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## SECURITY CONCEPTS IN THE REALITIES OF THE ARMED FORCES' TASKS OVER THE CENTURIES

### Abstract

The article characterises the evolution of the concepts of personal and structural security in the context of the tasks of the armed forces. It presents concepts of security in the context of the objectives of state and state power throughout history. These concepts have been undoubtedly formulated in a differentiated manner depending on the political and constitutional system formation dominating in a given historical period. The deliberations also highlighted the expectations of societies towards armed forces. Interestingly, not so much lethal armed struggle and mass killing, but limited armed action and low-intensity struggles, conducted in niches and causing little or no loss of life.

**Keywords:** military security, safety, tasks of the Armed Forces, history

## KONCEPCJE BEZPIECZEŃSTWA W REALIACH ZADAŃ SIŁ ZBROJNYCH NA PRZESTRZENI WIEKÓW

### Abstrakt

W artykule dokonano charakterystyki ewolucji pojęć bezpieczeństwa personalnego i strukturalnego w kontekście zadań sił zbrojnych. Przedstawiono koncepcje bezpieczeństwa w kontekście celów państwa i władzy państwowej na przestrzeni dziejów. Koncepcje te były niewątpliwie formułowane w sposób zróżnicowany w zależności od formacji polityczno-ustrojowej dominującej w danym okresie historycznym. W rozważaniach zwrócono również uwagę na oczekiwania społeczeństw wobec sił zbrojnych. Co ciekawe, nie tyle śmiercionośnych walk zbrojnych i masowego zabijania, co ograniczonych działań zbrojnych i zmagania o małej intensywności, prowadzonych w niszach i powodujących nikłe lub żadne straty śmiertelne.

**Słowa kluczowe:** bezpieczeństwo wojskowe, bezpieczeństwo, zadania Sił Zbrojnych, historia

## Introduction

Concepts of security in the context of objectives of the state and state power throughout history have been formulated differently depending on the political and constitutional system formation dominant in a given historical period. The aim of the article is to review the concept of security over the centuries in the context of the tasks of the armed forces. In the early stages of existence of ancient states, security was identified primarily with the state's interest as the property of the ruler or groups exercising power [27]. Relatively few available documents from ancient times do not allow us to reconstruct the views of that time on the sense of personal security, but – as we can assume – security strategies of early states and empires of antiquity identified state security with the needs of the ruler who could (depending on his views and style of ruling) take care of his subjects in such a way as “to live well”, “to have a good life” – in short, to be happy.

More traces of the relationship between state security and personal security have been left by the ancient cultures of Greece and Rome [26]. In Socrates' views, the state's security (structural security) was a higher value than the individual's security (personal security). For Socrates, a state (as an organisation) had a supreme value, to which a person, regardless of the consequences, had to submit [20]. Socrates' views had a significant influence on Plato's ideas who also treated the state as an entity that guaranteed a good life for its citizens. Furthermore, he defined war as one of the main dangers for the state. In his idea of a perfect state – sophocracy – he considered it necessary to have professional soldiers, referred to as guardians of the state [21]. According to Plato, professional soldiers (guardians of the state) were the most valuable group of citizens from which the ruling class should emerge. However, the state was always the most outstanding value [7]. The state's prosperity was to be the goal of all citizens, to whom a happy state could impart its share of happiness [6]. In such a system, structural security dominated over personal security.

Aristotle was also a continuator of the view of the state's leading role and believed that a human by nature must live in a state [13]. For this reason, he argued that the ability to wage war was an essential part of the functioning of the state. Unlike Plato, Aristotle was not as extreme in his views, thus recognizing the need for property and family for each citizen [8]. The individual's subordination to the state was not as absolute. War was necessary, but its purpose was only to ensure a good and happy life for all. Regardless of the above, Aristotle believed that all citizens should have the ability to fight [22].

Security was one of the most valued goods by the Epicureans, but Epicurus did not deliberate the problem of war to ensure it. He believed that the best means of ensuring security was to strive to live in friendship with all people and satisfy only the necessities [22]. The issue of war and security was not crucial in the philosophy of the Stoics and Cynics. That is because the Stoics' goal was a virtue as a state of

indifference to all material goods. The gods planned human life and the fate of humankind; thereby, a human, guided by reason, should accept all events that befall him/her as a manifestation of the divine will. Therefore, he/she should not avoid dangers but accept them as something inevitable. The Stoics believed that the law of reason is the only determinant of a virtuous life. All people should therefore be treated as brothers. Consequently, in the views of the Stoics, war was not an object of deliberations in any form. However, it appeared as a subject of consideration for the continuators of Stoic philosophy in Rome. The most famous Roman philosopher Cicero also considered virtue as the primary goal of human action. However, due to Rome's involvement in the wars with Carthage, a significant part of his views was devoted to issues of war and peace. Thus, Cicero distinguished the concept of just war, waged for just reasons for self-defence, defence of an ally, or recovery of looted goods [8]. An unjust war was unspeakable and undertaken for low motives, such as anger or the desire to seize other people's goods [23].

Further modification of the way security, war and peace were perceived occurred in the first Christian philosophers' views. In St. Augustine's worldview, mortal life had no value, and the goal for Christians should be eternal peace equivalent to salvation [17]. A citizen, however, should be obedient to every authority because every authority comes from God. The state's role was seen alike by Saint Thomas Aquinas who regarded the state as a structure necessary to ensure a harmonious development of a human towards salvation. The state and security were at the same time considered gifts from God and were to be respected as means to ensure salvation in eternal life [24].

Views on the mutual relations between the state and a human underwent a significant change during the Renaissance. This was when the idea of humanism was formed as a phenomenon that makes a human the highest value, entitled to seek happiness, self-realization and personal security. One of the leading thinkers of Renaissance humanism was Dante Alighieri. He argued that "every human aims to achieve temporal happiness, attainable by his/her efforts, which imagines an earthly paradise and eternal happiness consisting in seeing the Face of God," while "the state aims to provide its inhabitants with security and prosperous life, [...] in other words [...] the state is to ensure the security and prosperity of the people. Otherwise [...] the state will cease to be what it was meant to be," and finally that "the purpose of the Monarchy is universal peace [...] to ensure good order in the world" [1]. Thus, while the goal of every human being is happiness shaping personal security, and the goal of the state is security building structural security, the goal of supranational structures seems to be peace. A good fulfilment of these goals requires freedom, "that is, living for oneself and not for others," as the humanist of the early Renaissance emphasized [15].

Niccolo Machiavelli, who defined the role of an individual in relation to the state and the military's role in the state, was another of the great Renaissance

thinkers. His views were shaped primarily by the political situation of the Apennine Peninsula states. Seeing the fragmentation of Italy and the particular interests of individual rulers, Machiavelli formulated his postulates, looking for sources of strength and power for the Roman Empire [22]. Consequently he advocated a strong state and basing the armed forces on a national army financed by the ruler's money. A strong army - according to Machiavelli - was the source of success for the state, which should not avoid wars [8]. A critic of Machiavelli's ideas was Jean Bodin who propounded the thesis that geographical conditions influence state policy. The sovereign should ensure the family's security, in return for which the inhabitants of the state owe the sovereign obedience and help. Therefore, the state must have at its disposal a military whose existence corresponds to natural and divine law. God punishes sins through war [21].

A kind of achievement of the Renaissance is the vision of an ideal state presented in Thomas More's *Utopia*, Bacon's *New Atlantis* and Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*. More stated that war was the greatest monstrosity; however, it did not stop him from recognizing the ability to fight as a duty for both men and women. War, he argued, was only permissible in cases of aggression, to defend allies from harm or attack by another state, or out of compassion - to liberate another country from the oppression of a despot. Wars had to be fought in a way that minimized the number of casualties among one's serfs [8]. The best way to do this was to assassinate the enemy state leader or hire a savage tribe of warriors as mercenaries. If one's people were involved in the war, it was fought with sacrifice but in a way that minimized one's losses.

The problem of war was an issue almost ignored in Thomas More's vision. Almost, since he foresaw the necessity of war and his conception focused on defining in a utopian vision the role of technology in the state's organization - a pattern. Campanella, who considered that military training should be the duty of all citizens in the organization of ideal states, devoted much more attention to the organization of the armed forces. For him, war was allowed only as a defensive necessity against assault or robbery, an aid to an attacked ally and overthrow a tyrant [21].

On the other hand, Thomas Hobbes believed that the human pursuit of primarily self-interest was the source of the "eternal state of war" of all against all. The only factor that drives people towards peaceful existence is the fear of death and reason. A human should therefore strive for a peaceful existence (the first law of nature), but at the same time, he/she has the supreme natural right to defend himself/herself by all means being at his/her disposal [6]. However, the guarantor of the preservation of natural rights is a superior force - the state. According to Hobbes, the sovereign obtains power under a social contract, in which people relinquished part of their freedom to the sovereign - the state. The sovereign sets all rules in the state and all military matters and can do anything to restore peace or security [22].

A similar concept was presented by Hugo de Groot who recognized that man is inherently selfish and seeks only his own benefit. The state's welfare is paramount as it is a voluntary organization of free people coming together to pursue common goals. Therefore, the orders of the ruler cease to be valid only when they are in conflict with divine law or natural law. Grotius also invoked the concept of just war in his concepts. In his view, wars can only be fought to defend against attack, to recover property, or to punish another state for failing to obey divine or natural law [21].

In John Locke's concepts, in a natural state people are free, but they can only freely dispose of their property and person. The law of nature is for the mutual safety of human beings, and anyone who violates it becomes dangerous and transgresses against the entire human species, peace and security under the law of nature. Locke defines the state of war as being contrary to the state of nature. In his theories, a state of hostility and annihilation occurs between states and individuals who announce each other by word or deed their will to deprive each other of life. Besides, those wishing to subject to their authority those who do not consent to it also enter a state of war. Therefore, a state of war is when the goods of those in conflict are violated, but no judge can adjudicate the conflict under the established law. Therefore, with a lack of a judge or positive law, it is much easier for a state of war to appear. Exercising one's rights in a natural state is much more difficult. The guarantor of the undisturbed exercise of one's powers is the existence of a community in the form of a state that guarantees respect for natural rights [21].

The next stage in the formation of views concerning state and human security was the Enlightenment period. The social contract theory of Jacques Rousseau who argued that man was truly free only in a state of nature was the most outstanding one of those times. That state - in his opinion - was a period in which people led the most valuable life free from desire, jealousy and the need for property. The creation of societies gave rise to the spread of jealousy, hatred and ultimately to wars. According to Rousseau, since the return to the original state is no longer possible, existing societies should be transformed in a way that leads to their functioning following the rule of reason, justice and morality [21]. Such a construction is possible if society begins to function based on a social contract [15]. By entering into a contract, people create a supreme power, expressing the universal will, which must ensure the safety of all people. Consequently, an individual human must submit to the universal will, which is the true expression of freedom. Otherwise, he/she may be coerced into it.

The concept of war and peace became a significant part of Immanuel Kant's deliberations. In his opinion, the state of war is a natural relationship between states, and a human by nature is aggressive and antisocial, so it is necessary to create an artificial state of peace. Therefore, Kant's main goal was to design an artificial state of perpetual peace. According to his concept, every state is an organization of free people who form a community, and no one else from outside can make

decisions about it. No other state can claim the territories occupied by another state in any way. Kant believed that it was necessary to get rid of permanent armies, which were expensive to maintain in peacetime, and their readiness to fight might provoke the outbreak of war. In his opinion, defence functions should be handed over to ordinary citizens who would be subject to military training. No state should interfere in another state's internal affairs either [10].

The construction of mutual relations between personal and structural security began to undergo a certain reorientation in the Enlightenment period, when, under the influence of liberal views, a completely new look at the relations between the state and the individual emerged. Adopting the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen and the American Bill of Rights [25] at the end of the 18th century marked the beginning of forming the view that every human being is a subject with natural rights stemming from his/her autonomy and freedom to decide for him/her [18]. Neither of the adopted fundamental laws defined the construction of the right to security in its present form. However, they introduced the principle of participation of the representation of the people in exercising public authority and the constitutional position of the army into the legal order. Moreover, in the French Declaration of Human Rights, the public armed force was designated as a force established in the general interest to secure human and civil rights (Article 12 of the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights) [14]. At the same time, the introduction of the concept of human and civil rights led to the recognition of the national army as an instrument to guarantee them. The social concepts developed during the French Revolution brought about the formation of the modern concept of nationalism as a system in which the nation-state (and the nation as sovereign) is the only entity best able to satisfy the needs of people bound together by a shared history, language and culture.

The outbreak of the French Revolution and the political ferment of the early 19th century only temporarily disrupted absolutist states. After the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte, most European states saw the restoration of pre-Napoleonic dynasties and a return to pre-revolutionary political concepts. Despite incorporating republican ideals into some of the norms in force in individual states, the state was still seen as a value that took precedence over a human. The structure also had a significant influence on the formation of philosophical views [16]. That is how Georg Hegel perceived the role of war, regarding it as a necessary tool of history, fostering an awareness of the superiority of state interest over private interest. According to Hegel, wars integrated the nation, multiplied the strength of citizens and indicated the low value of temporal matters and goods, which in general promoted the moral reconstruction of civic attitudes.

It was not until the mid-19th century that the perception of the position of a human in the state was significantly remodelled under the influence of the social ferment of the Spring of Nations [23]. Progressive industrialization and

the development of the bourgeoisie led to a significantly strengthened position of the possessing class in relation to the monarch and aristocracy. As a result, changes in the social structure allowed the development of the idea of basing the entire system of social relations in a country on the principle of conformity and subordination of all normative acts to the Basic Law. The latter comprehensively defined the relations between the various organs of state power and citizens, which initiated the process of creating the concept of the rule of law [5]. The fulfilment of the need for a citizen's sense of security in every sphere of functioning in social life became one of the fundamental goals of the modern state [4]. Such a state, shaped by a sovereign coming from universal suffrage, had – following the 19th century concept - the task of creating an effective system for satisfying all its citizens' needs. Appropriate solutions meant to guarantee their respect appeared at that time not only in constitutional provisions but also in criminal and administrative law of individual states [2].

However, respecting human needs was not limited to creating laws. The development of science and technology brought along many changes, including new research methods in the field of human behaviour and mental processes, which led to the emergence of psychology as a new scientific discipline from philosophy and medicine [24].

Under the influence of the naturalistic research of Charles Darwin, who presented the concept of evolutionism as a form of permanence dependent on constant development, philosophical views began to appear, which emphasized the value of the state and the nation as the highest substance that determines the development of whole communities. Such a position was presented, among others, by Friedrich Nietzsche, whose opinion on war stemmed from his conviction that people are not equal and that every culture and society requires caste organization. Consequently, according to Nietzsche, a culture based on military foundations has a higher quality than one based on industrial foundations. Nietzsche considered nation and culture higher than the state, but concurrently he pointed out that war shaped the best human qualities. That is because cruelty makes a human able to control his uncultured instincts. War and danger bring true freedom, which embodies the desire for self-responsibility. For a free human is a warrior [6].

The idea of the nation-state that emerged in republican France, supported by the nineteenth-century theory of social Darwinism, as an effect fostered the consolidation of the concept of the state as a supreme value. At the same time, it legitimized the pursuit of an international policy based on militarism and the desire to develop one's state at the expense of other countries and nations. Rapid technological progress permanently resulted in creating new types of weaponry, which were intended by their creators to be used for the fastest possible destruction of whole masses of "enemy's living force." At the same time, the awareness of the enormity of potential losses in armed conflicts resulted in creating a new



concept of military training. Thereby, it was decided that preparations for future wars should begin with the development of a universal system for the recruits' selection and training based on mass calls to military service [11]. The system assumed designing a uniform training program that, over a short period, would enable ordinary citizens to develop the ability to participate in combat quickly. It was agreed that it was possible, providing that military training elements were introduced into general education curricula. Nevertheless, the awareness of the inevitability of armed conflict and the progressing process of states' democratization led to the development and formalization of warfare methods that minimized losses of human lives at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. That even led to the establishment of legal systems that defined the rules of waging wars in a way intended to minimise the occurrence of losses among the civilian population and medical care systems for direct participants of armed actions [3].

However, World War I and the scale of casualties caused by new means of warfare, such as rapid-fire weapons, long-range artillery and chemical weapons (war gases), came as a real breakthrough. The duration of fighting and social health consequences among the participants of the war caused a start in decomposition of mutual relations between personal and structural security at the beginning of the 20th century. On the one hand, the enormous war losses among the victorious Entente states caused an increase in pacifist sentiments and a search for peaceful forms of conflict resolution. On the other hand, severe territorial losses on the part of the loser states brought about the emergence of nationalist and revanchist views. A similar situation also arose in many newly independent states that had gained independence due to the collapse of the former European monarchies. As a result, views based on social Darwinism and nationalism had a significant impact on international politics.

After the end of World War II, the nation-state concepts assuming the primacy of the welfare of the state over the needs of the individual contributed to the emergence of totalitarian systems of state governance [19]. Awareness of the lability of national legal systems on the disintegration of mutual relations between the state and the individual led to the development of international standards on human and civil rights. The international community's concern to respect the substance of rights and freedoms, especially the right to life, created conditions for establishing several principles to minimize the adverse consequences of using force (mainly new nuclear weapons) in international relations. Respect for life mentioned by all sources of international law has become the most fundamental principle. It is described in many international documents, including both the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, established by the UN, and the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms adopted by the Council of Europe. The system of securing human and civil rights and freedoms established in mid-20th century complemented the international rules



of warfare (humanitarian law) created at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Currently, the entire functioning system of legal norms constitutes a comprehensive preventive mechanism.

The concept of a new social order based on the criticism of totalitarian states constituted the grounds of the open society concept developed by Karl Popper (during the Second World War) who expressed the view that only societies in which an individual obtains personal freedom can give people the opportunity to achieve self-fulfilment and happiness. Yet concurrently, given the development of the Cold War doctrine, even democratic states continued to maintain the assumption that national security was superior to the individual's security. It was considered sufficient to guarantee respect for individual rights in the legal protection system. It was not until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War that the security paradigm changed at the UN in 1994 when a new strategy for collective national security rooted in the concept of sustainable development was announced [9]. The international community recognized that in a situation of the collapse of the closed and totalitarian communist system, which officially declared the political doctrine of armed confrontation, the most effective way to ensure a peaceful existence is to pursue the individual's security. Happy citizens do not need war [12]. Making efforts to identify societal needs and mutually supporting the pursuit of those needs is the best way to prevent an armed conflict.

As a result, the concept of *human security* emerged in the literature in the 1990s. According to some classifications, this concept was developed in the convention of two schools. The first one, Japanese, promoting a "broad" scope of *human security*, was created under the slogan of "freedom from want, poverty and social inequality", while the other, Canadian, capturing human security in a "narrow" way, was created under the slogan of "freedom from fear" [16]. The development of the Canadian school of *human security* is connected to Lloyd Axworthy's views. His concept of individual security presents the complexity of the human environment and affirms that forces affecting security are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The fundamental values and social equality leading to world peace and reducing conflicts of different scope and scale are crucial in this case. These two levels are a prerequisite and guarantee for individual security [2]. Axworthy mentions the effects of conflicts among civilians injured in foreign military operations but does not refer to soldiers as participants in these operations. The author emphasizes that *human security* is much more than the absence of a military threat. It includes security against economic deprivation, an acceptable quality of life and the guarantee of fundamental human rights.

The concept of human security focuses on the individual as an entity. In a broad sense, it involves ensuring that every human being can live with dignity, survive and develop, while in the narrow sense, it aims to enable the individual to live in a free and democratic state that guarantees human rights. These rights should

be considered not only in the context of a state of peace but also and above all in the reality of threats, such as crisis and war, in which “freedom from fear” - the leading slogan of the Canadian school of human security - refers to the individual’s security, regardless of his/ her role in the social interaction that has taken place. In this context, human security is a concept emphasizing the need to ensure the safety of both the individual victim of aggression (threat) and the representatives of services (military) performing reactive tasks in the face of threats.

## Summary

Summing up the considerations, it should be noted that in open societies, armed forces are expected not so much for deadly armed combat and mass killing, but rather limited military actions and struggles of low intensity, conducted in niches and causing little or no loss of life. However, contemporary missions carried out by the armed forces of democratic states are primarily activities such as *peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacebuilding* [11]. In this respect, on the one hand, soldiers are still expected to be able to kill, but not to die, let alone murder or commit genocide, while on the other hand, they are to be provided with personal security.

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