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Authority and Military Command: Reflection on the Challenges Military Academies Face in Today's Profound Social and Cultural Changes

Danic Parenteau

Abstract: This paper aims to reflect on the training and education of officer-cadets in military academies, taking note of a societal trend observed by the vast longitudinal statistical study World Value Survey, conducted by the American political scientist Ronald Inglehart and his research team.¹ Throughout the west, we have observed a shift away from deference to all forms of external authority. Younger generations are increasingly critical of any form of relationship or organizational structure in which unequal relationships dominate and are more reluctant to join organizations in which they do not retain full control over all decisions affecting them and their immediate environment. How will military academies in the future adapt to this new social reality? How to bring young men and women to acquire and develop certain values that are central to the officer profession or to the armed forces in general, but that are on a sharp decline in civil society in which they have yet been socialized before their enrollment? This paper offers some reflections on this topic by focusing on three specific challenges. First, it attempts to show how learning to obey, as a necessary step in the learning of command, may represent a particular challenge for future officer cadets. Second, it will discuss the negative impact that this social trend will have on the necessary bond of trust with the military leadership. Third, it aims to demonstrate that this social trend risks affecting the sense of service, an essential element of military commitment for all officers. Finally, it outlines a solution to address these three challenges in the form of preparatory training dedicated to the military command system.

Keywords: Officer Training; Officer Profession, Command; Authority; Obedience; Officer Education; Civil-military Relations, Military Academy.

Introduction

Military academies train young men and women in the art of command and military sciences so that they can fulfill their duties and responsibilities as officers in the armed forces after graduation. These institutions offer comprehensive programs that include post-secondary education (most often leading to a university degree), leadership training, physical education, and character education. The leadership training inevitably includes a period of initial training, of varying length, during which officer-cadets are subjected to a strict disciplinary program, following a pedagogical approach widely accepted in military institutions around the world: before learning to command, one must learn to obey. Learning to obey is an essential element in the familiarization of cadets with the unique nature of the military's system of authority, which differs in many respects from those governing civilian institutions in which they have evolved before donning the uniform. This learning process is generally a difficult one for cadets.

Major societal trends in western liberal societies suggest that this learning of authority

may pose an additional challenge for future generations of officer-cadets. Inglehart has highlighted in his vast longitudinal statistical study *World Value Survey*, that we are witnessing everywhere in the west a transition from a society dominated by “survival values” to a society where the values of “self-expression” prevail. One of the major components of this new set of values is “a shift away from deference to all forms of external authority.”² Authority figures, whatever the context, no longer exercise, especially with younger generations, the same symbolic power that they did in the past. In other words, the notion of authority and the system of representation and symbolic control that accompanies it no longer feed the same charge today, as they are more and more questioned in a way never seen before. In addition to this, Inglehart and his team observed another trend that is not without consequence for the military institution, which is that of the “sharp decline in the willingness to fight for one’s country,”³ notably, once again, among younger generations throughout the west. It is thus clear that contemporary western societies are going through a crisis of values, the magnitude of which, one could argue, is comparable, with that which marked the turbulent 1960s. Several values essential to the proper functioning of any system of military authority, such as obedience, conformity to certain common values, self-sacrifice, loyalty to the institution, a sense of service or duty, etc., appears to be in sharp decline everywhere in the west within civil society.

Our intention is not here to condemn this social phenomenon by recalling how much better things were before our time. It is only to take note of this new reality and to reflect on its impact on the training offered by military academies. One would be naive to think that these major societal trends will have no effect on these institutions in the coming years. Although the military forms an ecosystem that operates largely at the margins of society, it continues to be influenced by societal trends affecting the latter, if not primarily, then indirectly, through the candidates it welcomes into its rank, as they are recruited from civil society, and thus invariably modify the social composition of the armed forces. Military academies must take the full measure of these trends to better understand the candidates they train and educate. Thus, how to bring young men and women to acquire and develop certain values that are central to the officer profession or to the armed forces in general, but that are on a sharp decline in civil society in which they have yet been socialized before their enrollment?

This paper aims to reflect on the training and education of officer-cadets in military academies. It intends to reflect on the nature of this training and education and the values that are specific to it, and about the dominant values in western civil society, taking note of the growing gap that exists between these two sets of values. The present reflection is based on the findings of Inglehart in his *World Value Survey*. Our reflection will deal only with the question of the current erosion of authority in society and will leave aside the other question, just as relevant, which concerns the decline of the will to defend one’s country; being a complex question, it would deserve a separate treatment. In addition, this paper does not aim to reflect on the impact of these societal changes on the profession of arms as a whole, but more precisely and modestly, on military academies and officer-

cadets alone. Our reflection will focus on three distinct challenges. First, we will attempt to show how the respect of obedience, as a necessary step in the learning of command, may represent a particular challenge for future officer cadets. Second, we will look at the negative impact that the erosion of authority will have on the inevitable bond of trust that must exist between the officer-cadet and the military leadership. Third, we will show that the erosion of authority risks affecting the sense of service, an essential element of military commitment for any officer. Finally, a possible solution to address these challenges in the form of preparatory training dedicated to the military command system will be outlined.

The Erosion of Authority in Contemporary Western Societies

Allow me to evoke here a personal experience I recently had in two classes of first-year officer-cadets to whom I have the privilege of teaching at the Royal Military College Saint-Jean, as a testimony to the erosion of authority that is currently affecting western society. In an introduction course to philosophy, I asked my students to write an argumentative dissertation on the general theme of command and leadership. They were asked to reflect on the profession of officer and on the essential qualities required to exercise military command. These thirty students, whose average age is around seventeen or eighteen, had only been at the military academy a few weeks. Their integration to military life was still relatively superficial. In this sense, we can say that they were still, in terms of values, lifestyle, and ways of understanding the world, essentially the product of their environment, that is, that of civil society, in which they have grown up and been socialized until now—here with all of them coming from francophone Québec. The reading of these dissertations, all produced individually and without consultation with their classmates, revealed a unanimous conception of command and leadership: to be a good leader, one must listen to their subordinates. In none of these essays did we find the idea that the art of command could mobilize a certain type of decision-making skill, that it relates to a specific type of power relations, that it could be linked to certain duties and responsibilities, etc. No reference, even minimal, or even allusive, to the idea of authority emerged from these essays. In the eyes of these first-year cadets, the most important thing to be a good commanding officer is to listen to your subordinates. These responses suggest not some specific conception of authority, but rather, problematically in my view, the very absence of any conception of authority altogether. However anecdotal it may seem, this personal experience nevertheless coincides largely on a broader level with a strong societal trend, revealed through larger sociological studies.

In this paper and for the sake of this discussion, we understand authority (or “domination, herrschaft), following Max Weber’s definition as “any chance that an individual has to find determinable persons ready to obey an order of determined content.”²⁴ In other words, one person has authority over another if they can give “order” to them. Weber distinguished three distinct forms of authority, which refer to three distinct sources of legitimacy, the last two of which can be mobilized by officers in their leadership. The traditional form is based on respect for customs and traditions. Carried by the power of

tradition, a person embodying it thus finds themselves exercising over others a certain form of authority. The legal form derives its source from the institutional structure on which it is based. In the military institution, it is articulated in the form of the legitimate authority granted to the officer, holder of a commission, to exercise authority over the troops and subordinate officers. In this case, authority is embedded in a rigid structure, around the chain of command. Finally, the third form is rooted in the personality traits of the person in authority. In addition to deriving their power from the authority granted to them by the military structure, of which rank is the most visible illustration, officers can also exercise influence through the charisma they can display in their relations with their subordinates. Candidates who enter the military academy must be trained to be able, once they receive their commission, to exercise, through their command, a form of authority, by relying both on the legal framework of the military command structure, as well as on certain personal provisions.

Inglehart has been leading a sociological study of unprecedented scope for more than thirty years. The World Value Survey tracks, through surveys conducted in more than 100 countries containing over 90 percent of the world's population, certain societal trends affecting large population groups. Among the trends emerging from these data is the fact that in western societies (United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, U.K., etc.), we currently observe a transition between two dominant value models. The "self-expression" values are now tending to supplant those hitherto associated with what is known as "survival" values. This tendency seems even more pronounced among younger generations, where this new set of values appears to be largely dominant. The transition in values translates into a shift in child-rearing values, from emphasis on hard work toward emphasis on imagination and tolerance as important values to teach a child. Societies that rank high on self-expression values tend to have an environment of trust and tolerance, in which people place a relatively high value on individual freedom and have activist political orientations.⁵

But this is also accompanied by another phenomenon, this one more worrying from a military point of view, namely a "shift away from deference to all forms of external authority." This is explained by the fact that submission to authority has high costs: an individual's personal goals must be subordinate to those of others. Under conditions of insecurity, people are willing to do so. Under threat of invasion, civil war, or economic collapse, people tend to seek strong authority figures who can protect them from danger. Conversely, prosperity and security are conducive to tolerance of diversity and rising demands to have a say in what happens to them.⁶

Younger generations are increasingly critical of any form of relationship or organizational structure in which unequal relationships dominate. They are more and more reluctant to become members of organizations in which they do not retain full control over all decisions affecting them and their immediate environment. In his studies, Inglehart is not particularly interested in the military. However, we believe that his research

constitutes a solid starting point for reflecting on the impact that these societal trends can have on the military institution, and on military academies, in the manner of the overall approach carried out by researchers before us interested in civil-military relations, such as sociologists Charles C. Moskos, Morris Janowitz, or Bernard Boëne, and others.⁷ To our knowledge, the trends observed by the World Value Survey have not yet led to the reflection we propose here.

This erosion of authority identified through the World Value Survey tool largely coincides with other phenomena observed throughout the west that confirm this trend in several areas. On the political level, this is observable in the current crisis of representative democracy, which can be seen in a decreasing voter turnout,⁸ a growing distrust of political institutions and of public office holders,⁹ as well as a decline of traditional political parties everywhere in the west, etc.¹⁰ This erosion also partly explains the growing influence of some populist political figures who paradoxically openly claim a certain authoritarianism.¹¹ But this demise of authority can also be seen in public institutions, mainly in school, that institution with which young people have had the most contact since their childhood.¹² Today, throughout the west, at all academic levels, the relationship between teacher and student is increasingly characterized by a desire to attenuate authority markers that underlies it. The learner-centered approach, an increasingly dominant approach throughout the school, at all school cycles, but in particular from secondary school, has the effect of redefining the relationship between learner and teacher around a more egalitarian mode less marked by traditional authority markers (teacher as an expert, teacher as a dispenser of knowledge, respect for instructions, etc.).¹³ In pointing out this phenomenon, it is not our intention to engage here in a debate on the educational virtues of this new pedagogical approach—whose effectiveness seems amply demonstrated in studies¹⁴—but simply to underline how much it affects the way in which young people are familiarized with authority at school.

Although widespread and multifaceted, the dangers of this erosion of authority should not be overstated. This societal transition to new dominant values is probably not so great as to lead to a collapse of our public or political institutions. Just as these institutions of the 1960s were able to withstand the social pressures of that decade, with perhaps sometimes significant adjustments, so too can our institutions, including our armed forces, be expected to be able to adapt to the new dominant values. That said, we believe that this crisis is sufficiently perceptible in an institution in which authority occupies such a central place as in the armed forces. No other institution in liberal democratic societies is permeated by the principle of authority than the military institution, which takes a particular form, that of “military command.” This hierarchical, relatively rigid, and all-encompassing authority structure has historically proven to be the most effective system for conducting military operations, particularly on a large scale in the context of armed conflict, the ultimate *raison d’être* of any military institution. But there is no reason to believe that this system should be abandoned. The challenge facing military academies is thus how to get officer-cadets to appropriate this unique system of authority, as they join the military academy.

Learning to Obey and Command

In the past, officer-cadets who entered military academies all came with some idea of what authority is. Schooled in institutions in which a certain form of authority was deployed, with the teacher as the main figure, they were socialized in a way to show deference to external authority, recognizing that it confers on certain people a type of power, sometimes real, sometimes symbolic, to which we must consent. They were also aware that all systems of authority are based on a relationship of relative inequality among members of the same organization, precisely according to the place and role of each one in this system, and that accordingly, some people have precedence over others, and might also enjoy privileges not granted to all. They also knew that the counterpart is that authority always comes with responsibilities and a level of accountability, in terms of decision-making, personnel management, administration of disciplinary measures, etc. Finally, they had integrated the idea that authority granted to people comes with precise limits, which prevent them abusing it. Perhaps they had also been able to experience authority in other organizations. The authority found in the school, in the sports club, in the social club, etc. was certainly of a different type, sometimes even of a very different one, than the one deployed within the military institution, but it was based on the same universal principle. The young man and woman who entered the military academy until recently had already integrated this notion. All that remained was to familiarize themselves with the unique form it takes within the military institution. The situation will be different in the years to come.

The erosion of authority, which can be observed everywhere in western liberal societies, is likely to result in a greater integration challenge for future cohorts of young men and woman who will enter military academies in three different ways. Let us discuss them, in turn, before outlining a possible solution for these challenges.

First Challenge: Learning Authority in the Military Context

First, future generations of cadets will be faced with the challenge not only to have to learn about the form authority takes in the military, but more fundamentally in a sense, what authority is all about. If integration to the military academy has always been a challenge for cadets, particularly because of the demanding training through which it is delivered in its initial phase, one can easily imagine how much more difficult this integration will be for cadets in the coming years. This may increase the failure rate and reduce the retention rate in general. While candidates who join military academies throughout the west today do so voluntarily, the retention rate, particularly in the early stages of their training process, is contingent upon maintaining a sufficiently high degree of commitment and willingness to continue on this path, even when faced with difficult challenges, hence the importance of this reflection on the impact of this social trend on cadet training.

Distinct in many respects from any other civil institution, notably because of its unique organizational culture, its somewhat “strange” rituals from a civilian point of view, the professional requirements imposed on their members, etc., the military institution is even more distinct because of the singular nature of its system of authority. The military

command unfolds as a system marked by a rigid hierarchy, of which ranks are the most visible external manifestation, which assigns each member, soldier, non-commissioned member, and officer to a precise place and role within a complex organizational structure, to which nothing is left to chance. In addition, this system is based on a very centralized planning and decision-making process, with minimal input from the lower echelons of the hierarchy and with a top-down execution. Over time, this system has been able to adapt and the type of authority which today structure the relationship, for example, between an officer and their troops in the current western armies, is very different from that which prevailed in any nineteenth-century European army. Recently, with operational experience in theatres dominated with hybrid warfare and driven by a new mission-oriented command approach, we have witnessed a tendency in most western militaries toward a certain loosening of this system, which translates into granting greater freedom of action and decision to officers, at every level, and even to some non-commissioned members.¹⁵ But, despite this new tendency, and in comparison, with the mode of operation that prevails in any civilian institution, the military system of authority continues to display a undeniable high degree of centralization and a relatively rigid hierarchy. Furthermore, military command is an encompassing system, in that it imposes itself to service men and women well beyond the contractual framework of their professional activities, encompassing a good respect the whole of their person. Military command can decline itself in different ways depending on the sub military culture of each element (Air Force, Navy, Army, Special Forces). Nevertheless, beyond these differences, it presents a character that clearly distinguishes it from any type of system of authority prevailing in civil society.

We are thus inclined to think that officer-cadets who will integrate military academies in the coming years will be more likely to question this system and the real and symbolic power through which it deploys itself. These critiques might not always aim at questioning its legitimacy—although it is also possible; in this case, one may be tempted to say that the profession of arms might not be the right choice for individuals expressing such critique—, but be simply the expression of a deep misunderstanding of the very idea of authority itself. Military academies must recognize this if they are to find the best way to teach them about authority in its military form.

Second Challenge: The Necessary Bond of Trust

The second challenge facing future cohorts of young men and women entering the military academies will be one of trust with the military leadership. Any form of learning, regardless of the type of learning and the nature of the institution offering it, always requires the existence and the maintenance of a solid bond of trust between the educator and the student (or between a “teacher” and their “pupil”). The student must have confidence that the person who oversees their education is competent and therefore masters not only of the subject matter they are transmitting, but also the most effective pedagogical techniques to achieve it. In the same sense, the student must also maintain a similar bond of trust with the institution in which this teaching is conducted. He or she must also have confidence

that their educator truly cares about their education. If this bond of trust is broken, the whole learning process becomes impossible. In practice, the strength of such a bond of trust is visible, for example, in the fact that the teacher can sometimes require the student to perform certain demanding tasks or learning exercises, whether on a physical, intellectual, or even psychological level, the purpose or pedagogical objective of which can sometimes escape the student engaged in such activity—only for them to realize later, sometimes even only much later, the full meaning of it. A student will only agree to submit to such a program if they have confidence in the authority figures in charge of their education.

In the military academy, such a bond of trust between the military staff and officer-cadets takes on an even stronger meaning, due to the particularly demanding nature of its training program. Thus, for example, cadets may only agree to undertake the physically demanding challenge, to support the inevitable psychological strain and the many unavoidable hardships and privations that come with any military training, if they have sufficient confidence that what is required of them is justified. Other mechanisms may also come into play here, such as the weight of tradition. Indeed, cadets are all the more inclined to perform demanding tasks knowing that generations of cadets before them have submitted to such a program. Another of these mechanisms is the sense of accomplishment. Most cadets derive a certain pride and a source of personal motivation from passing demanding tests, driven by the conviction that what is required of them is precisely not within the reach of all. Furthermore, serving in the military in the service of the country's defense is perceived by many cadets as a noble task, for which certain sacrifices are amply justified. Tradition, a sense of self-accomplishment, and service to one's country in the military undoubtedly play an essential role in the motivation of a cadet to submit to a demanding training program such as those offered at military academies. However, more fundamentally, we believe that the maintenance of a solid bond of trust with military authority figures is fundamental. It is this bond of trust that risks being undermined in the coming years with the erosion of the general notion of authority in society.

In addition, if this bond of trust between the military instructor and officer-cadet must be strong, it is also due to the singular objective of the educational program provided at the military academy, which is to train in the art of command. As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, learning to command requires first learning to obey. The erosion of authority that can be seen everywhere in the west will probably not result in the eradication of all forms of obedience within the educational institutions attended by young people. In schools, some form of obedience will continue to be required from students, if only minimally, in the form of a code of conduct through which schools can maintain an environment conducive to student learning. We can thus assume that cadets who will attend military academies in the future will know, at least minimally, what obedience to such a code is, despite the erosion of the idea of authority in general. However, in the military academy, obedience required by cadets is not only to ensure an environment conducive to learning—although it obviously contributes to it—but it also represents a learning objective in itself. Learning to obey has a much stronger meaning in this context,

as evidenced by the strict disciplinary code imposed on cadets, than what can be seen in civilian schools. This educational objective will certainly need to be well understood by cohorts of future cadets if they are to adhere to it.

Third Challenge: Military Service

Finally, the third and last challenge awaiting officer-cadets in the years to come concerns the nature of the commitment required of them in joining the academy, that of military service. Active military service imposes on all military personnel, regardless of rank or position, a form of commitment to the armed forces that has few equivalents in civil society, except perhaps in some religious institutions, such as the Catholic church, for priests and other clergy. Active service implies, among other things, giving up control to the military hierarchy over several aspects affecting not only one's professional life (e.g., choice of assignment, position, career paths, etc.), but also in many respects one's personal life (e.g., service during extended hours, on weekends or evenings, being away from one's family for extended periods of time, respecting a certain code of conduct involving, among other things, the requirement to have a regulation haircut, etc.). Being in the military is more than just a job; it is a "calling," as it is based on a comprehensive organizational commitment.¹⁶ It is easy to imagine how generations of cadets entering the military academy in the future may be more reluctant to embrace the profession of arms as the values of self-expression, including the idea of strong personal control over all aspects of one's life, become more prevalent in society.

In the case of generations of officers who will graduate from military academies, in addition to the challenges posed by active military service, come important professional responsibilities that are related to the exercise of military command. It is one thing to submit to a system of authority in a "passive" manner, so to speak, being placed in a subordinate position under a figure of authority—a position in which, for example, cadets find themselves at the military academy—it is quite another to be in a position of command and to exercise "active" military authority over subordinates—a position in which cadets will find themselves after graduation. In other words, it is one thing to learn to obey, another to learn to command. Young officers will then have to take full measure of the roles and responsibilities awaiting them as figures of authority themselves within the military command system, which they will have to assume entirely and from which they will not be able to relinquish, even partially or momentarily, as long as they remain on active duty. Accepting such a role certainly implies significant personal sacrifices and sometimes putting the organization's goals ahead of personal ones. It will also mean accepting, for the good of the organization and when required, to "impose" control over many aspects of their subordinates' lives. It is likely that many of these subordinates will exhibit the same resistance to show deference to external authority as discussed in this paper, making the exercise of command the more difficult. It will also involve assuming virtually unlimited accountability. In the military authority structure, the officer is fully accountable for all his or her decisions, including the potentially bad ones that may sometimes be made. To

appreciate the full extent of this responsibility, it must be remembered that it includes, for some officers assigned to tactical units, the exercise of command in theatres of war where decisions may unfortunately involve life and death. In receiving their commissions as officers, graduates of military academies will also have to accept the social status associated with being an officer. This will require of them to be attentive to their troops, but at the same time to be able to maintain a symbolic distance with them, as one of the devices of the officer's authority. In a society in which there is a strong desire to erase all markers of inequality, this may represent a real challenge for many future officers.

More broadly, in order to live up to the responsibilities entrusted to them, officer will need to accept not only the validity of the system of military authority, as well as their role and place within it, but also more fundamentally, they will need to maintain a strong confidence in the idea that it represents the most appropriate management system for an organization such as the armed forces, given its particular core mandate. This should never translate into a "blind" confidence in the institution or the military hierarchy. Every officer will only be able to serve the armed forces well and thus truly contribute as a central actor in the military decision-making process, at all levels of command that they may occupy throughout their career, if they demonstrate their constant capacity to use critical thinking. However, their degree of trust toward the military institution and its singular system of authority will need to be solid, given the inevitable doubts that will arise about this system and the chain of command over the course of a military career. This confidence will all the more easily be sustained if the officer is, in turn, fully convinced that the chain of command will always be present to support them as active figures of authority themselves.

A Possible Solution: Initial Training Dedicated to the Military Command System

How should military academies respond to these three challenges? What solutions are available to them? One such avenue would be for military academies to provide cadets with a specific preparatory program that will aim to familiarize them in a theoretical and non-engaging perspective with military command, as the preferred mode of organization and management of the military institution. In our view such a program would align well with the approach that tends to gain prominence in most military academies in recent years that aims at the development of critical thinking skills in officer-cadets, rooted in a broad general knowledge. Academies could provide this training to cadets right upon their admission and before being actually "caught up" in this system of authority while beginning their professional military training. In this way, it would be a matter of making explicit, and exposing to open discussion, reflection, and critique, what in the past had essentially been an informal and implicitly integrated learning process for cadets entering the military academy. Until now, learning about military command was not followed by any prior training, as it was learned, so to speak, "on the job", first and foremost under the command of the drill sergeant. It may be useful for this training to mobilize the resources of social sciences, to explain not only the actual functioning of this system, but

also its history, the principles that underlie it, and its validity, in order to show how it still represents the most appropriate management system for an organization such as the armed forces, given its particular core mandate. We believe that only once the legitimacy of the principles underlying the command system is well founded, can cadets then be led to learn the roles and responsibilities of an officer in that system, which certainly includes understanding how to exercise initiative, creativity, and critical thinking as essential elements of the functioning of that system. Awareness of the inevitable tension between obeying and taking initiative is only possible if the overall military system of authority is first well understood. This type of training could assuredly contribute to a more successful integration of future cohorts of cadets into their new environment.

Such a program would thus better respond to the first challenge of familiarizing cadets with military authority in a way that is more conducive to candidates for whom the very notion of authority is unclear (challenge 1). This program would also contribute to consolidate the bond of trust with the military leadership (challenge 2). The more the cadet understands the system of authority within which this educational relationship takes place, the more likely they are to have confidence in the military leadership that oversees their training. Finally, this initiative would also help to consolidate the notion of service that is at the heart of the unique commitment that binds the officer to the military institution (challenge 3).

Let us use an analogy to describe the meaning of the proposed solution path. Until the 1970s, there was no military morning exercise instituted within the U.S. military, as recruits were generally fit at enrollment. Since then, however, the practice of morning physical training has become more regular and necessary, as the overall fitness level of recruits has greatly decreased over time. The solution we propose here is of the same nature, in that it calls for an initiative by military academies that was unnecessary in the past but is now required to address a significant change in the new cohorts of cadets, in order to continue to fulfill its traditional training objective, which is to train and educate officers capable to occupy the responsibilities which await them within the armed forces upon graduation.¹⁷

Conclusion

The reader may be led to believe that our analysis is tinged with a certain amount of pessimism and that perhaps we are exaggerating the risk that this societal trend of the decline of authority in general in society actually will pose to military academies in the future. We are confident that these institutions can and will continue to fulfill their training and education responsibilities in the future if they are more responsive to these societal trends. Without sacrificing any of their organizational identity, forged by traditions and know-how that go back generations, an identity that is itself derived from the unique mandate entrusted to them by the armed forces, military academies must nevertheless take the full measure of these social trends, to better understand the candidates they have the mandate to train and educate. There is no doubt that the learning curve for future generations of cadets entering the military academies is likely to be steeper. Western military academies

should take note of this and adapt to this new reality if they want to continue to fulfill their training and education mission: training for officers to prepare them for their first command responsibilities at a junior level, but more fundamentally, to be ready, through further training and education combined with practical experience in units and selection processes, to occupy all the great variety of positions reserved for officers, up to senior military appointments.

Danic Parenteau, Ph.D., holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Paris 1 (Panthéon-Sorbonne). A graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada, he joined the faculty at the Royal Military College Saint-Jean in 2008, where he served as associate dean for university programs from 2016 to 2019. His teaching includes courses in political science, philosophy, and rhetoric. His main research focuses on political ideologies, Quebec politics and more recently, on the intellectual training of officers. Among his publications are *Les idéologies politiques. Le clivage gauche-droite* (with I. Parenteau, *Political Ideologies. The Left and Right Spectrum*, 2008 and 2017), *Précis républicain à l'usage des Québécois* (*Republican précis for the use of Quebecers*, 2014). He is currently working on writing an essay on the topic of intellectual training to officers.

Endnotes

1. Ronald F. Inglehart, *The World Value Survey Database*, <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>.
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REFERENCES: JPWS uses *The Chicago Manual of Style's* notes and bibliography system with endnotes. For further information on references, please consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition.

Books: Feldman, Lily Gardner, *Germany's Foreign Policy of Reconciliation: From Enmity to Amity* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 20-33

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