

## Sociology and the military

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### Abstract

Sociologists have been reluctant to study the military. It is peripheral to core concerns of sociology. This absence is routinely explained by going back to the discipline's conception. H. Saint-Simon and A. Comte conjured sociology after the close of the Napoleonic War which ushered in a century of relative European peace. C. Wright Mills (1956) argued that this cessation of hostilities created the classic liberal worldview: industrialism would replace militarism. Bizarrely, two World Wars and the Holocaust hardly altered sociology's focus. While Mills' disciplinary influence is indisputable, his call for a sociology of war has largely been ignored (his *Causes of World War Three* swiftly went out of print). To this day scholars repeatedly stress the military's invisibility in the social sciences (e.g Ender, Gibson, 2005). Yet having exited the most murderous century in all of human history and entered a new one with a War on Terror that was defined as global and perpetual, this task is surely pressing. A question, however, arises why the powerful must remain sociologically invisible. This article presents challenges to sociology's pedagogy and practice, which is to say sociology-as-taught and sociology-as-researched. It argues for study of the military, but in so doing it distinguishes itself from two existing literatures, those emanating from the sub-discipline of military sociology, and those emerging post-11-September that stress the ways in which society is now becoming militarised (Giroux 2008). At its worst this military sociology is embedded sociology, which is to say it is scholarship in the service of the powerful, and at best it stops at the garrison gates, treating the military as its own society. While H. Giroux's approach is much more profitable it appears to miss an essential point: society is always already militarised. The entire project of sociology is geared towards making sense of modernity. When modern state formation, administration and governance, citizenship, economic production and organisation, behaviour and discipline are

considered it becomes clear that the military has had a decisive influence.

**Key words:** sociology, militarisation, military, modernity

## **1. Introduction**

The article begins by questioning mainstream sociology's lack of engagement with the military. For the most part it remains invisible. This scholarly blind spot is made all the more perplexing as the military has been a major shaper of the modern world and it is the task of sociology to make sense of modernity. Reasons are considered as to why the military has been overlooked. This is tied to the historical origins of the discipline: it emerged and developed during a time of relative peace. Sociological analysis of the military is urged as it does not bear the costs of its actions.

The discussion that follows is part historical survey and part contemporary commentary. The historical survey largely concerns Western Europe. The contemporary commentary mostly focuses on Great Britain and the United States of America. The argument therefore applies to the western world. A more geographically extensive survey would be required to make the claim hold elsewhere. This discussion traverses a number of social spaces, the pre-eminent one being that of the nation state. The military exists to defend the nation state's sovereignty; in so doing it also gives it its legitimacy (Weber 1982a: 212). Within this framework of the nation state the societal impacts of military expenditures are examined as are military influences on notions of citizenship and social policy. Economic spaces are also surveyed. Here the focus is on modern bureaucratic organisation and the industrial workplace. This is done to assess the military's influence on modern notions of discipline, management, and production.

## **2. Canon fodder: the military and its sociological invisibility**

This paper takes issue with sociology's pedagogy and practice, which is to say sociology-as-taught and sociology-as-researched. The argument is for research on the military. The military is a subject worth teaching sociology students about and worthy of sociology teachers' scholarly energies. To date, sociologists seem reluctant

to study the military (Kurtz 1992: 62). Edward Tiryakian and C. Wright Mills explain this by returning to the discipline's conception. Claude Henri de Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte conjured sociology after the close of the Napoleonic War. The war's end ushered in a century of relative European peace (Tiryakian 1999: 475). C. Wright Mills (1956: 215) argued that this cessation of hostilities created the classic liberal worldview: industrialism would replace militarism. Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer's developmental histories of society both posited this (Lasswell 1941: 457). War, while significant for European state formation, was a thing of the past. It had its place, and that was in the early modern era. Peace would be the new reality. Being normal, it need not be studied.

Two World Wars and the Holocaust hardly corrected sociological vision. In 1956 C. W. Mills warned readers that the upper echelons of state, corporation and military were now of unprecedented import. Consolidated, they constituted the new power elite, the 'command posts of modern society'. Within this structure 'the military definition of reality [...] prevails' (Mills 1956: 5, 185; for a precursor of this idea see Lasswell 1941). Martin Shaw reminds that while his other sociological insights were enormously influential, Mills' call for a systematic study of the sociology of war went almost unheeded (cited in Kurtz 1992: 75). Lester Kurtz (1992: 76) adds that Mills' *Causes of World War Three* (1958) was virtually ignored (Keynes's *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* met with a similar fate). It is therefore unsurprising that Alvin Gouldner's (1959: vii) survey of twenty-five introductory sociology texts from 1945-1954 reveals less than 300 of the 17 000 pages devoted to the causes and consequences of war: 'More than half of the texts dealt with *this single most important problem of the modern world* in less than 10 pages'; so much for educating the next generation of sociologists.

In 1965 there was no obvious improvement. Lewis Mumford (1973: 265) lamented the military's continued avoidance of scholarly scrutiny. Echoing C. W. Mills, but taking a much longer historical sweep, L. Mumford concerned himself with contemporary power structures. L. Mumford identified the collective human machine as the archetype for all subsequent machines, and the army as the original model for regimentation and total obedience. The unfettered development

of sovereign power, conscription, and the uniformed standing army had created the conditions for a new constellation of forces. These factors, coupled with the militarisation of science and technology, afforded unprecedented levels of power. His name for the new elite was the 'Invisible Machine'. Its efficacy in education, production, and destruction was such 'that its implicit goals and its ultimate destination have not yet been subject to any critical examination' (Mumford 1973: 265), although given studies on the military-industrial complex this statement is an exaggeration.

Of course, critical examination is not something that the military welcomes. Secrecy laws restrict information in the interests of national security. Concerns about terrorism put another barrier in the way of scrutiny. Wherever possible, the military keeps researchers away from its documents, installations, and institutions. It is not easy to take stock of that which you cannot actively examine. Nonetheless, Michael Aaron Dennis (1994: 454) has it that words like 'Classified' and 'Secret' and the network of organisations that may never be entered say something important about post-war American political life. Like H. Laswell, C. W. Mills and L. Mumford before him, he saw the post-war emergence of a new type of state, and a new type of citizen, formed under conditions of total mobilisation. These militarily-backed transformations felt in areas as diverse as industrial production, family composition and academic orientations are still in the process of understanding (Noble 1984; May 1988; Novick 1988). In analysing the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics laboratory (APL) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Instrumentation Laboratory (I-Lab) M. A. Dennis concluded that the simple civilian-soldier binary made no sense. Scientist and military personnel were intersecting and overlapping roles. He asked: 'Is it too much to claim that looking at the civilian in post-war America is much like looking at a map of an archipelago composed of discrete islands of civilian life connected by a larger, largely invisible, military framework?' (Dennis 1994: 454).

Catherine Lutz (2002: 724) concurs, adding that the problem of knowing this military framework is not only one for outsiders: 'Much of the history and the physical and symbolic costs of war on the home front and of war itself have been

invisible to people both inside and outside the military'. Secrecy laws keep scholars at a distance, complicating the already difficult task of tracking cause and effect amongst the American military's complex, differentiated, globalised entities. Critical sensibilities are further blunted all-round by the information and entertainment industries – the compliant corporate media and a popular culture that actively celebrates masculinities of violence and war (Sherry 1995; Turse 2009). A report by Charles Lewis and Mark Reading-Smith (2008) bears C. Lutz out. From 11 September 2001 until the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Fund for Independence in Journalism researchers documented all of the public statements made by the eight most senior members of the G. Bush administration on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and its links with Al Qaeda. Scouring both the official transcripts and the outputs of major news corporations C. Lewis and M. Reading-Smith counted 935 knowingly false statements to the public. In the immediate run up to war the unified media messages 'creat[ed] an almost impenetrable din', and even though some journalists and organisations have retrospectively admitted error, at the time 'much of the wall-to-wall media coverage provided additional, "independent" validation of the Bush administration's false statements about Iraq' (Lewis, Reading-Smith, 2008).

Sociologically speaking, the military remains well camouflaged. This most powerful complex often still avoids critical enquiry. Morten Ender and Ariel Gibson (2005: 249) show that war, peace, and matters military continue to be 'relatively invisible in introductory Sociology textbooks' produced in the United States of America. They performed content analyses of 31 introductory sociology texts, the earliest published in 1995, the latest just before 11 September 2001, concluding that for sociology students the military is 'an invisible institution' (Ender, Gibson, 2005: 261). Broadening the American college text survey to include both history and political science as well, Carl Boggs (2005: xxv) reports on 36 books. Some 27 had nothing to say about the military, nine had fleeting commentary, and none offered any criticism. C. Boggs (2005: xxv) felt compelled to comment on this 'remarkable invisibility of U.S. military power'. Obviously there are methodological limitations to such studies. It is not known what other texts American students consult, so perhaps they are exposed to the military in their other works, nor it is known what non-

American students are routinely exposed to.

Lester Kurtz (1992: 64, 81) makes the suggestion that funding regimes are responsible for the lack of military study. The biggest global sponsor of social science research is the United States military. War and peace research has largely proceeded at the behest of military institutions. The resulting military sociology is inner-directed; at its most benign it stops at the garrison gates, considering the military as its own society. When it looks beyond the barracks it is often preoccupied with the efficacy of its own force, as for example with the Human Terrain Systems scholarship of social scientists aimed at making occupied populations in Afghanistan and Iraq more knowable and controllable (LeVine 2011).

Instead of military sociology a sociology of the military should be advocated, one which illuminates the operations and consequences of military power, and one which sees the various ways in which society at large is militarised. Military study, then, should be wrested from the near-exclusive grip of 'embedded sociology', which is to say that study which takes place within the military's own institutional structures and which seeks to extend its domination over others. A case is advanced against the military's continued invisibility from the disciplinary mainstream on the simplest of grounds: without reckoning with the military the modern world cannot be understood. Thus the article's position is also distinguished from a second, post-11-September literature that stresses ways in which society is now becoming militarised (Giroux 2008). While profitable it appears to miss an essential point: society is always already militarised, by which is meant that the military is a powerful shaper of social institutions and social practices.

To substantiate this argument the study will begin by considering the broad consequences of military expenditure. Following this a range of topics of central concern to sociologists will be surveyed: citizenship, social policy, economic and organisational structure, discipline and the state. In every instance their modern manifestations are traced to a series of military innovations.

### 3. The modern military and its study: where to begin?

What seems interesting here is what makes the modern military modern. For Maury Feld (1975: 419) the great transformation from traditional to modern armed forces is attributable to revolutions in training and financing. Technical skill replaced individual ability, and military activity moved 'from a self-liquidating form of venture capitalism into a systematically budgeted branch of public administration'. The former involved new forms of discipline, the latter a new way of conceiving war: no longer would it have to pay its own way. An obvious point of sociological intervention is to question the state's priorities and the size of these allocations. It could be argued that society would be better served if some of this expenditure went into health or education.

A chilling example of such a cost-benefit analysis of the U.S. military has been undertaken by the economist John Quiggan. Most American policy is based on the concept of the Value of a Statistical Life (VSL). For U.S. policy the VSL is 5,000,000 USD per life (3,850,000 EUR). If the cost of each life saved is below this amount, the policy has every chance of being implemented. This applies to a range of policy settings, including environmental management, medical care, national security, and transportation. Money that gets spent by the Defense Department cannot be spent on life-saving policy elsewhere. Since 2001 J. Quiggan estimates the 'normal' yearly defence budget to be approximately 500,000,000,000 USD (385,690,000,000 EUR). On top of this he estimates the yearly cost of America's wars to be 250,000,000,000 USD (192,820,000,000 EUR). These estimates are modest. For example in Fiscal Year 2011 the B. Obama administration requested 700,000,000,000 USD (539,920,000,000 EUR) for regular defence expenditure. But taking J. Quiggan's combined figures the 750,000,000,000 USD (578,486,000,000 EUR) spend could save 150,000 lives per annum. This means that 1,500,000 American lives could have been saved since 11 September. 'I think it's fair to say that those people were killed by the Defense Department, or, more precisely, by the allocation of scarce life-saving resources to that Department', J. Quiggan (2011) concludes.

Speaking of the British context, James Buchan (2006: 181-2) asserts: 'The military wastes money. That is what it does'. His claim stems from an analysis of the

Trident nuclear submarine system, the running costs of were officially priced at 1,700,000,000 GBP (2,100,000,000 EUR) per annum. This covers four vessels, 950 crew, 500 base guards, 110 marine police, two bases, one refit dock, storage fees for unarmed Trident missiles housed in the U.S., and the Atomic Weapons Establishment that maintains the 200 operational warheads. The Trident system also requires enormous capital works for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the submarines. These costs are 'beyond computation'.

C. W. Mill's concerns about the military definition of reality prevailing are worth revisiting. The warlords have their way yet Trident makes neither economic nor strategic sense. I. Buchan (2006: 181) writes, '[i]n reality, the Trident project has been by far the most costly industrial enterprise ever attempted in Britain in peacetime, or at least since the building of the Dreadnought-class battleships in the years after 1906'. But it is a defence system for which there is no enemy. With the rise of the non-state actor, the new evils are common nouns ('Terror') rather than proper nouns ('Russia'). A warhead can point towards Warsaw, but not towards a particular person. 'Britain's present enemies are individuals who blow themselves up on crowded trains and can't be located through their hydrodynamic wakes or magnetic scars' (Buchan 2006: 182). The Trident system epitomises what Mary Kaldor (1982) calls the baroque arsenal and Theo Farrell (1997) a weapon without a cause.

The effects of baroque arsenals can be felt socially and environmentally across generations, as in the Trident system. Although developed to protect British society, increasingly it will imperil it. The Ministry of Defence estimates the cost of dismantling the D5 missiles and safeguarding against nuclear contamination at 9,730,000,000 GBP (12,060,000,000 EUR). There is no budget currently set aside for this (Buchan 2006: 181). The British parliament passed a proposal to replace the Trident system in March 2007, although many details are yet to be worked through, and the project remains controversial. In the meantime the Trident system's yearly running costs alone could cover the fees for all of Scotland's tertiary education students and the salaries and research expenses of their professors, or the upkeep of the country's roads, rail system, and ferries (Buchan 2006: 181).

C. Lutz (2002: 726) adds that it is not merely a matter of taking the government's military budget from its social spending. Admittedly, the military can skewer public expenditure and even affect trade relations with other nations, but the state's organisation of violence has a host of immediate and long-term effects. In the U.S. this includes altering the social geography through military migrations from north and east to south and west. The West Coast boom began during the Second World War as people moved en masse to work in the aircraft and shipbuilding industries. Notes Donald Albrecht (1995: 11): 'This migration resulted in economic and demographic shifts that permanently altered the nation's regional balance, giving the West Coast newfound status and independence'.

C. Lutz analyses Fayetteville, the closest settlement to Fort Bragg. She discovered a city reconfigured to serve the interests of the post. Its nickname is *Fayettenam*. Soldiers come to shop. Retail work predominates. Retail work pays less than other forms of labour, and Fayetteville's is further depressed by the massed ranks of unemployed army spouses who come to town courtesy of the military, plus the retired soldiers that decide to decamp. In consequence the wage rates are lower there than in any of North Carolina's other cities. Fort Bragg also undermines Fayetteville's tax base. Its 647 km<sup>2</sup> are exempt from government property taxes (see also Jacobs, 1984: 184-7 on the negative economic consequences of another Carolinian garrison town).

Globally, the situation worsens. C. Lutz (2002: 729) notes that United States military operations 'include apartheid-like conditions, prostitution, and other retrogressive effects on women in the surrounding communities, and environmental devastation around bases'. Environmental damage is an often overlooked aspect of militarisation. Yet according to Kenneth Gould (2007: 331) 'militari[s]ation is the single most ecologically destructive human endeavo[u]r'. Other scholars agree. Michael Renner (1991: 132) argues that 'the world's armed forces are the single largest polluter on earth', while J. David Singer and Jeffrey Keating (1999: 338) note 'that the armed forces of the major powers produce the greatest amount of hazardous waste in the world'.

#### 4. Militarisation, modern discipline, and mass behaviour

Having surveyed the contemporary scene concerning the state's allocation of resources to the military and having offered some sociological insights into this, the current section and the following one offer a broader historical sweep. The primary aim of these two sections is to show the modern world's debt to military innovations.

Sociology seeks to understand collective human experience in modern society. Part of its project involves comprehending how society comes to be modern. This cannot be understood until the military's decisive role is factored in. Routinely the 'dual revolutions' are used to explain the onset of modernity. The French Revolution transformed politics, giving new notions of democracy and individual citizenship. The Industrial Revolution transformed economics through the factory system, a new detailed division of labour, novel forms of discipline, training and surveillance. In this section it is argued that all of the abovementioned subjects are themselves shaped by something sociologists scarcely acknowledge: military imperatives. Let each be considered.

For Zygmunt Bauman (1995: 153) the ideal modern subject is constituted as producer/soldier (see also Hintze 1975: 206-7). The individual is drilled as a bearer of force, directed either to construction or destruction. Docile, disciplined, and regimented they find their place as cogs in a collective machine. Healthy and obedient they are always 'fit for service'. This aligns with Michel Foucault's (1979: 168) observation: 'Politics, as a technique of internal peace and order, sought to implement the mechanism of the perfect army, of the disciplined mass, of the docile, useful troop, of the regiment in camp and in the field, on manoeuvres and on exercises'.

Citizenship can additionally be interpreted as the rights the ruling classes cede to the masses in order to rule. Citizenship in turn obliges military service. The origins of the citizen-soldier are to be found in Revolutionary France (the *levée en masse* of 1793), although it was Napoleon's *grande armée* that converted the entire country into a resource for fighting. Of course, just who has been cleared for entry into the charmed circle of citizenship is an important point: historically it has been

the white heterosexual male, the heroic fighting man.

Still, certain welfare benefits can be seen as rewards for military service. Modern American social policy begins with pensions to Civil War veterans, wives, and dependents (Skocpol 1992: 525), the extension of Britain's franchise to some women over 30 was seen as gratitude for services rendered in the Great War, and the Beveridge Report which ushered in their modern welfare state was implemented at the end of the Second World War (Scott 2001: 186-7; for an opposing reading see Foucault 1988: 147).

The origins of citizenship and social policy can be attributed to the military, as can the origins of Western 'disciplinary society' (Foucault 1979: 157-62). It is the military which first mechanises individual human behaviour, and from this source it spreads out into the world of civilian economics. Max Weber (1982b: 261) asserted that '[t]he discipline of the army gives birth to all discipline. The large-scale economic organi[s]ation is the second great agency which trains men for discipline'. A dueller in the Bruderschaft Alemannia and a Prussian officer, M. Weber felt the effects of drill on the parade grounds of Strasbourg and on patrol in Posen/Poznań. In his opinion mass organisation and collective action rest on rational discipline, the original of which is the barrack. M. Foucault (1979: 142) agrees. Early modern armies were a 'vagabond mass', they needed discipline to keep them in place, to stop looting and violence and to keep local communities safe from them. Moreover, discipline was required to prevent desertion and to contain expenditure. Once perfected, discipline also increases speed, force, and skill (Foucault 1979: 210).

Indeed, for M. Weber bureaucracy itself was the creation of the standing army, which in turn came into being through state machinations and financing. The standing army was a necessity for policing large territories and protecting them against external enemies. In monopolising the means of legitimate violence the state finds its reason for being (Weber 1982a: 212, 222). M. Weber brings sociological attention to the important questions of the extent to which military organisation affects broader social space: state structures and modes of social organisation. Alan Scott (2001: 184) gives him credit for bringing two important observations to light, '(1) the origins and implication of external discipline and self control;

(2) the interdependency of war, the formation of the modern nation-state and capitalism’.

M. Feld (1975) finds an historical location for M. Weber’s pronouncements in the unlikelyst of places, the hitherto unmilitary society of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Beginning in the late sixteenth century with captain-general Maurice of Nassau, the Dutch rationalised and professionalised their military. Regular wages replaced looting, binding soldiers by contracts rather than loyalty. This cured the morale problem. Discipline was no longer left to personal choice but was imposed by a rigorous regimen of training based on objective codified criteria. In 1607 Jacob de Gheyn published the *Wapenhandelinghe* (arms drill), a book of engravings demonstrating the new control. These systematised the necessary postures and movements required for successful use of the caliver, musket, and pike. Correct use of the weapon was broken down into a series of sequentially numbered steps, and a command attached to each forming the entire cycle. The knowledge was easily, and fully, transmitted. M. D. Feld (1975: 424) writes, ‘[t]he illustrations and their descriptions were arranged to form an integrated instructional device, perhaps the first ever printed’, moreover in the *Wapenhandelinghe* ‘the first verifiable system of mass indoctrination and control’ was introduced.

Such instruction produced a machine in L. Mumford’s sense of the word: a programmed mass working to a single end. This was strengthened by adding an old tactic to the new weapon: the countermarch to the firearm. Ranks of soldiers were organised five deep. The first rank would fire then retire to the rear and reload; marching towards the front again as successive rows fired and fell back. Once at the front they would fire again, thereby ensuring the continual production of firepower. M. Feld likens this to the assembly line replacing craft production, deskilling the participants so that they only needed functioning limbs and the ability to process basic orders. It is interesting to note that the efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control of people by non-human technologies that M. Feld constantly refers to represent all of the hallmarks of instrumental reason which defined the modern world for M. Weber (Ritzer 1996: 18). No less a figure than the ‘father of modern philosophy’ himself, René Descartes, a leading source of rationalist and machinic

thinking in his own right, joined the ranks of Maurice's army. With Maurice of Nassau the first modern army was found, and the 'earliest of industrial revolutions – the industrialisation of military behaviour' (Feld 1975: 434).

The military has continued its tradition of managerial innovation, particularly in its North American guises, developing operations research ('management science') during the Second World War and numerical control in the 1950s and 1960s (Noble 1985). 'Flat management' (Fukuyama, Shulsky, 1997: 28) and 'systems integration' (Hobday et al., 2005) are two additional command practices that have yet to be fully absorbed by the corporate civilian world. Nigel Thrift (2005: 216), in studying the sources of knowledge needed for sequencing and social ordering – what he calls the positionings and juxtapositionings of bodies and objects – concludes: 'Though there are many of these knowledges, perhaps the most important and most neglected have been those emanating from armies, navies and, latterly, air forces'.

### 5. Militarisation and modern mass production

While M. Feld restricts himself to the military's industrialisation of mass behaviour, other researchers have also traced the industrialisation of mass production to military origins. The Venetian Republic was a major maritime power during the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. A massive arsenal was constructed there in 1104. Contemporaneous to the Dutch military reforms, the Arsenal at Venice covered 24 ha. It employed 2,000 men within its confines; 3,000 in states of emergency. Dante's *Inferno* compared it to the clustered depths of hell. The Arsenal 'was the biggest industrial establishment in all Christendom, perhaps the biggest in the world' (Lane 1973: 362). Further, it foreshadowed assembly line production techniques, the use of interchangeable parts and vertical integration, arguably according it 'first factory' status.

More commonly, subsequent writers have highlighted the quest for interchangeable parts in musket manufacture as modern industrial production's driver. David Hounshell (1985: 25) acknowledges the debt 'the American system' of manufacture had to the Enlightened European military mind. General Jean-Baptiste de Gribeauval, inspector general of artillery, ushered in the standardisation of French

weaponry through uniform parts. This rationalisation made parts interchangeable, artillery pieces could be exchanged with small arms components. It entailed prototypical assembly lines and mass manufacture techniques (De Landa n.d.). Taken to America by Thomas Jefferson, the American system began with the federal armouries at Springfield and Harper's Ferry (Hounshell 1985: 26). Economic and administrative restructuring drew legislative momentum from an 1815 act aimed at 'the better regulation' of the U.S. Army Ordnance Department. The fully developed mass production process, in which Ordnance played a decisive role, employed dedicated machinery and precise systems of measurement to ensure systems of uniformity and controlled workflows. The historian Merritt Roe Smith (1985: 41) called it 'one of the great technological achievements of the nineteenth century'.

Given the points above concerning economic order, discipline and output, Karl Marx's use of military metaphors in *The Communist Manifesto* and *Capital* are anything but misplaced. K. Marx showed, 'that techniques, besides being means of producing, are always means of dominating, of disciplining, and of militari[s]ing the worker' (Gorz quoted in Hacker, Hacker, 1987: 747). The explicit linkages made here may not be so noticeable in contemporary western society, but sports shoe production in China, Indonesia, and Vietnam for instance, sees factory production frequently managed by ex-military men, with wages further depressed by militia that oppose collective organisation simultaneously backed by governments invoking national security interests (Enloe 2000: 291).

In K. Marx's schema worker and property owner, as the two great classes of capitalism, are in a sense at war. Their opposing identities are determined by their relationship to the means of production. What is understood by history is driven by this conflict's motor. All societies, barring the mature communist one to come, are stratified by class, the ruling class parasitic upon the subject class. This warfare is 'a structural determinant of modernity' (Tiryakian 1999: 476). Indeed, for K. Marx the military are proof of his thesis of historical materialism par excellence, pioneering the wage system, generating various assumptions about property rights, the value of metals and the monetarised economy, developing large scale machinery and, crucially, the division of labour. 'The history of the army brings out more clearly than

anything else the correctness of our conception of the connection between the productive forces and social relations', he said, indeed '[t]he whole history of the forms of bourgeois society is very strikingly epitomi[s]ed here' (Marx 1988: 341-2). A decade later he would ask Friedrich Engels (nicknamed 'the general' for his expertise on military matters) for a contributing appendix to *Capital*, asking: 'Is there anywhere where our theory that the "organisation of labour is determined by the means of production" more brilliantly confirmed than in the human slaughter industry?' (Quoted in Hacker, Hacker, 1987: 750).

## 6. Conclusion: the need to teach and study the military

One of the roles of sociology is to speak truth to power, to challenge the legitimacy of claims made by those in command. Sociologists can therefore play a role in scrutinising military expenditures and in suggesting more productive alternatives. This will give a more accurate picture of both the costs of the military and the costs of the wars it wages. As it emerges, the powerful have a tendency to downplay such expenditures. For example, in the lead up to the American invasion of Iraq President G. Bush's economic advisor thought that the war would only cost 200,000,000,000 USD (154,240,000,000 EUR). Donald Rumsfeld disputed this, suggesting a much lower figure of 60,000,000,000 USD (46,270,000,000 EUR), while the head of the Agency for International Development thought that the country could be rebuilt for 1,700,000,000 USD (1,310,000,000 EUR) (Shatz 2008: 10). Social scientists come up with very different numbers. When Joseph E. Stiglitz, a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, published a book with Linda J. Bilmes (2008) to discover the true cost of the Iraq conflict, they titled it: *The Three Trillion Dollar War* (although the cost to built heritage and human life are incalculable). Indeed, they suggested that the likely end cost would be closer to 5,000,000,000,000 USD (3,850,000,000,000 EUR).

Civilians pay in other senses too. The broad trajectory of warfare across the twentieth century and into the twenty first reveals a clear pattern in which soldiers die less and civilians die more. Such has been the transformation of modern warfare that some academics have suggested that we are currently witnessing the

death of the civilian (Gregory 2006). In eighteenth and nineteenth century European warfare, for example, armed attacks on civilians were virtually unknown. Fighting was for soldiers (Aron 2002: 33). At the start of the twentieth century something like 5% of all war-related casualties were civilians; by the 1990s that figure had exceeded 90% (Cohen 2001: 287). It is tempting to say, as Raymond Aron (2002: 69) does, that in the twentieth century the civilian-soldier distinction collapses. Certainly the conditions of total war coupled with technologies of mass destruction point to this conclusion (see also Lasswell 1941: 459). But this is not strictly accurate. The current state of war is a perverse one in which the soldiers survive while civilians die (and thanks to drone warfare this includes civilians in countries that the United States is not at war with, like Pakistan and Yemen). Martin Shaw (2005) refers to this gargantuan risk transfer as the new western way of war. It reached its logical conclusion in the Kosovo conflict in 1999. Whilst numerous Serb and Albanian civilian casualties were recorded, not a single NATO soldier died. To summarise, then, there are two solid reasons why sociologists should engage with the military: the military do not recognise the costs of their actions nor do they bear the costs of them.

The prime thrust of this article has been to highlight modernity's debt to the military, and to criticise conventional sociology's failure to acknowledge this. Having exited the most murderous century in all of human history (Todorov 2003: 6) and entered the new one with a War on Terror that is global and perpetual, this task is surely pressing. Major social theorists like K. Marx (1988) and M. Foucault (1980) recognised the central importance of the military, yet it remained marginal to their work. Neither managed their proposed military projects, yet K. Marx saw its import for the materialist conception of history, the connection of forces and relations of production. M. Foucault (1980: 76-77) praised him for '[e]verything he wrote on the army and its role in the development of political power. There is some very important material there', he said, before adding with disappointment, 'that [it] has been left practically fallow for the sake of endless commentaries on surplus value'. M. Foucault also alluded to the military's contribution to social order. Sociologists fixate on the Enlightenment dream of a perfect society, but as he noted, the military

had its own vision, based on coercion, docility, subordination, and training. For him, the military need to be examined if it comes to understand notions like space, power, organisation and knowledge. This sociology of the military is yet to take form. To this day, writers repeatedly stress the military's continued invisibility in the social sciences (Boggs 2005: xxv; Ender, Gibson, 2005: 249; Lutz 2002: 724). As long as this remains, critical examination, and by extension, comprehension, is evaded. Yet military readiness, defence and war constitute major ordering principles - in these senses our culture is militarised (Mann in Scott 2001: 184; Lutz 2002: 724). The workings of present society, past or possible futures cannot be fully appreciated until recognition with this will not become a fact. The task ahead is to illuminate the manifold connections between the military and modernity.

## 7. References

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