization and persons in a comprehensive setting of constant bodily routines such as morning drill, salutes, training, parades, and so on. Every morning drill referred to Danish territory and people, national spirit, wars, and victories. Added to these bodily routines were such structural military components as uniforms, weapons, and insignia, signs that were always visible, formed symbols, and thus generated meaning. 3) The organizational and physical separation of officer, sergeant and private first class resulted in the officer symbolizing ‘mind’, and the private symbolizing ‘body’. The sergeant’s position closely resembled the role observed by Stouffer: that of mediator between privates and the institution (Caforio, 2006, p.15). 4) This relation between officers and privates led to ‘obedience’, which in turn resulted in a deficit in meaning because obedience ‘intervened’ between the action itself and its objectives, and this led to a loss in the privates’ ability to find meaningful bearings for themselves. 5) Such loss of orientation resulted in “erroneous learning processes” (Jarvis, 1992), which took the form of passiveness and distorted behaviour (Kold, 2003).
Development of a Concept

The findings presented above relate to the field’s own lay concepts. The question is: are there theories that would enable research to extrapolate data and generate heuristic conjectures on that basis? Central in such extrapolation are the soldier’s rationality and mind-body interaction.

In their work, both Janowitz and Moskos referred to and used the work of Weber, Durkheim, Merton and others in their understanding of the military (Janowitz, 1971, p.278; Moskos, 1970, p.231). Underlying these theories is the critical discussion of the factors behind the rationalization of social order – *esprit de corps* and social cohesion. In Comte, we find an incipient formation of the collective; Tönnies shows a difference between the organization based on *Gemeinschaft* and those based on *Gesellschaft*; Durkheim likewise posited a similar development from archaic ‘mechanical solidarity’ to ‘organic solidarity’ (Segal in Buck, 1981, p.42). With Elias we find a historical review of exhaustive detail of how everyday habits are changing, with changes in both everyday life and the use of material tools in relation to violence, power, and organization. Through his analysis, Elias reaches a concept of ‘interdependency’ that creates coherence between the individual and the ‘outside world’, things and society (Elias, 1939, pp.51-81).

This traditional discussion of rationalization in human behaviour has continued to this day, with substantial critiques and contributions. Thus, any discussion about the mind and body of soldiers should rightly include such contemporary sociological theories on rationality as developed by Habermas (1981), Heller (1970/1984, 1999), Foucault (1975), Giddens (1984), or others. This is basically a discussion about human behaviour – in our case, that of soldiers – in which the rationality of the human mind is intertwined with the material world of the human body. For example: Norbert Elias shows that the inner human world of meaning is closely intertwined with the outer world of culturally-produced *artefacts*. These things become laden with meaning and thus change into symbols by which the person navigates (Elias, 1939, p.143). This means that the single person does not perform from an isolated personality and ideological rationality in the material context within which he or she lives. The consequence of this is that the traditional notion of rationality which separates human behaviour from its immediate surroundings – and in our case the soldier from the military situation, as well as his body from his mind – can be questioned. If the military context and the movements of the body in it are symbol-laden, how then do a military context and military drills and training of the body influence the mind of the soldier? How does the soldier in this context change from behaviour oriented to war to behaviour inspired and governed by peace support norms?

To answer that question, the present article will use the more recent work of Ágnes Heller, where she calls attention to the interconnectedness of mind, body, types of human action, and related varieties of rationality (Heller 1970, 1985).

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2 Ágnes Heller is a Hungarian philosopher. She was a member of the Budapest School, formed by Lukács. In 1986 she took up a position in the New School in New York, where she currently holds the position of Hannah Arendt Professor of Philosophy. She concentrates on Hegelian philosophy, ethics, and existentialism.
Action, Thinking, and Concepts

It is in the repeated actions observed in drills and briefings that the theories of Ágnes Heller become especially relevant. Heller defines three different types of human action: 1) repetitive; 2) intuitive; and 3) inventive actions, which she then relates to different kinds of perception, mind, and reflection. In this respect, Heller (1985, pp.95-100) is inspired by Alfred Schutz’ anticipation (project), practice (action), and result (act). Schutz shows that there are two ways to experience ongoing actions – two layers of consciousness which he terms external and internal time. It is the bodily movements, which combine internal and external events into a single time stream, that Schutz calls ‘vivid present’ (Schutz, 1973, p.216). Here Schutz refers to the thinking of Henri Bergson (1980 [1888], pp.92 sq). Bergson had called one of the two layers of consciousness durée, which corresponds to internal time.

External time, which is socially regulated, is what Schutz calls standard time. It is quantified, i.e. divided into uniform, objective elements that can be counted. In this way the outer layer of consciousness is organized as a differentiated everyday reality, in which one episode is distinguished from the other, and attributed with particular meaning and organized into several sequences of cause and effect. The inner dimension of consciousness, ‘durée’, however, is a continuous flow of internal states of experience and events that are undifferentiated, interconnected and, thus, interfere with one another. Thinking and action cannot be separated. Actual experiences are associated with the past through recollections and memories, and with the future through anticipation. This alternation occurs spontaneously and unreflectively, and is not formulated linguistically (Heller, 1985, pp.95-100).

Repetitive thinking/acting is present-oriented and “quasi-instinctive” (ibid., p.97). It is absolutely essential to human survival and reproduction, and is thus the thinking/acting that directly relates to heterogeneous activities as well as to (implicit) norms and rules. Repetitive thinking/action is the prerequisite for the other two forms. The intuitive and inventive varieties are partly reconstructed, and oriented towards both past and future. These two forms of thinking/action have the potential for transcendence, opening up new ways of understanding, and also new ways of acting – in our case, for soldiers in conflict zones.

When soldiers perform repetitive actions such as drills, parades, or training, they are in durée. ‘Durée’ does not occur in time, it is time. The experience is unreflective and unformulated, and consists of senses and feelings. These internal, undifferentiated, and diverse events are afterwards transformed, through reflection, into an outer world of quantified time, where they are structured, partly in the sequence of events of the past, present, and future, and partly in their simultaneity, in coinciding events. In our case, such ‘durée’ is transformed into an outer military world of structures, time, and events. Thus it is the bodily movements that intertwine inner and outer time and connect the internal states of mind to the outside symbolic order. In this context, the soldiers experience action as a series of repetitive actions in external and internal time. The soldiers’ bodily movements
combine events into Schutz’s ‘vivid present’. In direct face-to-face relationships with the
other soldiers, this is transformed into a mutual living present. Their bodily movements,
therefore, also include and incorporate communication of military concepts, words, and
commands. When the acting soldier expresses his/ her experiences and thoughts, the
reflexive interpretation of the stream of experience will connect past training and future
objectives with the military concepts which are being communicated. This belongs to the
sphere of internal time and it is associated with external time through voice, facial
expression, and gesture. It is this connecting of inner and outer time into one military vivid
present that, this article suggests, forms the basis for both esprit de corps and the cohesion
of military groups in action.

Heller relates these different forms of thinking/ action to Hegel’s three spheres of
objectification: 1) in itself, 2) for itself and 3) in and of itself (Heller, 1985, pp.89 sq). It is
this article’s contention that these three spheres represent, respectively: 1) the everyday
life of the soldiers, 2) the objective of the KFOR mission, and 3) the military institution
and its officers (Kold, 2003).

The sphere of “objectification-in-itself” is the backbone of the soldiers’ everyday
lives. It consists of a basic set of norms and rules that soldiers orient themselves by. These
norms and rules cannot be separated. The way the soldiers simultaneously communicate
and socialize contains the unwritten norms and rules governing soldiers’ relations. It is
through this everyday life that soldiers pre-reflexively experience objectification-in-itself,
which means that in this sphere of practice the soldiers cannot critically reflect on their
Which is also why ‘unwritten’ and bodily ‘tacit knowledge’ is hard to observe in an
interview or a survey.

It is in the military vivid present that empirical practice and rational concepts come
into contact and influence each other; however, as shown infra, this is neither purely
rational nor purely empirical practice.

A producer of experiences, the soldier seeks to transform them in order to attain the
‘higher’ sphere of objectification-for-itself – worldviews which provide the soldiers with
meaning. This cultural surplus is evident, for example, when soldiers acquire the
competence to deal with and change their practice from general, ideal performances to
situationally adapted performances.

As a consequence, changes in the soldiers’ concepts and type of rationale, such as
changing from war to peace support operations, must involve changes in bodily routines.
This would activate intuitive or inventive actions, which would intertwine new words with
new routines, new organizational settings and new symbols. In other words: if soldiers are
to carry out peace support operations, they also need to change concepts, instruments
(organization and weapons) as well as behaviour. To see if that is what takes place in a UN
peace operation, four cases excerpted from the field study have been selected for analysis.
Case A : Repetitive Actions in Camp Olaf Rye

A key area of observation during the study resided in the acts of bodily routine that the privates and officers were constantly engaged in, of which one, particularly, stood out: the drill. This will now be presented as it was observed.

It is a typical morning in COR. The platoons simultaneously meet in different settings at 08:00 for drills and briefings, in the camp, as do the colonel and the rest of the battalion’s leaders. Some of the officers have been on duty through the night. They have been preparing the brief, and now start arriving in the briefing room. They are to brief the other officers on what has been happening during the night, before they are relieved and can go to bed.

Outside in the square, the staff company has taken its position. Facing it, the captain is waiting for the briefing to start. He is reading various papers to himself – containing information, duties, and so on – preparing to convey these to the staff soldiers.

The clock is approaching 08:00 am and the officers are now moving more resolutely into the staff building. Cigarettes are put out, and notebooks are found in one of the many pockets in their uniforms. Some sit at their designated place and others keep standing close to the wall and the door while they continue to chat and laugh.

This place, Building n°25, is a wooden barrack. The briefing room is almost as crude as the rooms out on the different Deltas (checkpoints doubling as observation posts), only here the room is fitted with maps, blackboard, and a projector. Each chair has a school desk in front of it for the officer to use. It looks very much like a classroom. Along the sides of the room too there are chairs, but without tables. On one side of the entrance, a box for song books has been put up, which is almost empty now. All focus is now toward the lectern in front of all the officers. There is also a pulpit behind which the wall is covered with maps of Kosovo, the area of responsibility, the white screen for the projector, and the information board where the level of readiness is regularly updated.

The sitting soldiers start to get up and place themselves behind their chairs. They take the “at ease” position, while continuing to chat with their comrades, laughing a little. This continues until the colonel enters the room:

Lieutenant Colonel: ATTEN...TION!!

Everybody takes a position in which they stretch their arms downwards as much as they possibly can while they fold four of their fingers upwards and thumb downwards. They also stretch their backs, which bow slightly backwards. The eyes of the officers seem unfocused, as if they were looking inwards. Standing still like this, it seems as though all focus on the voice of the colonel – the bodies look stiff and prepared.

Colonel: Everybody... at EASE!!

The soldiers move one foot and place it 10 to 20 centimetres apart from the other, with the boot nose slightly outwards. The arms swing behind their back and now their
hands are folded, one hand gripping the other arm. The back is now in a more normal position and shape. The eyes are looking out towards the colonel.

**Colonel:** Good morning. Sit down.

**Everybody:** GOOD MORNING!!!

[Clatter from chairs as the officers sit down]

**Lieutenant Colonel:** We start by singing song n° 58!

[The vicar made the choice, and is also the one who will start the song]

**Vicar:** And this is a psalm ... which is not in the psalm book and it is not in the folk high school song book ... that you have here ... so you will have to get this [showing the military song book] .. and you have to start low...

[the officers start singing]

After the morning song has ended, some quickly put the song book back in place, others just put the book on the desk in front of them.

At other places in Camp Olaf Rye, different morning drills attended by all privates take place every morning at the same time. This ritual juxtaposes the soldier with meat that is about to be eaten, and is for that reason called “meat loaf” – in Danish “kød rand”. Little by little all the soldiers arrive and the platoons are formed.

At 08:00 all the platoons move into a big U formation. When the drill begins, the captain mostly gives the privates practical information but also informs them about operations. If anything more needs to be said specifically to the platoons regarding duties, coordination or meetings, this is done by the lieutenant, before or after the drill:

**Lieutenant 1:** 1\(^{st}\) platoon -

1\(^{st}\) platoon... – ATTEN...TION!!!

LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD!!!

**Lieutenant 2:** ATTENTION!!!

**Lieutenant 3:** 3\(^{rd}\) platoon?!! ATTENTION!!!

**Sergeant 1:** Commando, now come to attention!

**Lieutenant 3:** LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD!!!

[Lieutenant 3 turns around on the spot:]

**All:** GOOD MORNING, CAPTAIN!!!

**Captain:** Our homepage is now up and running ...

[The captain talks about various matters, including the duties of the day.

The drill ends with the words:]

Anybody got anything for me? – Good.

Platoons have been formed!!

In this situation, bodies, movements, words and minds all merge according to one collective rationale. This is how the organization musters and presents itself to its members every morning, its character and purpose evident in both blood and spirit, from privates to
colonel. The bodies are lined up in the different platoons and await collective information. This formation expresses, in a very evident way, the different relations and positions within the organization. A marked physical and symbolic distance can be observed between the captain who stands alone in the middle, and the lieutenants, who are each standing in front of their platoon. In each squad, the sergeant is first in the front line of soldiers.

Every morning, the company drills begin their briefing through a series of repetitive bodily movements and routines, all ordered by rank; these closely resemble the bodily movements and routines of the battalion briefing. The orders are collective, functional, and are given without any names, thus leaving out individuality. The bodily routines take place as a bodily answer to imperative orders (Weick 1993; King 2006; Siebold 2007; Kold, 2003). These repetitive military routines seem central as they make it unnecessary for the single soldier and the military organization to define expected behaviour anew every morning, thus creating some kind of security in a situation of high insecurity (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Heller, 1985; Gebauer & Wulf, 2001). During the repetitive actions, identification is taking place between the soldier and the already objectified meaning of the act (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p.91).

Case B: Intuitive Action at a Checkpoint

Inside camp Olaf Rye, the daily drill and other repetitive actions were hardly ever challenged to include different performances. The challenge typically took place outside the camp when the soldiers were confronted with mission objectives and local populations. Thus, one could expect action to change from repetitive to intuitive or even inventive acts outside the camp. The question is (a) when and how the military life of soldiers can exceed taken-for-granted military behaviour, and transform experience from peace operations into other or new forms of military mind; (b) what the meaning and understanding of the operations is. The case presented below is product of the observation at a Danish mobile checkpoint – MCP Honda.

Camp Olaf Rye: it is 05:30 pm, and the sun has started to set, but it is still rather warm. The platoon is about to set off to put up MCP Honda. The ramp of the Piranha armoured personnel carrier is still down. The privates are chatting and the engine is idling, waiting for all to arrive.

The last private comes running, steps on the ramp, passes on his weapon into the Piranha to somebody, and then crawls in, supporting himself on whatever is at hand, stepping on those already seated and trying to avoid the legs hanging from the open hatch. The lieutenant is busy finding his gear but finally enters, and we drive off. After arriving at the place where the checkpoint is planned to be, the platoon is positioned in a curve of the road where the MCP is hard to see. The Piranhas have been parked at a distance of 100 meters from each other, at the side of the road, and the vehicle commanders sit behind the heavy machine gun. The commanders wear helmets, headphones, and microphones, and are in constant contact with the leading officer and COR HQ staff.
Immediately after the MCP is established, a queue of civilian cars builds up in front of the Piranha. The first cars are searched; male drivers and passengers are searched manually while a metal detector is used to search female drivers and passengers.

There are two soldiers conducting the search and some more soldiers are positioned at a distance. They are the ‘guardsmen’. There is always at least one guardsman in that position. Between the two Piranhas, the platoon leaders’s GD (Geländewagen) has been parked beside a UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) police car, a Toyota in white and red colours. The interpreter is standing next to the lieutenant and an UNMIK policeman.

The chat reproduced below takes place at the roadside and is dominated by the repeated and noisy acceleration of cars and heavy trucks with diesel engines – noise and exhaust fumes pervade the scene:

**Interpreter**: What was the weather like?

**Lieutenant**: Usually it gets up to 25°C. It was so... then... we had two days when...

**Private 1**: We had 30°C the other day.

**Lieutenant**: It was fantastic... one night we spent the night in a little village that was surrounded by castle walls.

**Private 2**: They are arriving Saturday [another conversation]

**Private 1**: [A football team] arrives Saturday and Sunday. This Saturday it’s B73... is he playing there?

**Private 3**: As a matter of fact he is. Silkeborg is included. They say that he’s been playing in Silkeborg.

**Radio**: Can I let a car through now? Over.

**Private 2**: Yes you can! Over and out!

**Private 4**: THERE’S A CAR COMING!!!

Dusty cars and poorly dressed people are passing. The scene resembles an ordinary CP; with the same short orders: “Open trunk!”, “Driver’s license?”, and so on. Orders are uttered in single-word sentences by the privates, while the sentences and communication coming from the civilian drivers are of a more intuitive kind: “How are you?”, “Where is Denmark?”, “I am going to my sister’s!”, or “I don’t like war”.

The soldiers chat about the lieutenant’s recent vacation. More conversations are taking place and competing for the lieutenant’s attention. One bears on duty, and diverts it from his past vacation. It is especially the female interpreter who keeps asking questions about the vacation. It seems as if she is seeking to make contact with the private sphere/life of the lieutenant, while he tries to remain in his role as the officer in charge at the MCP. So the lieutenant is both open and at the same time not ‘present’, focused on what is happening at the MCP. The privates are joking, teasing each other and chatting about football and films.
A Mercedes 190 has been stopped to be searched. Inside the car, a woman is sitting. She can be seen through the car’s dirty and dusty windshield. Outside, the driver, who may be the woman’s husband, is standing next to the car. He is being searched by one of the soldiers. He has his arms up. In one of his hands is a pack of cigarettes. Inside the car the woman looks afraid, uneasy, and as if she is not feeling very well. The door on her side is slightly open, and a soldier now pulls the door wide open and asks her to step out. She gets out slowly, almost passively, looking as if she has given up. She is now scanned with a metal detector, formally and in a correct manner. No beep is heard, though – nothing alarming, only the little white noise coming constantly from the built-in loudspeaker. So she gets back into the car – still looking as if she is ill. The man on the other side of the car is speaking all the time, now smilingly offering the soldiers cigarettes. But the soldiers ask him to leave and wave the car out of the line.

The driver has re-entered the car, which is now accelerating away with an engine that sounds like one whose fuel feed is too rich, its exhaust pipe smoking as much as most engines will down there.

Behind the Mercedes a little old bus is waiting in line, tilting to one side. The passengers are waiting at the side of the bus. They seem restless and are shouting to get the attention of the soldiers, and the soldier who just searched the woman approaches the crowd and looks at the place on the road at which the crowd is pointing with a “hoj hoj hoj....!!!” Then things start happening very fast. The soldier immediately turns and starts to run after the accelerating Mercedes, even while he points and waves his arms, shouting loudly. His voice and gestures are received by the other soldiers who also start to shout to the soldiers further up the MCP:

Private 1: Hey! Stop him!
Private 2: Stop him!
Private 3: STOP HIM! STOP HIM.
[they run in the direction of the GD and the UNMIK Police car]
Private 1: STOP HIM!!!
Private 3: STOP HIM!!!
Private 1: HE HAD A GUN!!!
[AGITATED SHOUTING SCREAMING AND RUNNING]

The Mercedes is accelerating out the MCP, down “Hen” Road (its NATO code name) and away...

Private 3: CALL DELTA 2.6 AND MAKE THEM STOP IT!!!!

The soldiers run towards the lieutenant, who runs towards the soldiers. They are all very excited and all shout:

Private 1: [To the driver, who has the radio:]
A GREY MERCEDES ... YES A GREY MERCEDES!!!
**Lieutenant:** [who has just come running to the group of soldiers:] What happened!!???

**Private 2:** There was a gun under the car, there !! [points at the road]

**Private 1:** Do we call Delta 2.6?

**Sergeant:** Tell them it’s a Mercedes!!

**Privates:** [the soldiers further up the MCP are shouting back] A what???

**Private 1:** [they all shout] A GREY MERCEDES

[...after some time…]

**Private 3:** Can we send a car through?

**Private 4:** Send a car through!

Suddenly everything happens at once. There’s a dramatic change in the pace of action. Both time and space are significantly changed. Acts shift from a slow fluctuation between repetitive and semi-reflexive intuitive acts, to routines dominated by rapid bodily movements and shouted orders. The bodily routines taking over are observed to be suffused by different feelings (aggression; joy; anxiety) as well as by agitation and excited shouting of simple orders. Everybody is shouting and pointing at the car. It all happens too fast for reflection. The acts performed all seem to come from pre-defined concepts and prior training routines.

The initial shout – “Hey, stop him !” – contained both an appeal and an order. As the situation quickly escalated, however, the communication was reduced to just orders: “STOP HIM!!” This reduction can be seen as the playing out of functions, roles, and ranks, all intertwined with specific trained acts, words, and understandings (Kold, 2003).

The exclusion of the friendly, almost leisurely hailing (“Hey”) is important, as it influenced the choice of objectification mode. The ordered functional shouting, excluded inventive thought and action, which could have been: “LOOK OUT. He’s bloody scared and confused – LET HIM GO. We’ll find and talk to him later!!” After the bodily movement and the shouting of pre-trained orders, the Mercedes became part of a military vivid present. The old dusty Mercedes that accelerated out of the MCP changed its role and position. It was no longer the matter of a thin, nervous man and his sick wife, who accelerated away in an old Mercedes, but of two suspected dangerous ‘enemies’ who escaped.

After the hasty first seconds of the episode, the lieutenant came running from his position and asked open questions: “What happened ?” By doing so, he changed from ‘repetitive’ to ‘intuitive’ acts with the possibility for the privates to reflect and learn. The privates involved started to reconstruct the course of events, while the rest of the MCP returned to the routine searching of the other passing cars.

A newly produced experience (‘cultural surplus’) needed to be further reflected on by the two other spheres (Kold, 2006, p.319): meaning (mission objective) and institution (Danish military). The lieutenant did this by concluding: “Just proves that one has to keep
up attention. Also, when they come with children and ill people in an ambulance, right -
one must bloody not trust them“. This reflection referred to the mission training in Oxbøl,
where the lieutenant was observed having problems during a training exercise in which an
ambulance played a central role. In the exercise, an ambulance carrying women and
children was also used for transporting weapons through an MCP. The lieutenant now used
this exercise to interpret the event at the mobile checkpoint.

The objectification of the episode seemed to take place in three phases. First, the
episode was opened; second, it was closed again as bodily routines took over the behaviour
of the privates; and third, as the lieutenant interpreted the episode by using the trained
concepts from Oxbøl. Thus the last two acts resorted to thinking/action within the frame of
military training, and remained repetitive acts (ibid., 2006, p.319).

An attempt has been made in this article to describe the different types of action/thinking
observed in the cases. The two cases presented above refer to actions taking place
in Heller’s sphere of ‘objectification-in-itself’, i.e. the soldier’s everyday life. In it, any
action creates situations that are potential sources of learning, behavioural change and new
rational outlooks. Such learning is described by Heller as either critique or legitimation,
which brings us to as reflections in the other two spheres, and implies another, inventive
form of action (Heller, 1985, pp.95-100).

Case C: Legitimation by an Officer

We will now take a look at the sphere of “objectification-in-and-for-itself”, that is,
the military as an institution. The research question here is: how is the ‘cultural surplus’
produced by the privates, absorbed by the institution, represented by the officers?

In this case, we are presented with a tense situation one week after a soldier from the
battalion shot and killed a Serb at a mobile checkpoint. The colonel chose to face it by
trying to restore good relations with the local population, and by introducing a new policy
which he termed “Operation Goodwill”. Among other things, he arranged a meeting of
reconciliation in the form of a dinner. The company commander, a major, had to
participate in that dinner (Kold, 2006, p.359). Here is how the major briefed his lieutenants
and sergeants about it:

Operation Goodwill... is an operation that has been going on ... since ... Tuesday
... and it is a CIMIC Operation ... which is about ... getting ... if I may say so ... some of the CIMIC projects in the Serbian territory forced ... for obvious reasons ... and, err ... in a way I, in a way I feel pretty okay about that ... Really, these projects would have been carried through anyway. [...] I make no secret of it. That of course I have a professional attitude to ... the local people. Of course, I ... mainly have nothing against them until they give proof to the contrary. [...] Err... as I said the other day ... I am angry ... with the Serbs ... that they can't behave. [...] And if 7.9 ... err ... considers this to be necessary to improve the situation in the long term ... well, that is just fine. That is up to him ... and of course it is within his mandate as commanding officer, and I have no problem with that. And it is probably also quite correct ... but I ... do ... not ... wish ... to create any doubt about the signal I am sending for the present ... to those people ... err ... out in Supce or Zubin Potok. And that is why I told 7.9
now this morning ... that I did not wish to participate in that dinner. And I also
told him ... and this does not need to get beyond these four walls ... this you do not have to tell your soldiers ... I also told him that I find it unsuitable ... that it will take place in this camp ... Thus, that signal ... I do not want it to be misunderstood or compromised ... and thus I don’t bother to sit down ... and eat together with them.

This short passage throws into relief the major’s dilemma – the obvious conflict between his role-induced perspective (or bias) and his loyalty to the officer in command. During the briefing, he repeatedly says he has no problems with the dinner in question, yet the entire passage is about his conspicuous difficulties in getting used to the idea, because the invited persons seem to have been involved in the establishing of roadblocks.

The dilemma is caused by the colonel’s decision to have a dinner of reconciliation. The reason why this dinner is causing a dilemma is rooted in the allocation of functions, roles, and positions in the battalion, and the norms and rules which these come with. The professional role-induced bias in an infantry company derives from its classical task with a durée which tells the soldiers about nation-state, war, and winning – in short, about being a warrior (Kold, 2006, p.359).

Besides the occupational identity of the ‘warrior’, this third-generation peace operation also presents a new identity: that of ‘mediator’ (Kold, 2003). In sharp contrast to the occupational roles within the combat company, the new CIMIC unit represents the direct opposite: the ‘outstretched hand’ of the mediator. After the Serb was shot, the colonel stressed CIMIC and its operations far more than the company, which caused internal rivalry between the two units. The new occupational role thus challenges the company’s norms and rules – including its repetitive acts (Kold, 2003).

This case shows the dilemmas caused by new operational objectives entailing new identities, positions, and functions and role-induced attitudes. It shows that intuitive and inventive acts are resisted and that company officers tend to keep to long-habituated repetitive actions, which do not call into question its norms and rules. The dilemma of the major thus exemplifies a professional struggle between the ‘warrior’ and the ‘mediator’, sparked by the new objectives of the military.

**Case D: A Private’s Critique**

What did it feel like as a private to be part of the military vivid present, subject to its norms and rules; how did the privates perceive them, and what impact did they have on their outlook and behaviour?

One evening, when sitting in the observation post, during a stay at Delta 2.6, I was chatting with one private first-class whom I had gotten to know. Although it began as idle conversation, its focus subsequently shifted to all the drills, and a ‘spontaneous’ interview started about how he experienced these drills. He said that he had had “some different ideas” before entering the army, but by the time of this interview he had realized that he had “no influence at all”. This private had come to the conclusion that he had to learn to live with this conclusion, become “passive”, and “look the other way”. The things he
would look away from were all the “artificial traditions” like the drill and its bodily movements (Kold, 2003, p.360). Here is a piece of the conversation:

Question: Yes, yes ... and then, what would you like to change ... how would you like things to be?

Answer: Well actually ... for instance I would ... there’s so much ... sometimes then the army is run by traditions, right? ... And well then there’s ... and well there’s ... traditions, for instance for the different regiments, right? ... But those traditions in some way are gone ... they are artificial traditions, that ... that you maintain, and that you just sit and ... and think that it’s just all a lot of bullshit, really. And really, it has never anything to do with ... for instance also morning roll call, right? It’s just a detail you might say, right, but really, damn, there you stand like, and ... what the hell can I ... what the hell am I standing here and doing this crap for? right? Why don’t they bloody just say what they’ve got to say to us ... instead of having us walking about and then he could just say good morning, couldn’t he? And then we would say good morning to him, wouldn’t we?, instead of us spending ... wasting time on this [...]. Then you are down there to be “straightened up” ... and say good morning ... and then good bye again ... in the morning ... and well there’s ... well, it’s a waste of time ... and of mine too, because I really could find something else to do, really ... it’s not that I’ve got too little time but really I can find something else to do ... it’s no great fun to be down there getting drilled up and down all the time. I think ... it’s ... such things ... it’s ... that when you get a little irritated.

Question: Yes but I’ve been looking at it and I’ve been wondering what’s happening... how do you feel while doing it?

Answer: Yeahhh... well, it’s something you are used to doing ... that’s something else you are bloody used to ... it is ... it’s in your spine ... so it’s only ... but how I felt the first time?

Question: Do you listen better or ...

Answer: No, I listen worse! [...]

Question: What feelings does it cause in you?

Answer: Feelings?

Question: Are you angry, or are you tired, are you fatigued, or …?

Answer: Yeah ... again I am ... what can you say ... one can use the word passive ... you are being activated or you can say ... one shuts the whole brain down, right? ... and then you stand in your own little world ... and then you just stand ... well ... that’s the way it is...

The private was asked about the purpose of drills, didn’t answer with a reason, but instead referred to tradition by saying “it’s an old, old [tradition]...”. As the expression “straighten up” is both a mental and a bodily expression, the interview focused on the bodily movements of the private and how this is experienced. The private described the drills with words like “used to” and “it’s in your spine” and he also intersperses “in your spine” with words like “tradition” and “straighten up”. At one point the private says that the drill “contributes to building a community”, that it is “damn special being in the army” and that “one shows a kind of respect to others”. As the interview tries to go from the thinking of repetitive answers to intuitive or inventive thinking, the private is asked to reflect on the word ‘respect’. The private then relates the respect not to “others” but to a
specific officer, the major. He also talks about the repetitious form of the drill. When asked what the drill does to him, he says “one can use the word passive, you are being activated or you can say one shuts the whole brain down”.

In this interview, the private is asked to reflect openly and change from repetitive to intuitive and inventive thinking/actions. In contrast to the sphere of objectification ‘in itself’, objectification ‘for itself’ is reflexive (that is, involves learning); it consists of basic components such as art, philosophy, religion, knowledge – and supplies meaning. The encounter with the cultural surplus (new experience) makes it possible for the soldier to critically reflect on his/her everyday life and learning. (Kold, 2003, p.363) The soldiers’ subjective surplus emerges when they can no longer take the heterogeneous activities in their everyday life for granted. Objectification ‘for itself’ collects and transforms the subjective surplus generated in the sphere itself into a cultural surplus (Heller, 1985, pp.95-100).

It thus fulfils two functions: legitimation and social critique. The former applies to the extent that the worldviews by which the soldiers orient themselves support the meaning and significance that is implicit in the heterogeneous activities of the soldiers’ everyday life; the latter, whenever such worldviews no longer generate meaning, and thus contribute to the problematization of those heterogeneous everyday activities. If the subjective surplus is not granted access to the sphere of objectification ‘for itself’, and transformed into meaning, then the soldiers are placed in a situation of cultural deficit – one that does not make much sense to them. Over time they will try to make up for that deficit.

In a situation of trust and reflection, the private used the interview to criticize the traditions of the military. He connected “straightening the spine” with “tradition”, and contrasting “being activated” with “being passive” and shutting the brain down, while describing the mental and physical aspects of a military vivid present (Kold, 2003, p.360).

**Closing Remarks** (Excursus on Hearts and Minds)

First-generation UN peace operations (1945–1989) were symmetric, non-coercive operations involving States only, whose objective was to maintain an agreed truce after a period of war. As a consequence, they resembled a traditional post-war situation and did not involve the soldier’s intuitive actions. After the end of the Cold War, the pattern in international conflicts changed from symmetric to asymmetric conflicts. The number of peace operations grew dramatically and started to include new and challenging objectives. Second-generation UN peace operations (1989-1999) were, in practice, State-society operations whose objective was to intervene in and ideally stop civil wars (Boulden, 2001, p.83). The aims of new peace operations were thus much more complex than the maintaining of a ceasefire. As a consequence of this development, third-generation UN peace operations (from 1999 onwards) have changed into asymmetric interventions with a focus on conflicts within civil society.³

³ Dobbie, 1994; Berdal & Spyros, 1996; Kaldor, 1998; Boulden, 2001; Duffield, 2001; Tardy, 2004; Ramsbotham et al., 2005; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Kaldor, 2007.
The findings of the present field study, bearing on a third-generation peace operation, showed that the soldiers’ discourse during interviews did not correspond with what direct observation revealed about the behaviour of the soldiers involved. It also showed that the latter was not in harmony with the basic objectives of a UN peace operation (Kold, 2003).

To explain these findings, this article chose to use the theories of Àgnes Heller. To her thinking, an interview or a survey will only be able to address the soldier at the reflexive level of cognition, that is, the soldier’s mind and his words. Thus, the interview will in the nature of the case address the sphere of objectification-for-itself. This is the sphere in which, according to Heller, meaning is produced in the form of legitimation or critique. In other words, it is the sphere of political meaning and objectives, which is what an interview will observe – a version of the public discourse, rather than ‘military reality’.

An interview or a survey will not be able to completely address the sphere of objectification-in-itself, because this sphere is the focus of a soldier’s everyday life, where his/her acts take place in two layers of consciousness, one of which Bergson termed ‘durée’. And, as we have seen, ‘durée’ consists of undifferentiated, interconnected and unreflexive repetitive acts.

This is why the study of peace operations must also include direct observation of the field study type. In such direct observation, the routines and repetitive actions of the soldiers’ bodies are observed and compared to their lay concepts. Through direct observation, research can identify changes in the types of (repetitive, intuitive or inventive) action observed, as well as changes in the lay concepts used. On the basis of such data, it is in a position to analyze military organization, and its reproduction or new production of acts and concepts.

Resort to Heller’s theories thus suggests that, deeply intertwined as they are, the military context and the single soldier cannot be separated. This intertwining of empirical structures and rational words borrows from the Bergsonian theory of a ‘vivid present’ – which this article has used to construct a military vivid present, leading to the conclusion that it necessitates a renewed focus on the soldier’s body and its movements as the building blocks of cohesion and esprit de corps.

The analysis presents privates as producers of experience, which they are potentially induced to turn into new meaningful worldviews in order to meet the needs of the ‘higher’ sphere of objectification. This means that the military institution and officers could potentially use the experience privates derive from operations to better understand and design operations. However, this potential development is inhibited by constant repetitive actions, which are habitually based on old concepts of war, fighting and winning.

The corollary of dominance by repetitive actions in the field is a depletion of meaning, and confusion as to operational objectives; the heterogeneous everyday experience of the deployed soldier is not taken to ‘higher’ spheres and developed into new operational categories; which in turn means that the military institution is not developed into an institution capable of successfully conducting peace operations.
This can in part be explained by the historical fact that the officer is a construct of the nation-state military, socialized as such to symmetric wars between nation-states. Dominated by the prospect of repetitive action, the recruitment and socialization of officers have increasingly caused them to stay out of both the ‘higher’ spheres of objectification ‘for itself’ (meaning and politics) and ‘in itself’ (conflicts within civil society), and to remain inside the sphere of objectification ‘in and of itself’ – i.e. within the bounds of the military institution, tied to its prevalent concepts – thus, to act as specialized professional soldiers (Abrahamsson, 1972; Finer, 1962). Educated to remain loyal to the nation-state and to avoid the conflicts of civil society, the officer has problems with asymmetric conflicts, of which problematic and violent civil-military relations are part and parcel, and finds it difficult to identify objectives and navigate toward these (Roslyng-Jensen, 1980, p.15). Such a process would involve interaction between the different spheres and involve both intuitive and inventive actions. This was observed as being avoided.

However, just as the new objectives that emerged during the Cold War called upon the old warrior identity to develop into a constabulary identity (Janowitz 1971, pp.418 sq), the new global objectives in security politics increasingly confront the military institution with the need for a further development of the constabulary soldier into the observed new mediator identity.

Third-generation peace operations seem ripe for profound new developments, because today’s conflict scenarios involve state-culture relations (Kaldor, 1998; Duffield, 2001; Ramsbotham et al., 2005; Sen, 2008; Pretorius, 2008, p.100; Maguen, 2006). Such operations trigger deep, unreflexive cultural and religious identity processes. Instead of hostile military capacities, soldiers on patrol and even in combat are confronted with cultural symbols, behaviour and languages they do not understand, and they themselves perform cultural acts which the local populations, in turn, find it hard to interpret (Winslow, 1998; Duffey, 2000; Rosén, 2009).

As a result, though the new peace operations require the coming into play of higher cognitive levels, confrontation usually takes place at lower cognitive levels. This brings into focus the body as a bearer of cultural signs, symbols and behaviour – and also how these are constructed through different types of acts both among UN soldiers and the local population. Remediating that less-than-optimal situation in third-generation peace support operations implies that soldiers be helped to find their way into the ‘higher’ spheres, which in turn involves new intuitive and inventive action. Such a development, however, necessitates a much deeper political and military understanding of the military vivid present and its different forms of action (Mead, 1934; Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gebauer & Wulf, 2001; Rubinstein, 2008, p.116).
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