The Problem of Paris: Courage in the Age of Drones

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

The Problem of Paris: Courage in the Age of Drones, by MAJ Aravind Dileepan, 49 pages.

Drone warfare stretches and changes the relationship amongst an operator, a weapon, and a target and thereby stretches the generally accepted definition of courage as it is understood under contemporary American military codes of conduct. This paper explores the nature of courage today for both drone pilots and for civilians around them and questions the long-term risks to both with the continued use of drones in military operations. It will rely on a reading of the *Iliad* to uncover the role of the heroic code and how Paris, prince of Troy, deliberately ignored it. The problem of Paris is not simply that he used arrows or even that he stole another man's wife and started the war. For the contemporary American reader, the problem of Paris is that he also ignored the consequences of those choices. Today, the consequence of using lethal drones in warfare is the risk of retaliatory attack it imposes upon friendly civilians and concomitant courage that risk requires.

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Abbreviations

AUMF	Authorization for the Use of Military Force
GWOT	Global War on Terror
OWT	Operator-weapon-target
WWII	World War II

Inscription

Predator Warrior Pose
by Kemmer Anderson

In the screen room at the Agency
I sit in my flight suit before the video
Gaming, searching for the insurgent to fight

On line from the air. The war drones on
For years like Vietnam, Troy, or other
Colonial occupations that sweat and bleed.

But here in the air condition reality
Of Virginia, near the Battle of Bull Run,
We follow a flat target, zeroed and framed,

By the Predator–unmanned. The word
Almost crawls around my balls as I reach
To finger the button on squirrelly figures

Dashing about some shack in Pakistan
In their tribal sanctuary where Taliban
Al-Qaeda terrorists hide under ancient codes.

I squeeze the joy stick with power.
Long distance kills, gathered by photographic evidence
Make the brain twitch against the two dimensional

War made rectangular, Euclidean, and sure.
From this chair I sort through the signals
Broadcast from the air and watch our man target

Recline on the roof with his wife.
Back here I whip an arrow from a drone
Loaded from a base in Afghanistan. We kill from America

With Hellfire missiles while my son safe in his room
With his X-box works the games I work at Langley.
Though survivors weep, we never remotely witness grief

On the ground where men vow revenge, plant poppies,
IED's, and wear the latest suicide vest against the West.
Across the Potomac far from the rushing screams

Echoing through a mountain village,
I stare at torso, dust, and blood on a screen, separated
From feet in the dirt. I score my kill on a classified card,

Turn on the ignition of my Hummer, and head
For home in the suburbs in time for the soccer game
Where my daughter dribbles toward goal with the ball to shoot..[1]

[1] Kemmer Anderson, "Predator Warrior Pose," *Poet's Basement* (Petrolia, CA: CounterPunch, 2010).

Introduction

Whether a battle was fought in Afghanistan or Troy or using an arrow or a drone, Kemmer Anderson's poem puts to modern words the trouble of advancing military technologies mixed with the age-old truth of war. We have read about the realities of war—its brutality, its confusion, its testing and breaching of boundaries both literal and figurative, its distinctness from the rest of life—since the dawn of literature. Contemporary technologies are now defying all of these ideas simultaneously. For whom is war brutal? Is it possible to lessen the confusion? Can war be fought from home? Should war be fought from home? These questions seem to challenge notions and characteristics that previously appeared immutable and common to all war: that war is fought literally by people, albeit with tools, in faraway places, and that all participants suffer. Anderson's poem shows us that war does not necessarily look and feel like it used to. The question is whether that means that war is different now: do military advances change the fundamental nature of war? What kind of innovations render old ideas and virtues moot? Maybe ancient notions like courage and honor no longer hold sway on the modern battlefield. Or does the nature of war remain as it ever has, just under the guise of contemporary technology, tactics, and mores? Given the dramatic reductions in risk offered by certain new technologies, one must reexamine what courage is and how to reconcile it to contemporary methods and weapons.

Military ethicist and philosopher Asa Kasher describes all weapons as requiring an operator, a weapon, and a target.[2] Historically, the relationship between operator, weapon, and target has been straightforward. Each element of this triad was in relative proximity to the others in time and space. It was obvious in ancient hand-to-hand combat because the space and time between the operator, the weapon, and the target was limited to something that humans could

[2] Asa Kasher and Avery Plaw, "Distinguishing Drones: An Exchange," in *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military*, ed. Bradley Jay Strawer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 47.

sense and therefore could comprehend. It did not take any special skills, devices, or awareness to recognize each element on the battlefield. Codes of martial conduct, from the ancient heroic code to just war theory in modern times, were established around these and other commonly understood relationships.

Innovation stretches the space and time between the operator, the weapon, and the target. This impulse to put the adversary at a disadvantage while maximizing one's own advantages is natural. One of the ways this happens is by increasing the space from which the operator can attack beyond the target's ability to counterattack or defend. Such stretching of the operator-weapon-target (OWT) triad often creates an initial discomfort or even outrage, as the innovation appears to challenge the established code, which governs both how to fight and how to assess fighting. This is the tension Anderson portrays, specifically with lethal drone warfare: how is it acceptable to draw blood while separated not just from the target but from the place itself? Drone warfare draws accusations of cowardice, especially from the targets of these attacks. Traditionally, courage has been recognized in the other as the bearing of common risks. Innovations that mitigate one party's risk while increasing the other's are therefore problematic.[3] The course of history and eventual acceptance of erstwhile "problematic" weapons suggests that the issue is not with the innovation itself, but rather with the new imbalance in risk that comes from a stretching of what one might call the OWT triad.

War cannot only be the application of strength against strength, never exploiting a weakness, or else it could never end: every action would be a push as one side's irresistible force failed to move the other's immovable object. As US Naval War College professor and military ethicist Pauline M. Kaurin points out: "Changes in technology are problematic to traditional

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[3] Pauline M. Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare: Achilles Goes Asymmetrical* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 17.

narratives of courage; the side with the older technology views the new technology as mitigating or reducing the risk that their opponents are taking, and are therefore cowardly."[4]

This tension over new weaponry is not foreign or novel but has been seen with every advance and every stretching of the OWT triad. Even in the 8th century B.C., Homer discussed it in the *Iliad*.[5] Paris, son of Trojan King Priam drew scorn for being an archer when the heroic code demanded hand-to-hand combat. Then and now, however, the OWT triad continues to apply. Nothing has yet broken that triad. It is simply stretched. Drone usage today is no different. All three elements remain present, just at longer distances from each other. However, the operator, a pilot, now displays courage after and away from his portion of a battle. That is, he bears the risk of counterattack not necessarily when he is flying his drone, but perhaps later and certainly not in the same vicinity as either the drone or the target at the moment of the initial attack. Traditionally, even with distance weapons, the operator needed to show courage at the moment of using his weapon and engaging the target, whether it was manning a howitzer or sitting in an airplane. Drone pilots still face risk, just at a later time and a different place because of their distance from both the target and the weapon itself.

Stretching the OWT triad has occurred before. As law professor William Ian Miller describes, with each new advance in technology, "first there is the terror of unfamiliar weaponry, where novelty itself provides much of the fear."[6] What constitutes courage in battle changes with time. While crossbows once posed a grave threat to civilized notions of warfare, today no one thinks twice about the propriety of machine guns in war.[7] With the benefit of history, one can see

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[4] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 17.

[5] Elizabeth Vandiver, *The Iliad of Homer: Course Guidebook* (Chantilly, VA: The Teaching Company, 1999), 8.

[6] William Ian Miller, *The Mystery of Courage* (Cambridge, MA: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2000), 54.

[7] Martin Van Creveld, *Technology and War: From 2000 B.C. to the Present*, rev. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 71.

how the move from crossbow to firearms was incremental and did not contort or break the OWT triad.

Indeed, with small arms, the operator and weapon are collocated, and the target is relatively nearby. With planes and helicopters, the operator and weapon are again collocated although the target may be farther removed. The risks in this type of warfare are immediate because all the elements are immediate. Therefore, the courage required of the warrior was also immediate. The target could react and defend against the operator directly, timely, and immediately. Even with ballistic missiles, the operator is initially collocated with the weapon even if the target is far away. However, with drone warfare in particular, the operator's distance from his target and the weapon itself grows almost inconceivably without degrading his ability to attack effectively. The common resulting judgment is that this drone operator requires less courage to carry out his attack.

Courage is one of the quintessential virtues of the warrior. As nineteenth century military theorist Carl von Clausewitz asserts, "[w]ar is the realm of danger; therefore courage is the soldier's first requirement."[8] The courage required of the warrior usually takes an offensive nature, even in defensive operations. Kaurin describes it as "risk taking and the facing of danger above and beyond what everyone else faces, overcoming these to some larger effect."[9] This applies equally to the operator as well as the target in the OWT triad because each is a warrior.

Much is written about civilian casualties in drone warfare, but little is written about the adversary's response and how that might happen. Presumably, this is because the Muslim tribal groups so often targeted in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) have little ability to defend against drones or to fight back against them. But this view ignores an adversary's right to defend and fight back. Even if the US and other western countries do not recognize such a legal right, it does

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[8] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 101.

[9] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 15.

not mean that the adversaries do not consider themselves justified in retaliating. Just war theory does not apply exactly the same to tribal groups and nonstate actors as it does to internationally recognized states, but it can work.[10] Political scientist Eric E. Smith suggests that in certain parts of the world, largely the Muslim world, it would be detrimental to ignore the real functionality of nonstate actors that serve many of the same functions as standard governments do in the rest of the world.[11] To ignore what such adversaries might do because they are not states is to be willfully blinded by happenstance. Regardless of any particular adversary's actual capabilities, the US must consider how an adversary could rightfully respond because they will respond somehow. War always involves an other, an opponent, whose actions and reactions demand their own counteractions and reactions. Clausewitz describes belligerents as wrestlers, intertwined and relying on each other for balance even as they grapple.[12] Forgetting or ignoring this, the US is at peril of surprise when an adversary does respond.

Just war theory allows for the targeting of military operations in war even if civilians are at risk of injury if there is a true military necessity for the attack and civilians were not the intended target. Therein lies the problem for drone pilots and the US. Given a state of war, declared or otherwise, if the target is not able to counterattack immediately, it does not preclude his ability or right to counterattack in a later time and space. Drone pilots are, after all, operating from a site not immediately accessible to a target. Pilots operating their drones from domestic American bases would pass as justifiable targets. Stretching the distance between operator and target invites counterattack against the operator at a later time and in a domestic location in closer proximity to American civilians.

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[10] Eric Edwin Smith, "Just War Theory and Non-State Actors" (Dissertation, Auburn University, 2015), 12, accessed March 26, 2021, https://etd.auburn.edu/xmlui/handle/10415/4651#:~:text=The%20study%20found%20that%20Just,operating%20among%20the%20international%20community.

[11] Smith, "Just War Theory and Non-State Actors," 18.

[12] Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.

When drone operations are run from US sites, they pose a new risk to civilians who are often adjacent to the pilot. For generations of Americans, the traditional battlefield was largely somewhere else, far from home and usually overseas, and was defined by the presence of the operator, weapon, and target. The new extended battlefield stretches next door because the operator is next door even though the target and the weapon itself, the drone, are not. For example, Creech Air Force Base, from where many drone missions are flown, is in the town of Indian Springs, Nevada and is less than fifty miles from Las Vegas. This closeness imposes an implied courage requirement upon civilians. Courage of this sort is traditionally a military virtue. Again, as Clausewitz points out, war is the realm of the soldier. War is dangerous. Danger requires courage. But that is the soldier's responsibility, and in America's all-volunteer military, the soldier signs up for that responsibility. Yet in today's operational environment, courage is demanded of civilians. How does the US as a nation, a military, and citizens contend with this domestic danger invited by the imbalance of drone warfare?

Methodology

Warfare has always involved leveraging advantages against opponents' weaknesses. This seems straightforward and obvious. At the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war, success requires the mitigation of one's own weaknesses and the exploitation of opponents'. Indeed, the most effective advantages are those that target an adversary's weaknesses. But new approaches also invite accusations of unfairness and cowardice. Homer's *Iliad* presents an illustrative and early opportunity to explore both the accusations of cowardice that arise when the traditional or accepted OWT triad is stretched and the consequences of that discomfort. Further, its treatment of honor and courage has historically and continues to inform our contemporary understanding of these virtues, even as they have morphed over the ages, because they are the foundations of contemporary military virtue.

Within the rigid rules of the ancient Grecians' heroic code, the use of distance weapons like Paris's bow and arrow was viewed as unfair, an improper test of manhood, sneaky, and a weapon to be used by the lower class because not even a "self-respecting hoplite or legionary would condescend to use them."[13] To be sure, both the Trojans and their opponents the Achaeans employed archers, but those ranks were not populated by royals, nobles, and heroes.

Homer spends a good deal of the *Iliad* reflecting on the importance of the heroic code in the ancient world. Although modern codes of martial conduct are not delimited by class, birth, or rank, they still trace their roots to the heroic code. The *Iliad* explores the contents of the heroic code, the importance of hand-to-hand combat amongst nobles, of the vengeance of the gods when one seeks to avoid one's duties under the heroic code, and about the consequences of ignoring these ideas. In these lessons, the modern reader can examine their discomfort with drone warfare today as well as what happens upon failure to consider the full consequences of one's choices within the code of conduct.

The *Iliad*, in many ways, is an examination of Paris's choices and their consequences. Paris chose to be an archer and in his confrontation with Diomedes on the battlefield, we see the nature of discomfort with unacceptable weapons: despite indignation, these weapons are often effective to the point of unfairness. Then in Paris's escape from Menelaus and in his final tryst with Helen, we encounter the ultimate consequences of choosing to be beyond the heroic code. Paris's problem was not simply his abduction of Helen, nor was it just his choice to be an archer. Paris's problem was in choosing to ignore the heroic code despite its provenance over him and his disregard of the consequences of that choice.

The examination of the *Iliad* will be followed with a discussion of how the US armed forces' ethoses and values replicate the guiding role of the heroic code and its worth today.

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[13] Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War: The Most Radical Reinterpretation of Armed Conflict Since Clausewitz* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 80-81.

Drones as distance weapons are similar to arrows, but that is not necessarily problematic. The problem, rather than distance, is in failing to adjust an understanding of concepts such as honor and courage to the realities of modern combat. Ultimately, it shall be clear that the problem of Paris is one that the US can still avoid.

Literature Review: Discussions of Courage in Drone Warfare

One prominent narrative is that drone usage is cowardly because it is an application of military power against an extremely asymmetrically disadvantaged opponent. Akbar Ahmed, chair of Islamic studies at American University and senior fellow at the Brookings Institute, contends that drones have become a symbol of American cowardice in the GWOT. The targets of American drone strikes in the GWOT are often Muslim tribal groups in remote communities. These communities are "some of the most impoverished and isolated in the world, with identities that are centuries old," yet the US attacks them with "twenty-first century's most advanced kill technology".[14] These tribal groups, usually lacking access to sophisticated technology themselves, have a rigid and intricate code of honor that takes offense to the American approach in the GWOT.

The most prominent tribal groups to have found themselves in the crosshairs of the American drone effort are the Pukhtun, Yemenis, Somalis, and Kurds.[15] Dissimilar as these tribes may be, they share a "tribal lineage system defined by common ancestors and clans, a martial tradition, and a highly developed code of honor and revenge."[16] The honor code to which these tribes ascribe is tradition.[17] Tradition is what gives these tribes their strength, and so it is

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[14] Akbar Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2013), 1.

[15] Ibid., 3.

[16] Ibid., 5.

[17] Cora Sol Goldstein, "Drones, Honor, and War," *Military Review* (November-December 2015): 71, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20151231_art013.pdf.

associated with honor. Adherence to tradition then, whether in daily religious practice, familial obligation, civic or political process, is honorable. It is most evident today in shame and vengeance as motivation for fighting. American military might, seen as apotheosis of modernity and thus the enemy of tradition, already stands at a relative disadvantage. The cultural and group normative differences with America, or the west, have left many Muslim tribesman with "little respect for Americans and their culture. Inasmuch as Muslim tribesmen see everyone and everything through their particular cultural prism with its emphasis on honor, they find Americans not up to the mark."[18] These communities abide by notions of honor and courage that value self-risk, bravery, fighting for a greater cause than oneself, and revenge.[19] This is not terribly dissimilar to traditional Western notions of courage, and also explains why these same societies decry American cowardice today yet recognize valor and courage displayed by American troops in World War II.[20]

Matthew Hallgarth, a professor of philosophy and religious studies at Tarleton State University, does not use the OWT construct but argues that remote warfare is simply the latest frontier in gaining military advantage. Technological superiority, whether it was the stirrup or laser guided weapons, has historically been the difference between victory and defeat.[21] Seeking advantage through distance is just one aspect of military advantage at large. Whatever difficulty drones pose today was mirrored with less furor with the advent of long-range artillery and high-altitude bombers. Hot air balloons in the nineteenth century, Hallgarth suggests, offered then the same type of spatial and temporal advantages that drones do today, albeit more crudely: they made inaccessible targets accessible, revealed enemy troop movement, improved communication

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[18] Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone*, 327.

[19] Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 50.

[20] Stewart, *Honor*, 326.

[21] Matthew W. Hallgarth, "Just War Theory and Remote Military Technology: A Primer," in *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military*, ed. Bradley Jay Strawer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 26.

and information fidelity, and were cost-effective ways to compel the enemy to change his tactics or plans.[22] Novel as balloons were, extant just war theory remained useful to control and assess balloons in military operations.[23] Just war theory was flexible and robust enough to remain useful as technology improved from smooth bores to rifled muskets and from direct-fire artillery to howitzers. Hallgarth's suggestion is that drones today are no different. The only thing required is a reexamination of the weapon in question to find its salient points of comparison and contrast and a closer reading of the tenets of generally accepted just war theory.[24]

Philosopher and technologist Robert Sparrow examines how technological advances affect warrior codes. He does not argue that modern technology is simply anathema to traditional warrior codes, but that they demand a reexamination in light of gaps exposed by such advances. He contends that since the advent of "long range artillery, cruise missiles, and high-altitude bombing, it may appear perverse to single out remote control weapons for making possible 'killing at a distance.'"[25] That is, increased distance between the operator and the target is not novel or particular to drones, although, as mentioned earlier, the distance between the operator and the weapon itself is something new and unique.

Courage, Sparrow argues, whether physical or moral, will always be the first of the martial values because the soldier "must be prepared to risk his (or her) life for the cause in which he (or she) fights."[26] When compared to traditional manned aircraft, drones certainly seem to require less physical courage, since the operator is not physically in an airplane, yet he questions whether even the requirement for moral courage might diminish. With drones' live video feeds

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[22] Hallgarth, "Just War Theory and Remote Military Technology," 45.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., 40.

[25] Ryan R. Gorman, "War and the Virtues in Aquinas's Ethical Thought," Journal of Military Ethics 9.3 (2010): 254 quoted in Robert Sparrow, "War without Virtue?," in *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military*, ed. Bradley Jay Strawer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 88.

[26] Ibid., 90.

and their ability to loiter, they often offer much more information about activity on the ground than traditional aircraft can garner, and the feeds are usually recorded.[27] More information allows a pilot to make a more informed decision whether to kill or refrain, thus arguably requiring less moral courage than otherwise. Recording pilots' actions make them more readily reviewable and less easily obscured in the fog of war, again relieving or preventing them from making more difficult decisions. Otherwise, pilots of both types face the same dilemmas with whether to fire, how to deal with possibly unlawful orders, or any other decision in the cockpit.[28]

Sparrow carefully notes that this is not to suggest either the technologies or the virtues should be forsaken. As he says, "[i]f unmanned systems will save both friendly combatant and civilian lives . . ., then so much the worse for the virtues."[29] Warrior codes' value, meanwhile, has always been to "reduce the horror of war and tame the worst excesses of young men sent out to kill strangers in foreign lands with weapons of terrifying power."[30] In other words, the mere existence of warrior codes indicates that lowering friendly body counts and increasing enemy body counts is not the goal. The suggestion is to review the warrior codes in light of new technologies and their effects on the traditional battlefield. The suggestion is not that courage is no longer important. Rather, one should reexamine the character of courage today, not simply declare courage to be outdated.

Military ethicist Pauline Kaurin argues that courage today, at least in the US, is an endurance narrative, which is often self-regarding.[31] This contrasts with the traditional, offense-oriented notion of courage associated with defeating enemies. This older view of courage is

[27] Sparrow, "War without Virtue," 95.

[28] Ibid., 93-95.

[29] Ibid., 104.

[30] Ibid., 105.

[31] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 19.

"other-regarding" for its emphasis on self-sacrifice in service of a goal or another person.[32] The endurance narrative sees less emphasis on defeating the enemy and accomplishing the mission and more emphasis on enduring the trial to return home. Rather than explaining the reasons for the shift, she describes its roots and its effects today. She traces the shift to the Vietnam War and sees it continuing in GWOT. In the stories and literature out of Vietnam, she describes a "shift in the objects of concern being the other (traditional courage as an *other* regarding virtue) to being the individual (courage as a *self* regarding virtue) and his survival."[33] That trend has continued in GWOT with a focus on force protection and not exposing oneself or one's comrades to danger.[34]

She supports her contention with contemporary Medal of Honor citations. During the GWOT, they overwhelmingly include mention of personal engagement with the enemy, suggesting that such personal engagement is now above and beyond the call of duty. This stands in stark contrast to previous eras, when personal engagement with the enemy was simply the standard of duty.[35] The idea is that in prior ages, an operator was expected to engage a target directly and viscerally. The question that arises is how courage changes when the operator does not engage a target directly. Can the endurance narrative expand the notion of courage beyond its martial limits?

The whole matter of the nature of courage is vital because it is the most important virtue in war. As if often said, war begins with willingness not to kill, but to risk dying.[36] Also, courage is closely related to *jus in bello*: "Many of the restrictions on weapons and strategies, as well as on who may be targeted and who has immunity, are historically rooted in the idea that it is not courageous to target those not taking the same risk or who are not fellow warriors, and therefore

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[32] Ibid., 16.

[33] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 19.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 14, citing Martin van Creveld quoted in Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 134.

expected to show courage."[37] In other words, under the traditional model, civilians were not expected to show courage. Soldiers, or operators, engaged with the enemy, or targets, directly and on behalf of civilians. Indeed, universal military service or conscription alters this narrative to a degree, but not fundamentally. The purpose of a draft is to bring civilians into the military to impose upon them the burdens of risk and courage. Upon return to civilian life after service, an erstwhile warrior no longer shares in that task. But if the endurance narrative is changing the character of courage in war, the question that remains is "what is the standard for courage in asymmetrical war?"[38] Implied is that there may now be a role for courage in civilian life. There must be a "public recognition and assessment of the risk involved in . . . war."[39]

Kaurin argues that answering this question is difficult today because the public is increasingly reluctant to judge the military. Claiming not to fully understand war, it leaves the decisions, execution, and judgment to the military itself.[40] At the same time, she suggests there is a public ambivalence about the endurance narrative because people easily recognize and indeed want the traditional narrative. That narrative is associated with "quick, decisive, and clean" wars where the US is inevitably on the side of good.[41] Yet, with the growing sense that war will not be like that in the future, "[t]he endurance narrative, with its focus on what is and is not worth the risk and limited individual agency become more and more important, with less focus on physical courage, some moral courage, but mostly psychological (endurance) courage."[42] What remains, then, is a need for training in this psychological courage. Militaries have always incorporated physical and moral courage in their traditional training regimes and are perhaps beginning to

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[37] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 14.

[38] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 19.

[39] Ibid., 21.

[40] Ibid., 22.

[41] Ibid., 23.

[42] Ibid.

venture into psychological courage with such efforts as resilience training, but the ultimate conclusion is that the public, responsible as it is both in the Clausewitzian sense and in the modern democratic sense, also needs some measure of training in courage. The unresolved question, she concludes, is which narrative of courage will the training entail?

She ends her analysis by suggesting that training and education in courage ought not be limited to soldiers, but that "[w]hen it comes to war, the citizenry must be habituated and educated in civic courage, without which the individual courage of the warrior will be entirely pointless and in vain."[43]

The Problem of Paris in Homer's *Iliad*

To aid in the struggle with the stretching of the OWT triad, it is helpful to reference a classical example of a tension in that triad and the outcome. In Homer's *Iliad*, the highborn Paris was an archer in a time when archery was not recognized as honorable under the heroic code, the acceptable mode of fighting amongst nobles in ancient Greece. The heroic code was the birthright and duty of any noble warrior. *Dikē* was the goddess of justice and represented the consequences of failing to abide by the social norms and code of conduct that governed the royal or princely class in ancient Greek life.

Under the heroic code, there were two aspects to honor: *timé* and *kleos*. Elizabeth Vandiver, professor of classics at Whitman University, explains that *timé* could be translated as prestige and concerned external tokens (or booty) of honor earned through courage in battle.[44] *Kleos* was a warrior's legacy, or the memory or reputation that reflected courageous acts on the battlefield collected through *timé*. *Kleos* and success on the battlefield were closely related because "honor is in action and self-risk."[45] This mattered greatly to mortals because it was the

[43] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 26.

[44] Elizabeth Vandiver, email correspondence with author, January 8, 2021.

[45] Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 28.

one clear path to meaning in life when there was no meaningful afterlife of the soul.[46] The heroic code required that individuals secure their own *timé* through displays of courage.[47]

Heroes throughout the *Iliad* like Hector, Agamemnon, and Achilles were exalted for accruing *timé* through victory on the battlefield and the picking up of tokens or booty. Achilles famously raged when Agamemnon stole the former's booty to claim as his own on the verge of the coming war against Troy, calling him a "Drunkard, dog-face, quivering deer-hearted coward." Agamemnon took Achilles's hard-won *timé* and chose theft over courage on the battlefield. By the standards of the heroic code, choosing to "stay safe, right here in the camp and direct your efforts to stealing the prize of whoever might contradict you" was both dishonorable and shameful.[48] Not only did Agamemnon attempt to claim *timé* and earn *kleos* without the battle, but doing so degraded Achilles's *timé*, a double insult.

Paris, prince of Troy and cause of the Trojan war for stealing Helen from her husband Menelaus, king of Sparta, was an archer and therefore fought far from the battlefield. He therefore did not have the same access to prestige in the same way as the other heroic warriors due to his literal distance from the battlefield. As scholar Caroline Sutherland suggests, rather than the honor of hand-to-hand combat, archery was associated with "death, cowardice, and treachery."[49] Paris's choice of bow and arrow indicated his position outside the parameters of the heroic code and outside of *dikē*, or justice.

Paris was denied access to the heroic code from the beginning and his later choices and actions, such as taking up the bow and later stealing Helen, only underscore this positioning outside *dikē*. Prophecy held that Paris's birth foretold the fall and destruction of Troy, so his

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[46] Vandiver, email correspondence.

[47] Paul Robinson, *Military Honour and the Conduct of War: From Ancient Greece to Iraq* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 6.

[48] Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Free Press, 2011), 1:226-31.

[49] Caroline Sutherland, "Archery in the Homeric Epics," *Classics Ireland* 8 (2001): 117.

father King Priam sought to have him killed by exposure.[50] He was saved by a shepherd, though, who raised him as his own. Not until later did he learn of his royal lineage and reconcile with his parents. Even so, he lived in the shadow of the prophecy and it colored both his choices and others' opinion of him. His remove from noble pursuits is further illustrated in contrasting Paris with Hector. Noble Hector was heir to the throne, Troy's hero, and preeminent warrior. Paris, on the other hand, was generally accepted as Priam's most worthless of 68 sons.[51] Indeed, Hector himself despised Paris, whom he called on multiple occasions a "miserable disgrace . . . a seducer, a selfish fool."[52] He went so far as to declare, "I wish you had never been born, or had died unmarried . . . that would have been far better than to become . . . a cause of contempt like this, whom good men despise."[53] As military ethics scholar Shannon French points out, "[w]hat distinguishes Hector from his brother is a question of character. What makes Hector noble and Paris ignoble is that Hector chooses to make courage one of his defining virtues. . . . What others demand of him matters because it matches precisely what he demands of himself."[54] Further, even among the Trojans at large he was hated "like death itself," both because of the prophecy and the calamity he later brought to the city.[55]

As with *dikē* and *timé*, Greek nobles are called to abide by the heroic code. The other elevated characters who are consistently shown as exemplars in the *Iliad*—namely Achilles, Hector, and even Agamemnon and Menelaus—recognized themselves as subject to the heroic code because they recognized themselves as subject to *dikē*. Paris did not.

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[50] Sutherland, "Archery in the Homeric Epics," 117.

[51] James M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), 113.

[52] Homer, *Iliad*, 3:33-34, 13:726-27.

[53] Ibid., 3:34-37.

[54] Shannon E. French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 32.

[55] Homer, *Iliad*, 3:429.

When Paris strikes Diomedes with an arrow from behind cover, Homer directly addresses the tension between Paris's actions and the heroic code. Those tensions mirror the discomfort that occurs when the OWT triad was stretched unexpectedly in battle. Diomedes, one of the Achaeans' best warriors, expressed shock at being shot with Paris's arrow. Even as he was pinned to the ground with an arrow through the foot, because he was surprised and assaulted to such a degree, Diomedes attempted to downplay the injury by calling Paris a coward:

> You weakling, you girl-crazed seducer, you perfumed sissy,
> why don't you step out and fight me now man to man,
> directly, without the help of your cowardly arrows?
> You are boasting in vain. You have barely scratched me. Your shot
> is no more painful than if a woman had hit me
> or a child; a half-wit's arrow has a dull point.
> When I wound a man, it is fatal. Even a slight
> touch of my spear can strike a man dead on the spot.[56]

Ironically, Paris's arrow *was* effective and caused "fierce pain [that] shot through his flesh," regardless of Diomedes' attempts to downplay the severity of his injury.[57] Paris's mastery of the arrow, while effective, was still considered a weak and ineffective weapon compared to manly weapons that demand bravery to employ, like Diomedes's own spear.

In beating his opponent, however, Paris was still unable to achieve honor. Recall, honor comes from fighting according to the heroic code, which is to say hand-to-hand combat. It was the spoils and booty collected on the battlefield by which victorious heroes measured their honor. Paris, firing from afar and from behind cover, could not reach the battlefield to claim *timé* and thus could not accrue honor within the heroic code. He challenged the parameters of the heroic code by pinning Diomedes; he also challenged the conventional OWT triad of hand-to-hand combat. While perhaps the heroic code was taken from him in early life, Paris repeatedly demonstrated a willful refusal to abide by it when given the choice.

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[56] Homer, *The Iliad*, 11:362-9.

[57] Ibid., 11:354.

Diomedes voiced the perpetual trouble one has in reconciling any stretching of the OWT triad: his immediate reaction was to feel insulted and then to denigrate the arrow because it did not comport with his more rigid understanding of the triad. But as Hallgarth and Sparrow both show, the difficulty with distance weapons is not actually fundamental, but really just a function of a limited imagination: distance weapons do the same things as immediate weapons and have all the same moral, legal, ethical, and practical effects, concerns, and justifications. The only difference is in time and space.

In the *Iliad*, Homer makes it clear that distance weapons were not considered courageous or heroic within the ancient code. But Paris did not care. Both the Trojans and Achaeans had archers, but they were of the lowest classes and not subject to the precepts of the heroic code. Paris, a noble, chose to use them anyway. Stealing someone's wife and claiming her as one's own was not acceptable under the heroic code, but he did so anyway. It is plain that Paris's arrow is indicative of his problem, rather than the problem itself.

Perhaps the true problem with Paris, then, was his willful disregard of the consequences of fighting outside the heroic code, which in the case of the *Iliad*, is the justice of the gods, or *dikē*. As Sutherland puts it, "[un]like [the other heroes], Paris seems to have [had] little concern for the heroic code."[58] French agrees, although she is willing to give Paris some room for feeling: "[he] does not like to be judged a coward or called a coward by the people of Troy, but he does not really care whether or not he is, in fact, a coward." Indeed, he kidnapped Helen and precipitated the decade-long war against the Achaeans, knowing it was a violation of the heroic code and knowing, by virtue of the prophecy, that it would likely cause Troy's downfall. Just like Agamenom did to Achilles, Paris did to Menalaus. Helen was Menelaus's "symbol of rank among

[58] Sutherland, "Archery in the Homeric Epics," 117.

his peers."[59] By taking Helen from her husband Menalaus, he also reduced Menalaus's *timé* and claimed her as his own without merit.

Yet another example of Paris's outsider positioning in his duel with Menelaus. Perhaps out of a late sense of honor, he offered a duel to settle the war and to decide who was to keep Helen. The moment offered promise to both Menelaus and Paris, as the former could obtain *dikē* in vengeance and the latter would face the right consequences of his action, namely death. That promise is clear in Menelaus's prayer in the moments before the duel:

> Lord Zeus, grant me revenge on the man who wronged me,
> Paris, and let me kill him with my own hands,
> so that for all generations a man may shudder
> at doing harm to the host who offered him friendship.[60]

But the spear missed, and though he "brought it down on the ridge of Paris's helmet,"[61] his sword shattered. Ultimately, Menelaus took Paris by the helmet and dragged him back toward the Achaean lines where he "surely [would] have dragged him away and won for himself imperishable glory" if the gods had not intervened: "Aphrodite swept Paris away with ease, as a god can do; she shrouded him in dense mist and set him down in his own sweet-smelling bedroom" where he would take comfort in Helen's arms.[62] It is noteworthy that even this late change of heart by Paris was essentially too little and too late. His choices were made and he could not change the eventual outcome: Aphrodite took him away despite his late and meager efforts to comport to the heroic code. He was outside of justice, and so regardless of what he tried, he would neither face justice for his actions nor succeed in setting things right. He would obtain no *kleos*, or legacy.

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[59] French, *The Code of the Warrior*, 27.

[60] Homer, *The Iliad*, 3:330-33.

[61] Ibid., 3:339.

[62] Ibid., 3:350-59.

Paris the scoundrel, cause of the current calamity, source of ignominy for Troy and insult to the Achaeans, an archer prince, at the moment of his justice, which would have made whole Menelaus and also ended the war, instead of facing it, absconded to his bedchamber to take solace in the arms of his stolen bride. But while he escaped the rightful vengeance by Menelaus, Paris would ultimately find bitterness anyway. Helen, ashamed now, greeted him with derision: "So you are back from the fight. I wish you had died there." Troy ultimately fell, his brother and father were brutally killed, his mother was enslaved, and Paris's prize for which the war started hated him. The lesson Homer teaches is that by positioning himself outside the heroic code, Paris not only invited scorn and ignominy over glory and renown, he set out on a path which he could not alter. Having set himself outside *dikē*, Aphrodite would not allow him to be subject to *dikē* at Menelaus's hands this late in the story. Ultimately, Paris did not get *timé* or *kleos*. He is not remembered as anything but a scoundrel and coward who caused the destruction of all he loved because of his concern for no one beyond himself.

Drones and Courage

The impulse to strike an enemy from a greater distance is as old warfare itself. Bows and arrows, javelins, catapults, and projectile weapons all create distance between the warrior and his target. They stretch the OWT triad. Rifles, rockets, howitzers, and jet airplanes are all modern iterations of this trend. The desire for distance and reach spurred hot air balloons, zeppelins, and eventually the airplane. By early in the Civil War, balloons were employed in reconnaissance roles and artillery support.[63] From there, little imagination was needed to see balloons' potential for long-range, airborne fires. In 1862, Charles Perley, an inventor, filed a patent for an unmanned hot air balloon equipped with a timer-controlled door that would drop a bomb to

[63] American Battlefield, "Civil War Ballooning," Civil War Quick Facts, accessed March 28, 2021, https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-ballooning.

"injure an enemy that is entirely out of the range of cannon-shot and too far for bombs to be thrown from mortars."[64] Fighting through, from, and in the sky were not far off.

In the early 20th century, the US Navy developed and tested unmanned aerial torpedoes and radio-controlled biplanes, but it was not until the Vietnam War that unmanned vehicles gained wide usage.[65] Whereas in Vietnam, their role was limited to reconnaissance and intelligence gathering roles, drones have become a widely recognized part of the US military in the GWOT.

Modern drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles or unmanned aerial systems have been in widespread military use for well over a decade in a range of roles.[66] Across the services and components, the Department of Defense has fielded over 11,000 units[67] for use in "dull" tasks like reconnaissance and surveillance to potentially dangerous ones like battle damage assessment and weapon delivery.[68] Drone warfare has spurred much debate over the legality and effectiveness of their use, but, especially in their lethal roles, their effects remain unsettling. There is an underlying discomfort about using unmanned systems to deliver weapons that legal and ethical justifications do not satisfy.

[64] Charles Perley, "Improvement in Discharging Explosive Shells from Balloons," United States Patent Office, Patent No. 37,771, New York, Filed January 24, 1862, Issued February 24, 1863, accessed March 26, 2021, tmt-law.jp/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/US37771.pdf.

[65] Naval History and Heritage Command, "Navy's Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles," Naval History and Heritage Command, August 5, 2020, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.history.navy.mil /browse-by-topic/exploration-and-innovation/unmanned-aerial-vehicles.html.

[66] Office of Secretary of Defense, *Unmanned Aircraft Systems Roadmap 2005-2030* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005).

[67] US Department of Defense, "Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS): DoD Purpose and Operational Use," US Department of Defense, accessed March 26, 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/UAS/.

[68] Naval History and Heritage Command, "Navy's Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles."

US willingness and ability to use drones to attack has taken off since 9/11. Since the start of the GWOT, the US has used lethal drones in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen,[69] and Pakistan,[70] among other places. While initially somewhat limited under George W. Bush, the practice expanded during Barack Obama's presidency. Obama claimed in a speech at National Defense University in May 2013 that drone strikes were not only effective but legal as well, citing both Osama bin Laden's personal journal entries that they could not effectively counter air strikes and that Congress had authorized war against "al Qaeda, the Taliban, and their associated forces."[71] The weight of his moral justification for drone strikes, though, rested on the legitimacy of targets and the imperative to support troops at war.

Historian Peter Paret says that "everything in war may have consequences beyond the operational or strategic intent. How often has success proved itself counterproductive perhaps because of the manner in which it was achieved?"[72] Socialization explains the acceptance of moral and ethical codes of any given time and place.[73] With a simpler technology, a society will have a more traditionally constricted OWT triad and thus a more rigid definition of courage. Kaurin explains how conceptions of courage and honor are reciprocal between belligerents:

> We view [soldiers] as courageous if we see them having the same sort of moral commitment, if we see them taking the same kinds of risks, facing the same kinds of danger—especially death. This is why changes in technology (i.e. advent of machine gun, unmanned weapons) are problematic to traditional narratives of courage; the side with the

[69] Christine Hauser, "The Aftermath of Drone Strikes on a Wedding Convoy in Yemen," *The New York Times*, December 19, 2013, accessed March 26, 2021, https://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com /2013/12/19/the-aftermath-of-drone-strikes-on-a-wedding-convoy-in-yemen/.

[70] Sebastian Abbot and Munir Ahmed, "Pakistan Says 3% of Drone Deaths Civilians," *USA Today*, October 31, 2013, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news /world/2013/10/31/pakistan-done-deaths/3322539/.

[71] The White House, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University," Office of the Press Secretary, May 23, 2013, accessed March 26, 2021, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university.

[72] Peter Paret, *The Cognitive Challenge of War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 3.

[73] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), 131.

> older technology views the new technology as mitigating or reducing the risk that their opponents are taking, and are therefore cowardly.[74]

Ahmed describes Muslim communities' mandatory code of honor symbolized in a tribesman's requirement to carry a weapon.[75] Traditionally this was a dagger or sword but more recently an assault rifle has been appropriate. Again, this is why Muslim communities that decry American methods in GWOT can still recognize valor and courage in American operations in World War II (WWII). The weapons and methods used in WWII comport with these communities' current capabilities and with their current notions of the OWT triad and courage. In contrast, American drone usage violates their traditional code of honor because it stretches the OWT triad in unfamiliar and unaccepted ways. Diomedes's claim against Paris was quite similar. It stemmed from his own inculcation in the ancient heroic code and the offense he felt when Paris breached it. As Kaurin notes, "[t]his dynamic is not always about technology *per se*, but to the extent that the new technology impacts the sense there is now an imbalance relative to how directly one side is facing the enemy and taking the risk that direct confrontation involves."[76] Today, pilots are so far removed and the GWOT adversary is so ill-equipped that pilots (remote or actual) are practically invulnerable. The only difference between manned aircraft and drones is one of time and space: attacking or defending against a manned aircraft meant attacking its pilot simultaneously. Attacking a drone pilot necessarily entails some act other than attacking the drone itself.

The imbalance is so extreme as to render the stronger side almost godlike in its power. That power, though, is a function of the distances between the operator and the effect delivered on the ground being so great as to be nearly incomprehensible. It is natural to expect that an operator needs to be close to a weapon when it is delivered—whether by pulling a trigger or

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[74] Kaurin *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 17.

[75] Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone*, 21.

[76] Kaurin, *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare*, 17.

releasing a bomb from a plane. To increase the distance between operator and weapon at all, leave alone by thousands of miles, beggars belief.

Diomedes and these Muslim tribal groups betray a human discomfort when facing godlike power. This is true about drones but equally about other advantages, as Sparrow or Hallgarth might note. It makes one believe that the soldier exercising this godlike power lacks courage because gods do not face risk the way mortals do. It is tantamount to a violation of the expectation of a warrior. Richard M. Swain and Albert C. Pierce, authors of *The Armed Forces Officer*, explain that a professional soldier must embrace the willingness both to take the life of others and also to die in battle: "[w]hen one is not willing to go into harm's way, he or she is not a soldier but a technician of death, or just a technician. A defining moral quality is absent. The military ethic is based on a commitment to disciplined service under conditions of unlimited liability, whether or not one has a military occupational specialty that involves combat."[77] This is the content of Diomedes's accusation against Paris. Not only was Paris far away, but he was hiding behind cover, invulnerable to attack. The same theme is evident with drones today: these unmanned platforms piloted from thousands of miles away, delivering lethal effects on unsuspecting targets appear immune from counterattack. Ahmed implies that the American adversaries or targets in the GWOT believe that drone usage simply does not require courage. Yet, one disregards the complaints of those Muslim tribesmen at the peril of falling into the trap identified by Swain and Pierce. Because there is no explicit code of warfare governing drones, what is required is an examination of the fundamental martial virtues. It must be determined if these virtues are still valid as they are understood now or if their definitions may need refinement in light of the way drones, or any other coming innovation, may stretch the OWT triad in ways that appear contradictory to those virtues.

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[77] Richard M. Swain and Albert C. Pierce, *The Armed Forces Officer* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2017), 9.

If courage is a quintessential virtue of the warrior, honor is a foundational virtue of war. It governs how war is conducted as well as why war is conducted. It is a crucible: war is a setting to prove honor, or to gain it. It is not merely the sum of the strategic, operational, and tactical goals. As Paret suggests, "Wars are fought not to be won but to gain an objective beyond war."[78]

As an American virtue, honor has always been of utmost importance. Even the means of obtaining American independence had to be honorable. Historian Craig B. Smith submits: "The founders wanted to win, but win well. They wanted the new country to succeed, but not at the cost of honor or virtue. These concepts of honor and virtue were at the forefront of the American founders' minds as they traveled the precarious road to Independence."[79] The importance of honor and virtue continues today in the American armed forces. Military service is often considered a calling more than a job or even a profession. To the cadre of military veterans, honor is more than a vague notion. Shannon French and fellow ethicist Joe Thomas suggest that honor is the concrete idea that helps "provide comfort and reassurance" in the chaos of war.[80] French further explores why a code of honor exists for warriors. She explains warrior codes work on two levels, external and internal.[81] The external role is impressed upon the military by the political class to ensure control of the military and should not be minimized or ignored in a liberal democracy. The internal form, or internal code is to protect a soldier's conscience while carrying out the destructive tasks of war. This code serves as the bridge between honor of the nation and individual honor. French also considers honor's relationship with courage. The virtue of courage, which is found "in the mean between the excesses of cowardice and foolhardiness," she explains,

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[78] Paret, *The Cognitive Challenge of War*, 3

[79] Craig Bruce Smith, *American Honor: The Creation of the Nation's Ideals during the Revolutionary Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 7.

[80] Joe Thomas and Shannon French, "Honor in Military Culture: A Standard of Integrity and a Framework for Moral Restraint," in *Honor in the Modern World: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Laurie M. Johnson and Dan Demetriou (New York: Lexington Books, 2016), 273.

[81] French, *The Code of the Warrior*, 12-13.

is different than bravery, or what might be called guts, because courage must serve a noble goal.[82] Honor is that noble goal, the objective beyond war; it is respect and right action; it is winning well.

All branches of the US armed forces have established codes of conduct that speak to the role of courage and honor. Usually exemplified as core values or a creed by which they operate and to which each member is held accountable. The Army's core values are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.[83] Honor in its estimation, is the capstone and is attained by satisfying the other six values. It defines personal courage as "fac[ing] fear, danger or adversity" and continues that both moral and physical courage require endurance. There is no mention of triumph, but the Soldier's Creed does include that soldiers always place the mission first, never accept defeat, and never quit.[84] Crucially, it also makes clear that soldiers stand ready to destroy enemies in close combat.

The Marine Corps recognizes honor, courage, and commitment as its foundational values. Honor is the "bedrock" upon which character is based.[85] That character is to be the "ultimate [example of] ethical and moral behavior." Their definition of courage includes physical, moral, and mental courage. It is characterized as the strength to overcome challenges in combat and to make difficult decisions in difficult moments.

The Navy's Core Values Charter identifies honor, courage, and commitment as the keys to "build the foundation of trust and leadership upon which our strength is based and victory is

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[82] French, *The Code of the Warrior*, 236.

[83] US Army, "The Army Values," Army Values, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.army.mil/values/index.html.

[84] US Army, "Soldiers Creed," Army Values, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.army.mil/values/soldiers.html.

[85] US Marine Corps, "Human Resources and Organizational Management," Headquarters Marine Corps, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/hrom/New-Employees/About-the-Marine-Corps/Values/.

achieved."[86] These values also appear in the Sailor's Creed.[87] Honor, in the Navy's view, is accountability, integrity, and honesty. It is right action and fulfillment of responsibilities. Courage is defined as strength, but the Navy stresses the strength to do what is right rather than physical strength. In fact, there is no mention of danger at all. Perhaps the very real depths of the oceans are covered in the "courage to meet the demands of [their] profession."[88] Sailors also pledge to overcome challenges and to make decisions in the best interest of the Navy and the nation, despite personal consequences.[89]

The Air Force's current leadership doctrine, sometimes called the Little Blue Book, does not include honor or courage in its core values but does include integrity, service, and excellence.[90] Published in 2015, the document concedes that "[b]y examining integrity, service, and excellence, we also eventually discover the importance of duty, honor, country, dedication, fidelity, competence, and a host of other professional requirements and attributes," as if perhaps the latter are somehow subservient to the former.[91] Although there is a reference to success despite dangerous missions, the only mention of courage is of how proper airmen have the moral courage to "do what is right even if the personal cost is high."[92] The previous version of the Little Blue Book, published in 1997, is largely the same in content, although courage is listed more

[86] US Department of the Navy, "Department of the Navy Core Values Charter," Department of the Navy, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.secnav.navy.mil/Ethics/Pages/corevaluescharter.aspx.

[87] Naval History and Heritage Command, "The Sailor's Creed," Naval History and Heritage Command, accessed March 25, 2021, https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/heritage/customs-and-traditions0/the-sailor-s-creed.html.

[88] US Department of the Navy, "Department of the Navy Core Values Charter."

[89] Ibid.

[90] Curtis E. Lemay Center Doctrine Development and Education, "Air Force Core Values," Volume 2 Leadership, August 8, 2015, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61 /documents/Volume_2/V2-D05-Core-Values.pdf; US Department of the Air Force, Air Force Doctrine Volume 2, *Leadership* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Government Publishing Office, 2015), accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Core-Doctrine/Vol-2-Leadership/.

[91] Curtis E. Lemay Center Doctrine Development and Education, "Air Force Core Values."

[92] Ibid.

prominently as a "moral trait" that comprises integrity.[93] Again, there is no reference to physical courage. The Airman's Creed, however, highlights the Air Force's "tradition of honor and . . . legacy of valor."[94] The later publication of the Little Blue Book nods in this direction and includes a citation from an award of the Air Force Cross from Operation Enduring Freedom. The Air Force Cross is second only to the Medal of Honor in the Air Force hierarchy and is awarded for "extraordinary heroism...while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States."[95] While the citation mentions the extraordinary heroism shown by Senior Airman Jason D. Cunningham, heroism makes no other appearance in the publication. The reader is left to surmise his or her own connection between heroism and integrity, service, and excellence. While it is noteworthy that the service branch most associated with the particularly dangerous duty of flying jet airplanes pays so little heed to the physical sort, courage and honor are still woven into the Air Force's culture. Being the branch most closely associated with drone operations, the failure to include courage and honor more explicitly risks misrepresenting the Air Force's actual esteem of these virtues.

There is also a set of joint values that are common to all branches of the US military and guide joint operations. The "most idealistic societal norms" are distilled into five values: duty, honor, courage, integrity, and selfless service.[96] Honor is defined as the "ultimate in ethical and moral behavior" and includes consideration of how one behaves and respects others.[97] It

[93] US Department of the Air Force, *Little Blue Book* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Government Printing Office, 1997).

[94] Curtis E. Lemay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, "The Airman's Creed," Volume 2 Leadership, August 8, 2015, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.doctrine.af.mil /Portals/61/documents/Volume_2/V2-D07-Airmans-Creed.pdf.

[95] US Air Force Personnel Center, "Air Force Cross," Air Force Personnel Center, August 23, 2010, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.afpc.af.mil/About/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/421871/air-force-cross/.

[96] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine of the US Armed Forces* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2017), B-1.

[97] Ibid., B-2.

encompasses one's personal obligations and provides a basis to hold others accountable. The definition of courage is similarly robust and includes specific characteristics of both physical and moral courage. It is careful to note that courage in general is no less important in technologically advanced warfare than before and is fundamentally about action. Physical courage is "the ability to confront physical pain, hardship, death, or the threat of death," the willingness to act even under duress.[98] Moral courage is also about action, although the emphasis is on acting despite "popular opposition or discouragement."[99] This mirrors and reinforces the role of accountability already raised in the definition of honor. These values are the apotheosis of military professionalism and reveal a deep respect for commonly accepted standards of behavior as well as the heights demanded of professional soldiers.

The US military is decidedly unlike Paris in its adherence to these values. The very fact these codes are enumerated, published, and inculcated into American servicemembers is proof enough. Paris disregarded the heroic code of his day, but today, these codes guide the way the armed forces serve their nation. While one cannot conclude that their mere existence and codification justifies every action, plan, and operation, it may be assumed that these codes entered the decision-making process, maybe even multiple times. That assumption gains some credence when one recalls that drones do not break the OWT triad, but simply stretch it to a novel degree. Drones do not obviate the need for courage, nor do they ignore the requirement for courage. But the recent updates to the Little Blue Book and the omission of physical courage from the Airman's creed juxtaposed with the full-bodied descriptions of honor and courage in joint doctrine forces a question: what does courage look like in the age of drones?

The Air Force's core values do not necessarily suggest that courage is no longer important to its mission. The recently created Remote (R) Device in its awards hierarchy

[98] US Joint Staff, JP 1, (2017), B-2.

[99] Ibid.

recognizes contributions of drone pilots to modern warfare.[100] The R Device acknowledges the change in warfare; there is still have a need to recognize and venerate honorable military service. The inclusion of the Air Force Cross citation in the current Little Blue Book also supports this point. Nevertheless, there may be residual discomfort about how the traditional definition and descriptions of courage correspond with current technologies.

One is compelled, then, to reexamine courage to understand its character in modern military operations. Cowardice is not inherent to drones any more than it is to arrows. Accusations of cowardice rooted in weapon choice are nothing more than the revelation of discomfort with an offense against a tightly limited OWT triad. Diomedes betrayed as much when he called the arrow weak but then winced in anguish at the pain of removing it. Indeed, could such an ineffectual weapon pin such a mighty warrior where he stood? Warfare is not about the application of technological principles. As military theorist and historian Martin van Creveld points out, "[t]his is not to say that we should start fighting with our bare hands...nor that a country that wishes to retain its military power can in any way afford to neglect technology and the methods that are most appropriate for thinking about it."[101] Gaining an advantage in the distance between the operator and the target is something that is actively sought. In the history of warfare, it is always to one's advantage to increase the distance between the operator and the target. No military conducts operations while minimizing its own advantages and exacerbating its weaknesses. Artillerists did not face scorn for firing from a distance. Perhaps because they were recognized to be on the battlefield in a way that Paris was not when he shot Diomedes from behind cover. The lesson for today is that soldiers conducting military operations in war are on the battlefield wherever they happen to be.

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[100] Secretary of the Air Force, "AF Releases Criteria for New Valor 'V', Combat 'C' and Remote 'R' Devices," US Air Force, June 22, 2017, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1226132/af-releases-criteria-for-new-valor-v-combat-c-and-remote-r-devices/.

[101] Van Creveld, *Technology and War*, 319.

A remote operator faces risk just as any other pilot, only at a different time and place. With a traditional airplane, the risk to the airframe was the same as the risk to the pilot: both could fall out of the sky. In a drone, the pilot still faces risks, just at a spatial and temporal remove from the airframe. Striking the pilot down somehow would require a different act than striking down the drone itself. The pilot is still in theoretical danger, just not in practical, cognizable, immediate danger simultaneously with his drone. That is to say, he is still a warrior and still faces all the risks associated with being a warrior, just at a time and place proportionate to a stretching of the OWT triad. This slight shift in risk may run parallel to Kaurin's thesis of the shifting narrative of courage. If endurance is marked by perseverance over an extended timeline, the endurance narrative explains the courage of drone pilots who face their risks later.

As the OWT triad is stretched to godlike extents, whether with drones or with another coming technological innovation, the time and space for a counterattack will stretch as well. In an older model, as in the case of WWII, the time and space for a target to return fire or to mount a true counteroffensive was usually immediate, easily comprehended, and thus posed no trouble for traditional notions of courage. Today, counterattacks may and most likely will need to come at some attenuated time and space, if only because the American operator sits thousands of miles away from the target. The target's own target could be the drone, the weapon in the OWT construct, or the operator himself.

But even given this valid stretching of the OWT triad, some decry cases of "extreme military superiority," such as the unilateral usage of lethal drones could invite the use of terrorism.[102] Political scientist and military ethicist Uwe Steinhoff argues that this is the kind of scenario in which tribal Muslims, at stark technological disadvantage, may be justified in turning

[102] Ewe Steinhoff, "Killing Them Safely: Extreme Asymmetry and Its Discontents," in *Killing by Remote Control: The Ethics of an Unmanned Military*, ed. Bradley Jay Strawer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 197.

to terrorist attacks.[103] Steinhoff suggests that when a state wages a war using an extreme asymmetric advantage against a weaker foe, attacks against defenseless civilians may be the only way they can mount an effective counterattack at all.

In cases of offense, revenge is considered both justified and necessary according to the code of honor in many Muslim tribes. Any American resistance to recognize this is meaningless. Whether the right is legally justifiable or not, the possibility of retribution is real and justifiable in the eyes of the targets of the current drone campaign. This is especially true in largely isolated, lawless areas removed from government reach. Revenge offers the only means of justice. As Ahmed describes, revenge may be exacted not only upon the transgressor but also upon family units and even entire clans: “an individual knows full well that any transgression against another’s honor calls for revenge against the transgressor and his family, subclan, or clan by the victim’s family, subclan, or clan.”[104] This makes real and imminent the risk of retributive terrorist attack that Steinhoff previously identified.

Contemporary American methods offend rigid traditional notions of honor and courage among tribal Muslim clans. It is ironic to note that improvised explosive devices, the weapon of choice of America’s adversaries in the GWOT, also extend the distance between the operator and the weapon (and the target) in similar albeit less extreme ways. This reveals that the problem is not simply the use of an asymmetric technological advantage or even the stretching of the OWT triad, but instead comes down to whom the operator is and whom the target is.

Findings: An Approach Unlike Paris

As noted earlier, courage requires agency because it is a martial virtue. War is dangerous and therefore requires courage. Courage is a soldier’s responsibility, not a civilian’s because courage is sacrifice in danger. Soldiers enlist to bear this responsibility. The fact of enlistment

[103] Steinhoff, “Killing Them Safely,” 195.

[104] Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone*, 24.

makes soldiers agents of willing choice to bear that responsibility. Journalist William Pfaff writes of the soldier:

> [His role] is like no other because it is inherently and voluntarily a tragic role, an undertaking to offer one's life, and to assume the right to take the lives of others. The latter, morally speaking, is probably the graver undertaking. The intelligent soldier recognizes that the two undertakings are connected. His warrant to kill is integrally related to his willingness to die.[105]

Civilians simply do not share this same responsibility. They have made no such choice. Critics might argue that civilians in World War II and before did bear the responsibility of war and some risks of war. The civilian deaths at Pearl Harbor, Tokyo, London, and Dresden come to mind, among so many other places. But a crucial difference today, at least in the US, is that military operations are conducted under the auspices of an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). Such laws literally govern the military, not the country at large.[106] Yet, as is clear from history, civilians often bear a great burden during war. Steinhoff suggests that the burden is even greater if attacks against civilians are somehow justifiable responses in the face of extreme military superiority. But as noted above, the soldier volunteers for this responsibility, and it is his role.

The question that arises now is whether and to what extent it is permissible to require a martial courage of civilians. Since Sherman's March to the Sea and strategic bombing, the question has been asked, but it demands further research. Drone usage may invite retributive attacks against military installations or even against civilians directly, as Ahmed and Steinhoff note. In either case, the consequence of drone usage is an inadvertent imposition of risk upon unwitting civilians. If we are allowing civilians to be targeted and those civilians are not in the military, then they are not agents of the sacrifice being asked of them. The irony here is that the

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[105] William Pfaff, "The Honorable Absurdity of a Soldier's Role," IHaveNet.com, accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.ihavenet.com/United-States/The-Honorable-Absurdity-of-a-Soldier-Role_2013-03-3005.html.

[106] Authorization of the Use of Military Force, Public Law 107–40, 107th Cong. (September 18, 2001), accessed March 26, 2021, https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ40/PLAW-107publ40.pdf.

need for civilian sacrifice and courage stems from the military's increasing use of a method of warfare that reduces its own immediate risks and, thereby, need for courage.

Perhaps Kaurin's endurance narrative of courage is indeed the grand narrative of courage, not just for the military but for the American people. Kaurin herself mentions that civilians in a liberal democracy need training in courage. If drone warfare imposes such a courage requirement upon civilians, ignoring this consequence would be dire, as Paris learned. If we do not answer this question, we may end up sharing Paris's fate: everything we love crumbling around us.

Can the military indeed require civilians to show courage and, if so, what should that courage look like? Pushing military responsibility of courage onto civilians is easy to do if courage is nothing more than endurance. Endurance is not a military virtue. It is a human virtue.

Conclusion

Soldiers fight on the battlefield. The soldier—or operator in this case—is on the battlefield even though he is physically on domestic American soil. That is, the battlefield extends to encompass where he is. Part of what struck the American population on September 11, 2001, beyond the deliberate targeting of civilians, was that it was an attack on American shores. That had not happened in a meaningful way since Pearl Harbor. But most civilians remain unaware that the battlefield has grown to encompass the homeland. Perhaps there is even a reluctance to admit this in military circles, but the fact remains that where the operator is, there the battlefield is.

There was no room in ancient Greek culture for a reexamination of the relationship between the operator and the target and with it a reconsideration of the dimensions of the battlefield. This is the problem of Paris the archer: he ignored the heroic code to which he was subject, and he ignored the consequences of that rejection. Instead of dying at Menelaus's hands, allowing him to reclaim his honor through vengeance, he escaped the brutality of battle to find comfort in Helen's embrace. Paris's decisions to take up the bow and to steal a king's wife drew

rightful ire within his culture. His decisions warranted the death at the hands of Menelaus. The duel Paris offered to end the war was a half-hearted half-measure. For Paris's choices, Troy fell, his father and brother died, his mother was enslaved, and Helen came to hate him exactly for his cowardice.

The US armed forces do not ignore courage or honor, as is clear in their published ethoses and values statements. Drone technology does stretch the OWT triad to unsettling extremes that make us question the continued validity of traditional notions of courage, a core value by which war is conducted and assessed. Targets cannot apprehend the location of the operator, not because the drone is quiet but because its operator is not present. In turn, the operator cannot obtain his target directly but only through the mediation of lenses and electronic signals. The temporal and spatial relationships amongst the operator, weapon, and target in drone warfare are attenuated to the point of abstraction. The target is left unable to react and respond to the threat posed by the operator, except perhaps through passive protection measures like hiding or hardening his structures in anticipation of an attack. This reexamination is thankfully possible for us today, though it was impossible for Paris. In his world, even had he chosen to speak up and defend his choices as honorable, he would have doubtlessly invited further scorn and derision.

The consequence of Paris's choice was the destruction of Troy. He knew of this consequence when he learned the prophecy of his birth, yet he made his choices anyway, and did not repent until it was too late. What predictions and perceptions are ignored today? If the distance between an operator and a target is not a true moral problem, yet the US, or any user of lethal drones, is at risk of vengeful retaliation, then what steps should be taken now? Examining the character and role of courage today and in the future of warfare, we the US does not yet stand at the precipice as Paris did. It can still avoid a calamitous fate.

American drone usage today, regardless of the discussion within the military about courage, exposes civilians to risks associated with war and thus requires them to show courage. The risk is more acute today when American military operations are governed by a Congressional

Authorization for the Use of Military Force rather than a full declaration of war. Creech Air Force Base is populated with military personnel but is also quite close to civilian noncombatants who have nothing to do with American drone operations. Yet, those same civilians are now at risk of justifiable retaliatory attacks. Drone usage requires unwitting civilians to display the courage to accept and withstand a retaliatory attack, but without their acquiescence. This is problematic, and decision makers from the lowest levels to the highest need to be aware of this real consequence. Civilians are not soldiers. Enlistment is the acquiescence to the baseline of courage Clausewitz identifies as required in war. This consideration has not yet become part of the wider discussion, though it needs to be. Kaurin invites a consideration of what the narrative of courage is and who should participate. It is a vital discussion both within the military and without: who ought to be courageous in war and how? This is especially true in a liberal democracy, where the lines of the Clausewitzian trinity are obscured between the people, the government, and the military. The structure and operations of the armed forces should adjust accordingly. American civilians' lives are being risked without their acquiescence, let alone awareness. Where Paris failed, the United States must succeed in advancing notions of courage and honor that comport with technological advancement and maintain the integrity of our "Troy."

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