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The Shape of New Zealand's Regimental System

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Abstract

Unit cohesion has been identified as a strong factor in the way soldiers overcome their fear of death in battle. Imperial Roman soldiers felt loyalty to the legion and its standard was more than a signal to rally towards in battle; British soldiers show similar loyalty to their regiment and Colours.

Historians of a strong military background often write of the British regimental system as particularly effective in maintaining ethos and fighting spirit. Yet, reading any one of their descriptions of the regimental system offers only a vague insight of the structures and character of a uniquely military organisation. Identifying a regimental system is a particularly difficult task, even for those who are part of one.

Although New Zealand has inherited the idea of regimental system from the British, it is a much smaller nation with a correspondingly smaller all-volunteer armed force and a more egalitarian society. The size of the New Zealand Army, with fewer regiments, seems to suggest that it has escaped both the benefits of regimental cohesion and the damaging effects of aggressive tribalism between its units.

This thesis will challenge that assumption by showing that the New Zealand Army has a strong cultural history with definite characteristics of a regimental system. It will be seen that the New Zealand Army's regimental system adapts its values according to its own particular cultural pressures and legacies.

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Introduction

When it became apparent that this project on New Zealand's regimental system is a cultural study, I initially attempted to bring absolute objectivity to my research. Unfortunately, this has proved impossible. No matter how much I read, how many people I interviewed or how many questions I asked, I could not escape the fact that I have had no direct experience with any military culture, let alone a regimental system in any form. As an outsider, all I can do is bring together the subjective experiences of various people and try to find commonalities and trends.

As an additional limitation, my own subjectivity colours the direction of this research. My own particular frame of reference, made up of upbringing, personal experience and group affiliations, not only affects the level of understanding I've brought to each aspect of the culture studied, but also overshadows those items which I have noticed as strange or different enough to evoke further enquiry. Anyone else attempting this same project would come up with another set of questions and make different decisions on what to include or exclude.

Rather than attempt to limit this, I have decided to acknowledge it. This thesis will therefore include short personal anecdotes as constant reminders to the reader -and to myself- that this study can never be purely objective -nor should it be taken as such.

This does not mean that this thesis is any greater or lesser than what would have been written by a researcher more personally involved with the regimental system, or one with a firmer grounding in cultural study. Its value lies in forming a starting point for what would otherwise be a Gordian knot of information.¹ Nor have I intended to write a thesis coloured by bias, or deliberately used the limitation of cultural study as an excuse for exercising bias. This introduction simply acknowledges, much to my annoyance, the lack of 'correct' answers I can provide. If, however, any conclusion, interpretation or inference I have made within this thesis causes offence, I offer my sincere apologies and assurances that such was not my

¹One commonality I've experienced during this project is the willingness of several writers to attempt explanations of cultural concepts through analogy.

intention.

The first section of this thesis defines what a regimental system is. This is not as simple as might first appear. For every definition of the regimental system, there is an equal and opposite.² I have sought the most common definitions, and ones that are most useful in answering the questions posed in the following sections.

Section Two identifies the major influences on New Zealand's regimental system. Firstly, New Zealand's military history reveals the beginnings of the present regimental system. Professional, structural and cultural demands can produce pressures on the regimental system. How the system is shaped by these factors is the central theme. Although there are many influences that can be selected, attention is focused on those most likely to affect New Zealand.

Finally, this thesis will analyse the shape of New Zealand's regimental system and whether it provides identifiable benefits to the New Zealand Army. This section is a combination of tools used and conclusions made in the previous two sections. The central question is whether New Zealand's military cultural needs are best met by a regimental system and, if not, what would be an appropriate cultural direction.

Section I: General Features of a Regimental System

Introduction

It should be explained that an infantry section contains around eight men, including a machine gun team, commanded by a corporal. Three sections working under a platoon headquarters section make up a platoon, and in an ascending pyramid of threes, a company is formed from three platoons, a battalion from three companies (plus a support weapons company that is often split up in war between the rifle companies). Three battalions make a brigade, three brigades a division and so on.³

Nowhere does the above definition include a description of a regiment. Yet, the phrase 'regimental system' has been used so frequently that its definition has been blurred. Some writers have considered the regimental system in terms of its

²Piers Reid, Personal Communication, 8 November 2006

organisational structure; others discuss it in terms of its contribution to morale, fighting spirit and *esprit de corps*. To further muddy the issue, the word 'regiment' cannot be considered definitive, either. It is not a tactical unit, and its flexible structure means that it can be of varying size, more so than a tactical unit such as a battalion or a company. There is also such a thing as a 'regimental corps', a structure that groups together army units of a specific function, such as engineering or artillery.

To clarify the position of this thesis, it will define the regimental system as a form of military culture, encapsulated within a particular organisational structure. This recognises the effects of structural reform on the regimental system, and its resistance to abrupt change.

A regimental system has several cultural features that interlock to form each regiment's unique character. These features cannot be considered totally in isolation nor can they be grouped into a hierarchy, as each affects the others, producing the cultural expression that is often glibly called a regimental system. With this in mind, these features will be grouped into loose associations only for ease of description.

If we start with the premise that the regimental system is a form of culture, cultural anthropology lends itself as a tool for analysis. Cultural anthropology examines a society by dividing it into three sub-elements: its social structure, its culture and its personality (or the amount of opportunity for individual expression).⁴ These sub-elements seem a good start but have been further defined in this thesis, to recognise the differences between military society and its parent culture.

The first part of this section will examine the regimental system as an administrative structure, the means by which a country controls its military. It also asks the question why a country might choose a regimental system over a continental system in organising its army.

The second part considers how the corporate identity of a regimental system

³ Hugh McManners, *The Scars of War*, London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993, p. 169

⁴ Marc J. Swartz and David K. Jordan, 'Section Two: Modern Anthropology: Three Guiding Concepts',

through its beliefs and values; and the symbols used to promote these values.

The third part considers the psychological framework that a military culture provides for the individual soldier. The army has been referred to as a greedy institution, as it controls a greater proportion of its employees' daily lives than any civilian occupation. It is also the only employer that asks its employees to risk and take lives. What does it offer in return? What opportunities for the relief of this pressure does it offer?

Administrative Organisation

The Regimental System vs The Continental System

The first step in defining a regimental system lies in comparing it to what it is not. The most obvious difference between the regimental system and the continental system is unit size. During the 1881 reforms, Britain structured its army around the regiment, while the larger "armies of Europe were organizing themselves around the much larger unit of the corps".⁵ "The Continental system is most effective in countries that have a large Armed Forces with a large percentage of conscripts."⁶ It organises ground forces into corps, while the regimental system is based around the regiment. Unlike an army corps, the regiment is not a tactical unit on the battlefield, but an administrative means of grouping battalions.

The second main difference is that the continental system "is based on an industrial model that is based on efficient use of resources, specialization and economies of scale."⁷ Reinforcements are centrally trained and are moved from regiment to regiment as required.⁸

A country with a large army might choose a continental system as a more

Culture: The Anthropological Perspective, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1980 , pp. 41-160

⁵ Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 204

⁶ Frank Kuschnereit, <http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Quad/5504/regiment.htm>, p. 2, Last accessed 16 February 2007

⁷ Kuschnereit, p. 2

⁸ Kuschnereit, p. 2

economic means of training large numbers. A small country, with a smaller population base, might choose a regimental system to build cohesion, "a force multiplier in that a cohesive unit can overcome a less motivated enemy that is many times its size."⁹ Kushnereit reports Brigadier-General D.G. Loomis as concluding that the regimental system has greater long-term benefits and the continental system is more economical in the short term.¹⁰

Regional recruiting is a common feature to both the regimental system and the continental system. "The idea of territorial basing in order to facilitate mobilization... was a [feature of the] Continental system."¹¹ But, where the continental system uses regional recruiting to facilitate mobilisation, the regimental system uses a region's social bonds to foster cohesion. "The regimental system is a mutually supportive personnel management structure that emphasizes a sense of belonging."¹²

Regional recruiting has a much older history: "the bonds between [ancient Greek] hoplites on the line did not originate within military service... they were natural extensions of already long-standing peacetime friendships and kinships."¹³

These community bonds formed the basis of cohesion. "The peer pressure among friends and family within the Greek phalanx grew out of a pride that all men shared in facing danger together."¹⁴ "The soldiers of the city-state met the charge of the enemy... because of their general and because of the men at their side, the wish to protect them from the thrusts of the enemy [and] the shame of playing the coward before their eyes."¹⁵ Family relationships within the regiment not only brought displeasure at misconduct from serving members, but possible scorn from the

⁹Kushnereit, p. 2

¹⁰Kushnereit, p. 2

¹¹Strachan, pp. 201-202

¹²Michael O'Leary, 'The Regimental System', http://members.tripod.com/RegimentalRogue/papers/the_regimental_system.htm, p. 2, Last accessed 16 February 2007

¹³Victor Davis Hanson, *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece*, Second Edition, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, p. 121

¹⁴Hanson, p. 125

civilian family community once word of disgrace arrived back home.¹⁶

The Social Hierarchy of Regiments

Ironically, fighting qualities and military efficiency are not the sole, or even the most important, criteria for inter-regimental competition. "It has been argued that a regiment's standing is correlated almost exactly with the educational scale, although other factors, such as the age of the regiment, royal connections and military ability, also count."¹⁷

This ranking, although a "strictly informal exercise... the results of which no two people, let alone regiments, will agree"¹⁸, is most visible in the way in which an officer cadet and a regiment select each other before the cadet faces selection for Sandhurst¹⁹ and during ceremonial duties. In the case of the latter, it appears that long lineage and proximity to royalty are the key criteria.²⁰

Before Britain's Cardwell-Childers Reforms, the purchase system was a key indicator of the social hierarchy of regiments. The oldest regiments, being least likely to be disbanded, and ones with royal connections were the best financial investment. A commission in a high-ranking regiment tied a gentleman's social prestige to that of the regiment. Families "who had made money in industry and commerce and bought land, found that the presence of a son in the army was an aid to social acceptance" amongst the gentry²¹, while the army offered an acceptable profession to younger

¹⁵Hanson, p. 128

¹⁶F.M. Richardson, *Fighting Spirit: Psychological Factors in War*, London: Leo Cooper Ltd., 1978, p. 17

¹⁷David Weston, 'The Army: Mother, Sister and Mistress: the British Regiment', in Martin Edmonds, ed., *The Defence Equation: British Military Systems – Policy, Planning and Performance Since 1945*, London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1986, p. 149

¹⁸Weston, p. 148

¹⁹Weston, p. 148

²⁰Weston, p. 149

²¹Ian Knight, *Go to Your God Like a Soldier: The British Soldier Fighting for Empire 1837-1902*, London: Greenhill Books, 1996, p. 23

sons of the gentry, who considered trade to be vulgar.²²

As the regiment was social as well as a financial investment, regimental reputation came to be closely linked to the Colonel's social position:

Colonels cashiered or transferred officers who had been perceived to have dishonoured themselves, not to protect the honour of the regiment, but to distance themselves and their other officers, some of whom may have had higher social standing than the Colonel himself, from any hint of contamination through association.²³

Although this has been criticised as a factor that threatened military efficiency (as a "very capable officer could as easily be transferred because of a perceived social slight... as for the commission of an ethical offence"²⁴), "the existence of the regiment as the focal point of an officer's loyalty prevented... any state-army clash in Britain, since no cohesive group of officers emerged with political ambitions."²⁵ "Rivalry and competition between regiments then internalizes any inclination in the army's officer corps as a whole to act more cohesively."²⁶ Additionally, "the careerist and the ambitious officer of middle-class origins, who might otherwise be predisposed to political intervention, is instead assimilated into a class structure that apes the gentry."²⁷

This social hierarchy exists independently of military competence, as there is no need for soldiers to continually prove their regiment's fighting abilities to maintain or even advance their regiment's social standing. Instead, it became an extension of civilian social stratification, as the gentry and upper classes used the regiments as tools in their competition for status.

There is a strong degree of internal acceptance of each regiment's standing within the hierarchy. Rather than working on improving the regiment's social standing

²²Knight, p. 23

²³O'Leary, p. 4

²⁴O'Leary, p. 4

²⁵Weston, p. 151

²⁶Strachan, pp. 196-197

(which remains consistent in any case), soldiers themselves focus on characteristics that make their regiment different from others: "Northfield:... You have to realise that the Parachute Regiment has a very warped, sick sense of humour, and that a unit like the Royal Anglians wouldn't do this sort of thing [posing enemy dead for photographs]." ²⁸

This is consistent with Britain's civilian social hierarchy: one key problem in World War I was finding enough young men of high social standing for officer recruitment, as "it was the belief of most officers that soldiers preferred to be officered by gentlemen rather than by those of their own class". ²⁹

The Cardwell-Childers Reforms

Britain's Cardwell-Childers Reforms have been described as inadvertently stimulating 'the growth of a regimental spirit and ideology, coupled with establishment of a close relationship between the officer and his regiment.' ³⁰ Knight estimates Cardwell's greatest achievement lay in 'simplifying the senior administration of the army -which had hitherto been split between a number of military departments- and bringing it under government control.' ³¹ Strachan suggests that an effect of "carrying through reform... was the reinvigoration of the regimental system" ³², although reformers themselves focused on army needs above those of the regiment. Insight into important features of a regimental system can be gained through studying how the Cardwell-Childers Reforms produced these effects.

Linking the Regiments

In 1854, the need for British Army reform had come to public attention through journalist William Russell's dispatches from the Crimean War. However, Britain's

²⁷ Strachan, p. 197

²⁸ McManners, p. 349

²⁹ Ian F.W. Beckett and Keith Simpson, eds., *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985, p. 65

³⁰ Weston, p. 143

³¹ Knight, p. 27

response to the Mutiny in India, portrayed as more successful to the public, diverted attention away from reform.³³

It was Prussia's surprising success in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 that drew British attention back to the issue.³⁴ Major-General James Lindsay reported in April 1869 that the Prussians had linked together line, reserve and militia battalions from the same region so that, with territorial recruitment and mass conscription, they could double the size of their field army within weeks.³⁵

Edward Cardwell, Secretary of State for War 1868-1874, was concerned with controlling army expenditure³⁶ and with doubt that Britain could raise a credible expeditionary force to defend its interests in Europe.³⁷ Following the Prussian example, Cardwell's linked battalion system paired all "Regiments of the Line with a number over twenty-six" to reduce the total number of regiments from 110 to 69, while retaining the number of battalions at 141.³⁸

General Order 32 (1872) divided Britain into sixty-six sub-districts, each allocated to a pair of new 'linked' regular battalions. The Brigade also included two militia battalions and existing Volunteer battalions.³⁹ By sharing the same depot, it was hoped that militia and volunteers would be inspired to regular service⁴⁰ and would benefit from training with the Regulars.⁴¹

Territory-based recruitment later proved unworkable in large-scale conflicts. During World War I, it was found, in 1916, that "casualty rates meant that battalions

³²Strachan, p. 204

³³Knight, p. 26

³⁴Knight, p. 27

³⁵David French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army and the British People c. 1870-2000*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 13

³⁶Knight, p. 26

³⁷Knight, p. 27

³⁸Weston, p. 142

³⁹French, p. 14

⁴⁰French, p. 13

could no longer be reinforced by drafts from within their own regiments.”⁴² Instead, all “conscripts were... allocated to where they were most needed irrespective of their local connections”⁴³ and to “spread the resulting misery amongst the civilian population who were bereaved.”⁴⁴

The “commander-in-chief..., the Duke of Cambridge... pushed Cardwell into linking battalions rather than amalgamating them in 1872, although he recognised that the system would create problems.”⁴⁵ In 1880, the Airey committee of inquiry (gathered by the Duke and the Queen in an attempt to unlink the battalions) discovered that many felt “that inducting a man into a home-based regiment and then shipping him off to serve overseas in another worked against the creation of *esprit de corps*.”⁴⁶ Rather than returning to single-battalion regiments, Cardwell's successor, Hugh⁴⁷ Childers, amalgamated these linked battalions into territorial regiments a decade later.⁴⁸

This initiated a process of constructing new identities for the amalgamated regiments. Some regimental pairings faced difficulties in uniform, particularly regarding changes in Highland regimental tartans⁴⁹, histories and perceived identities.

4 Regimental Systems?

One startling idea is that Cardwell and Childers may have initiated four distinct regimental systems, rather than one overall system:

⁴¹ Knight, p. 28

⁴² Strachan, p. 207

⁴³ French, p. 278

⁴⁴ French, p. 278

⁴⁵ Strachan, p. 201

⁴⁶ Strachan, p. 202

⁴⁷ Strachan reports Childers first name as Henry (p. 202), whereas others have named him Hugh – Weston, p. 142; French, Index, p. 386

⁴⁸ French, p. 15

⁴⁹ Strachan, pp. 204-205

[B]y the early 1880s the British army possessed not one but four regimental systems... the line infantry regiments created by Cardwell and Childers[;]... the two large corps regiments, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, and the much smaller departmental corps[;]... the Horse Guards and line cavalry...[;and] the Rifle Regiments... and the regiments of the Foot Guards.⁵⁰

French goes on to state that the line infantry regiments and the corps regiments had the largest degree of functional separation; the cavalry and rifle regiments had aspects of both.⁵¹ A comparison of line infantry and corps regiments underlines what separates the regimental system as practised by line infantry from that of regimental corps.

While a soldier of a line regiment could reasonably expect to spend his entire career within the same regiment, personnel in the corps regiments are seconded into line regiments as needed to support operations⁵². These different career paths mean that the fierce regimental loyalty that characterises line infantry regiments doesn't usually have the same opportunities to develop in corps regiments, nor is it desirable for members of a regimental corps to identify themselves as parts of an indivisible unit. Instead, "[t]hose who serve in these 'tail' arms have to learn to fit in with the character of the regiment or combat unit to which they are attached. For this reason many frequently end up owing greater loyalty to that unit than to their own corps."⁵³

Secondly, personnel in corps regiments experience a greater degree of professional training. "Pride in... any of the ... support corps is due primarily to professional competence and technical skill."⁵⁴ Focus is therefore shifted towards professional pride, and regimental pride is not the sole source of self-image and sense of worth.

Thirdly, regimental corps are usually unique within an army; there is less scope for competition with other organisational groups to fulfill the same roles in that army.

⁵⁰French, p. 30

⁵¹French, p. 30

⁵²Harry Sebborn, Personal Communication, November 7, 2006

⁵³Weston, p. 150

⁵⁴Weston, p. 150

Line regiments have the same equipment and purpose; it is this factor that stimulates the inter-regimental rivalry that underlines each regiment's belief in its fighting qualities.

Towards Professionalism

“The Army has always found its professional identity in the warrior role at the regimental level”⁵⁵, but hasn't always promoted professionalism: “no one has ever upheld the Regimental System as a meritocracy.”⁵⁶ “The distinguishing characteristics of a profession as a special type of vocation are its expertise, responsibility, and corporateness.”⁵⁷ While the British Army until the Cardwell reforms expressed its corporateness at the regimental level, the regimental system did not encourage expertise and responsibility and, in some cases, discouraged individual professional development.

However, it had become traditional for officers for higher command to be selected from the line infantry and cavalry regiments. This made them highly attractive investments in the purchase system. This practice removed military professionalism, or even competence, as a criterion for command.

Cardwell's reforms were intended to redress this lack. The 1871 Regulation of Forces Act abolished the purchasing system as the basis for officer promotion.⁵⁸ While a system based on military merit may have seemed the best option, Cardwell recognised that a merit system was also vulnerable to the same abuses and influence as the purchase system.⁵⁹ The abolition of the purchase system left the entire officer class without the retirement investment they had hoped to later recoup, so the

⁵⁵ Nick Jans with David Schmidtchen, *The Real C-Cubed: Culture, Careers and Climate and How They Affect Capability*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 143, Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 2002, p. 57

⁵⁶ O'Leary, p. 11

⁵⁷ Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 5th Printing, Cambridge Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1972, p. 8

⁵⁸ Weston, p. 142

⁵⁹ Knight, p. 23

government fully compensated all officers, accepting a total bill of £8 million.⁶⁰ Officer promotion was thereafter based on seniority.

While this shows how professionalism was introduced into the British Army, it does not explain why candidates for higher command came to be selected from the least profession-oriented sectors of the army. Military culture is divided into two main subcultures. Jans and Schmidtchen identify these as 'hot' and 'cold' organisations.⁶¹ 'Hot' organisations operate in high-stress situations, where life-or-death decisions must be made frequently. These characteristically occur at the tactical or 'sharp' end of battle, or on board an aircraft carrier, where the takeoff and landing of aircraft is a perilous business. The tempo of decision-making is high, a balance of teamwork and initiative is necessary and a bad decision can prove disastrous.

'Cold' organisations, by contrast, are based around routine. Combat service and combat service support units typically operate under much lower stress situations. Decisions can be made in a more relaxed fashion and a bad decision does not carry the same potential consequences as in a 'hot' organisation. Jans and Schmidtchen point out that the military, in terms of quantity and frequency, is more a 'cold' organisation than a 'hot' one.

Yet the 'hot' organisation, although smaller, overshadows the 'cold'. Military culture, as a whole, has evolved in response to 'hot' situations. The *raison d'être* of the Army is to prepare for and conduct war. Those officers with experience at the 'hot' end of the organisation have greater insight into the abilities and needs of the units fulfilling that function. The 'hot' organisation also captures civilian imagination; a higher commander with experience at the 'hot' end of the Army inspires greater public confidence in times of crisis.

Unfortunately, the merging of a regiment's reputation with those of its officers meant that factors other than military ability influenced higher promotion. Even during the First World War, the regimental system still selected its officers from the

⁶⁰Knight, p. 28

upper classes because it was felt they alone had the necessary qualities to supply officers and gentlemen: "An exclusive social and educational background, the gentlemanly ethos, a commitment to country pursuits, loyalty to institutions, self-confidence and physical courage"⁶². This list does not require a candidate to show any ability or interest in military matters, indicating cultural resistance to Cardwell's reforms.

Officers were not the only personnel, or even the first, to come under scrutiny for their professionalism. As rank-and-file soldiers had enlisted to escape worse civilian fates more often than through a desire to serve in the army, their officers often felt "[b]y and large the rank and file of the British army was composed of riff-raff, and was accorded the kind of treatment it might be supposed to deserve."⁶³

Cardwell's 1870 Enlistment Act reduced the length of service from 21 years to 12 years⁶⁴, which eventually allowed six of these to be served "with the Colours (with an option of re-enlistment), and a further six in the Reserve."⁶⁵ It was hoped that this measure would attract a "better class of recruit"⁶⁶.

It was felt that merchants' sons, as having a stake in the wellbeing of the parent society, would be more motivated to protect its interests and less interested in drink than unemployed slum dwellers: "Better educated, thinking soldiers, highly motivated through training and by esprit de corps, are very much more effective than men who simply obey orders."⁶⁷

At that time, the British soldier had a low reputation, particularly with regards to alcohol. Recruiting sergeants (who were paid a bounty for their work) often found recruits in the local pubs and took them, still drunk, to the magistrate to attest, a

⁶¹ Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 49

⁶² Beckett and Simpson, p. 65

⁶³ Kiernan, p. 22

⁶⁴ Weston, p. 142

⁶⁵ Knight, p. 27

⁶⁶ Knight, p. 27

⁶⁷ McManners, p. 96

doctor for a medical examination, and then on to their regiments. Cardwell attempted to end this practice but succeeded only in forcing recruiting sergeants to wait outside the bars.⁶⁸

One interesting argument against short service was that it “would rob the army of its tried and tested veterans and would replace them with young men who who no sooner learn their trade than leave.”⁶⁹ Yet, these tried and tested veterans “were in many cases – not in all – addicted to rough behaviour, heavy drinking, and hard swearing”.⁷⁰ This behavioural stereotype, and its effect on the reputation of the army and, subsequently, recruitment, were exactly the problems Cardwell hoped to address in his reforms. The continuity of culture that long service had provided for the regiments was replaced by the construction of official regimental identities.⁷¹

Professionalism was a major reason for reform of the regimental system. The lessons of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny highlighted that, even though the pre-1870 regimental system existed independently from professionalism in the British Army, it had become a hindrance to military efficiency. The system had to change to make the British competitive with their rivals on the Continent. The process of reform was itself slow and the Cardwell-Childers Reforms were never entirely adopted in their intended form.

Corporate Identity and Regimental Ethos

The focus of the regimental system is primarily administrative, rather than tactical. And yet, “comradeship and ultimately Regimental Spirit play an important part in helping men of widely differing outlooks and types to live happily together, to adapt themselves to life in the Army.”⁷² How can an administrative organisation produce such spirit?

⁶⁸Knight, p. 16

⁶⁹Knight, p. 27

⁷⁰William Robertson, 16th (Queen's) Lancers, 1877, in Knight, p. 31

⁷¹French, p. 78

⁷²Richardson, pp. 20-21

The elements “which comprise a regimental ethos... [are]: a feeling of belonging; a sense of loyalty and service to the regiment; an awareness of individual regimental history and folklore; and a belief in the regiment's fighting qualities.”⁷³ This section will briefly consider elements of this regimental ethos.

Beliefs and Values

A Portable 'Home' and 'Family'

The most enduring feature of regimental ethos is the feeling of belonging. This belonging is heavily based on a strong family structure. “Historically, any family feeling which troops developed toward the regiment was to exercise a psychological need to belong.”⁷⁴

Regional recruiting draws upon civilian family structures: new recruits often join the regiment where other family members have served. However, the regimental system inspires greater loyalty than a civilian organisation. The nearest civilian equivalent, the secondary school house system, is soon forgotten once a student has left school and is only resurrected when and if that student's children enter the same school.⁷⁵ Former infantry personnel do not forget their regiment so easily. Taylor writes, “While I had considered myself a former Hauraki officer, through their friendship, kindness and hospitality they showed there is, in fact, no such thing. Once a Hauraki, always a Hauraki!”⁷⁶

“Selfish, self-centred, rootless men learn to practise unselfishness, and find roots in pride in the traditions of a regiment”.⁷⁷ Regimental values are brought by serving

⁷³ Weston, p. 142

⁷⁴ O'Leary, p. 7

⁷⁵ O'Leary (p. 16, fn iv) points out that major sports teams can engender the same sort of loyalty and sense of belonging, sometimes fanatically so. However, as membership in a sports team very rarely runs in biological families, these differ from the historical regiments discussed here.

⁷⁶ Richard Taylor, *Comrades Brave: A History of the Hauraki Regiment*, Napier: Cosmos Publications, 1998, p. 5

⁷⁷ Richardson, p. 21

and non-serving⁷⁸ members into their civilian homes; civilian values are constantly introduced into the regiment by new recruits.

This cultural dynamic means that the regimental system is constantly and informally changing. When opponents of a particular reform talk about some measures 'destroying' or 'damaging' the regimental system⁷⁹, their objections reveal concern at changes more dramatic than usual. This opposition to sudden change, criticised as "backward-looking, insular and conservative"⁸⁰, at least ensures that useful features of regimental ethos are retained, even in a different form.

Key regimental personnel held roles associated with family equivalents: the Colonel as a father; and the regimental sergeant-major as a strict, no-nonsense maternal figure⁸¹, "responsible to the CO [Commanding Officer] for unit discipline and the behaviour of the NCO's [Non-Commissioned Officers]."⁸²

The position of Colonel-in-Chief is always held by a member of the Royal family, helping to "fuse the regiment into the national fabric. Regiments often take their name from a one-time association with the royal family. Every "King's", "Queen's" and "Prince of Wales's" regiment derives its title from a specific royal who held that title. Once honoured with such a title, the regiment keeps it for life."⁸³ This patronage equates to a distant uncle/aunt of the regimental family.

Even today's recruits are attracted to the army by the idea of a secure, surrogate home: Australian research has discovered that "enlistees to the army are significantly more likely to be from 'broken homes' than those joining most other national

⁷⁸ An alternative, and more accurate, word than 'former'

⁷⁹ Knight, p. 27

⁸⁰ French, p. 97, also Strachan, p. 201

⁸¹ A famous World War II song emphasises this with the lyric, 'Sergeant Major, be a mother to me', Martin Page, ed., *'Kiss Me Goodnight, Sergeant Major': The Songs and Ballads of World War II*, London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1973, p. 26

⁸² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regimental_System, Last Accessed 16 February 2007

⁸³ T.F. Mills, 'Regimental System of the British Empire and Commonwealth', <http://www.regiments.org/regiments/r-system.htm>, page created 15 March 1999, corrected and updated 03.01.2005, p. 2, Last Accessed 16 February 2007

employers".⁸⁴ 41% of all male applicants for Army General Enlistment came from 'broken homes'. The proportion of female applicants was even higher.⁸⁵

This portable 'home' and 'family' produce a strong sense of familiarity for recruits, an effective buffer against culture shock when posted to a foreign environment:

Life in India... helped foster regimental spirit. Most regiments could expect to be sent there at some point, and often for lengthy periods. For the soldiers, a long way from home in an alien culture and vastly outnumbered, the regiment became important both as a home and as a focus of existence. In the process, it assumed the mantle of a close-knit family.⁸⁶

The pressures of conflict have a similar effect: "individuals become able to dissociate themselves from the upsetting scenes of civil disorder they see. Instead they look in on themselves, identifying strongly with their unit, their platoon and the four-man teams in which they perform their tasks."⁸⁷ Between the world wars, "[c]olonial garrisoning revalidated the regimental system in the infantry".⁸⁸ "The battalion became the soldier's home, a sort of extended family".⁸⁹

This phenomenon was not unique to the British. For the Romans, Marius' "[f]ormalization of the cohort system may have been necessitated by the spread of the Empire, and the need the garrison large areas with semi-independent units". Under these pressures, "the legions themselves gradually became permanent formations indoctrinated with a corporate identity not dissimilar to that of the regiments of the modern British Army."⁹⁰

The characters of individual regiments are partly artificial. Because one battalion

⁸⁴Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 44

⁸⁵Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 158, fn 10

⁸⁶Weston, p. 142

⁸⁷McManners, p. 101

⁸⁸Strachan, p. 211

⁸⁹Strachan, p. 206

⁹⁰Simon Anglim, et al., *Fighting Techniques of the Ancient World 3000BC – AD 500: Equipment,*

remained at home feeding its linked battalions abroad with annual drafts of recruits, they were likely to be separated for years. During the 1881 reforms, regimental and military authorities decided to prevent this estrangement from “undermin[ing] discipline and *esprit de corps*... [by] manipul[at]ing symbols, rituals, ceremonies and 'histories', to create a new regimental *esprit de corps*.”⁹¹ The regimental link between geographically separated battalions then lies in a virtual community, a shared concept of regimental identity. “Regimental colonels presided over the institutions that created the image of the regiment as a community.”⁹²

This manipulation was by no means absolute. The “ways in which the soldiers conceived their regiment was not always consonant with the officially constructed notion of what constituted 'the regiment'.”⁹³ The sense of home was heavily reliant on regional recruiting; when that failed under heavy casualties and the administrative necessity of swiftly introducing replacements, “regimental leaders had to work hard to create a sense of community where none had existed before.”⁹⁴ For volunteers and conscripts of the world wars, the regiment “was the men they fought alongside.”⁹⁵ The psychological 'family' shrinks during wartime. The need to swiftly construct an ad hoc community in the field leaves no time to instruct new soldiers on the official identity and traditions of the regiment. “It might be argued that the British regimental system is therefore best suited only to a peacetime Army.”⁹⁶

This sense of belonging has its disadvantage: identification with one unit of an army necessarily draws a psychological line between 'us' and 'them'. 'Them' does not always refer to the enemy. If a regiment's identity acts as a buffer against cultural difference, then it cannot be surprising that it can also act against other regiments. Soldiers have been known to fight “for their regiment as fiercely against fellow

Combat Skills and Tactics, London: Amber Books Ltd., 2002, p. 56

⁹¹French, p. 78

⁹²French, p. 80

⁹³French, p. 339

⁹⁴French, p. 282

⁹⁵French, p. 283

⁹⁶Richardson, p. 153

regiments of their own army in public houses or on the sports field as they might against a declared enemy in armed conflict.”⁹⁷

O’Leary notes in the Canadian army, that the upholding of regimental ideals can sometimes be contrary, even damaging to national ideals and believes that the initial orientation for all recruits ought to include instruction on national and army ideals before and above the teaching of regimental ones.⁹⁸

However, the regimental system is not one of absolutes. While it is a partially-constructed, partially-evolved portable culture, it is also a sub-culture within a country’s parent culture. This is apparent for three reasons. Firstly, the “regimental system’s claim to impose a single, overweening loyalty on each of its members was never entirely successful. Even regular soldiers before 1939, who were, for the most part, unmarried during their colour service, remained members of real families.”⁹⁹ Secondly, just as it is unlikely that any one soldier can restrict his/her relationships entirely within the regiment, it is improbable that every member of the regiment can form relationships with every other member. Intra-regimental friendships are still within smaller groups.¹⁰⁰

Finally, service is no longer a life-long commitment: regimental bonds are celebrated and revisited, and the bad times forgotten¹⁰¹, but only on discrete occasions. A soldier still remains fundamentally a member of the parent society.

Commitment to Something Greater than Oneself

War heightens all the common purposes and attitudes of military life into an exceptionally simple reality, in which individuals surrender themselves to the higher calling of the common cause – to something far more important than themselves.¹⁰²

⁹⁷O’Leary, p. 5

⁹⁸O’Leary, p. 5

⁹⁹French, p. 338

¹⁰⁰O’Leary’s estimate is 100-150 strong, or company level, p. 7

¹⁰¹French, p. 343

¹⁰²McManners, p. 367

The role of a regiment is to absorb individual recruits into a community, making individual death much easier to face. Recruits are infused with a sense of belonging to something far greater than themselves. This association can be a powerful commitment, often made during the impressionable time in an adolescent's life:

during the critical age period between 15 and 20, when physical development is well ahead of emotional and intellectual maturity. Adult bodies can be trained for strength and endurance, while immature minds are conditioned into military ways. This is a formative and vulnerable time of life, when adult personality is shaped. Military training invariably has a great impact on this developing personality.¹⁰³

Many adolescents yearn for just this sort of association even if it means joining a gang.¹⁰⁴ It is not surprising that the regimental system has been criticised as a form of brainwashing.¹⁰⁵

A strong aspect of the regiment is its perceived immortality: soldiers may die, but the regiment is eternal.¹⁰⁶ Some soldiers "came to act on the principle that if the Regiment lived it did not matter if they died".¹⁰⁷ This attitude is a subversion of individuality in favour of *communitas*.

Mendelbaum noted that one of the inherent functions of funerals is to affirm the continued existence of the community, as a counterpoint to individual death.¹⁰⁸ In those environments where death is an everyday occurrence, this affirmation is constantly reinforced. For the regimental system, constant casualties might reinforce the value of the regiment, but this reaffirmation of community would have to be artificially reinforced during peacetime.

¹⁰³ McManners, p. 112

¹⁰⁴ French, p. 343

¹⁰⁵ O'Leary, p. 5

¹⁰⁶ Richardson, p. 15

¹⁰⁷ Lord Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage*, 4th Reprint, London: Constable, 1946, p. 166

¹⁰⁸ R. Fulton, 'The Contemporary Funeral: Functional or Dysfunctional' from Wass, J. and Neimyer, R.A., eds., *Dying: Facing the Facts*, Washington: Taylor and Francis, 1995, Reprinted in 176.318 & 176.723 *Sociology of Death and Dying Book of Readings*, Massey University Palmerston North: School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, 2003, p. 245

Symbols

According to Turner, hierarchy within a society is often expressed symbolically, rituals accentuating differences in established relationships, for example, between men and women.¹⁰⁹ The military, a highly-structured hierarchal society, establishes and reinforces that hierarchy through a variety of symbols.

Symbols also affirm the continued existence of the community, most noticeably at funerals: "Mandelbaum (1959) argued that participating in the funeral ceremony... gave the mourner the sense of being part of a larger social whole"¹¹⁰. This social whole includes ancestral members, who may no longer be living. This identification with regimental 'ancestors' underlines the 'immortal' feature of a regiment's corporate identity.

These symbols are often displayed to members of the parent society as a means of promoting the regimental identity to outsiders, upon whom the regiment relies for support and recruits. Attracting and retaining the latter appears to be the higher priority. From the time of separation from civilian society, a recruit was trained, not only in the military profession, but also in the particular symbols, traditions and traditions of the regiment.

As noted earlier, "regimental and military authorities manipulated symbols, rituals, ceremonies and 'histories', to create... regimental *esprit de corps*".¹¹¹ Although these features have been constructed rather than allowed to evolve, this doesn't negate their effect on the regimental community.

Myth

For the purposes of this study, a myth is "a story which embodies the values that are important to a culture and which has an aura of sanctity about it."¹¹² Despite the

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous, *Mystical Rites and Rituals: Initiation and Fertility Rites, Sacrifice and Burial Customs, Incantation and Ritual Magic*, London: BPC Publishing Ltd., 1975, pp. 15-17

¹¹⁰ Fulton, p. 245

¹¹¹ French, p. 78

¹¹² Swartz and Jordan, p. 329

connotations associated with the usual use of the word 'myth', this definition includes no judgments on the truth or falsity of a cultural myth.¹¹³ What are important are the myth's attendant values.

Under this definition, regimental histories are the myths of the regimental system. These include the tales of associated battle honours; award-winning soldiers who had served in the regiment; and even defeats and disgraces, with their attendant reasons. "Proud regiments with fine traditions stretching back hundreds of years may prefer to overlook the platoon that tried to withdraw under mortar fire after their lieutenant was killed, and the sergeant who stopped them by shooting one of the section corporals."¹¹⁴

Painstaking historical research can add to the aura of sanctity by producing proof of the story the regimental boards prefer, but the truth is not important. What is important is that the histories embody the values of the regiment, and set a standard for its living members to emulate and to form a source of pride. For example, Germany's "senior officers have been calling for new regimental role models, untarnished by the Nazis, to encourage the right military virtues."¹¹⁵

Ironically, the greatest regimental myth is the regiment itself, its solidarity "and the belief that it has a collective consciousness."¹¹⁶ The British "like to think [Regimental Spirit] flourishes in [their] army more richly than in any other."¹¹⁷ The values associated with this myth are "morale and group consciousness and the basis of... fighting effectiveness."¹¹⁸ The aura of sanctity has been bolstered in modern times by the example of the Falklands War, a conflict that pitted Britain's regimental system against Argentina's continental system: "[T]he land battles of the Falklands

¹¹³Swartz and Jordan, p. 329

¹¹⁴McManners, p. 81

¹¹⁵'The Red Baron Strikes Again', *The Dominion Post*, Wellington, Saturday October 14, 2006, p. E6

¹¹⁶Weston, p. 150

¹¹⁷Richardson, p. 15

¹¹⁸Weston, p. 150

War revealed the value of the regimental system".¹¹⁹ The aura of sanctity is reinforced by the "continued use of symbols, rituals, customs and traditions."¹²⁰

Regimental and Military Language

The Roman legions and the British regiments hold in common a strongly paternalistic language and structure which effectively showed each recruit his place in the organisation and the expectations held of him. "The battalion became the soldier's home, a sort of extended family, whose commanding officers regularly used the vocabulary of paternalism to describe its beneficial influences."¹²¹ 'Sir' has its linguistic roots in 'sire', meaning 'father'; 'cadet' means 'younger son'; female officers are addressed as 'Ma'am', a word with French roots meaning 'my mother'. Even the word 'infantry' comes from the Italian word 'infante', meaning 'youth' or 'infant'¹²², from the days when "younger men would fight on foot in support of the mounted knights who were their seniors and superiors."¹²³ These highlight the regiment's emphasis on family.

Military jargon and acronyms can be confusing to a civilian. Recently, I received an apology for the large number of military terms used during an interview¹²⁴, but had learnt these during undergraduate studies. This aspect of language highlights the professionalism of the Armed Forces, as these terms most often refer to concepts related to operations. Furthermore, when "management or business studies... emerged as an academic discipline... its popular writers drew heavily on military theory as a means of communicating the savage cut-and-thrust nature of the competitive business world."¹²⁵ With the theory came the language and it is not

¹¹⁹ Weston, p. 153

¹²⁰ Weston, p. 151

¹²¹ Strachan, p. 206

¹²² R.E. Allen, ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 8th Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 605

¹²³ *Why?* Wellington, New Zealand: *New Zealand Army Publication*, Section 1001

¹²⁴ Maj. D. Millner, Personal Communication, 24 September, 2006

¹²⁵ Joel Hayward, 'Explaining Command' in Glyn Harper and Joel Hayward, eds., *Born to Lead? Portraits of New Zealand Commanders*, Auckland, NZ: Exisle Publishing Limited, 2003, p. 22

unusual to hear businesspeople speak of marketing strategy, mission statements and business tactics.

Regimental Display

To a civilian, military display can hint at the kind of cohesion and trust that is not often seen within civilian society. This can come across as something special and even breathtaking:

As the parade marched past the spectators' tent, the leader barked out an order and all turned their heads to face the audience, NOT the direction they were marching. Only one, on their right, looked forward and it must have been due to this one soldier that all the rest didn't drift towards a knee-high white post. That potential collision, embarrassing and potentially painful, was awaited by some forward-leaning spectators but the parade passed safely by. Even though those soldiers must have been familiar with every stone on this parade ground after 12 years of service, it was still an impressive display of trust in that sole soldier who was the eyes of them all.¹²⁶

Ceremonial occasions provide the opportunities to reaffirm regimental identity, in almost the same way that a funeral allows a small tribe to reaffirm their continued existence. Each regiment takes pride in showing that this is who they are, honouring those who have served before, and creating a sense of belonging. This group pride and group trust, wordlessly communicated by a smartly dressed and precise parade, can inspire potential recruits to join a particular regiment.¹²⁷ In this way, ceremonial display is an important means of cultural expression.

Apart from ceremonial display, close order drill carries other benefits. From his personal experience, McNeill reports "a strange sense of personal enlargement; a sort of swelling out, becoming bigger than life, thanks to participation in collective ritual"¹²⁸ and that this "emotional resonance of daily and prolonged close-order drill

¹²⁶Personal Anecdote, Waiouru Army Training Group, September 13, 2006

¹²⁷Recruits have been known to say that one reason they joined was they liked the costume of their particular regiment, Richardson, p. 17. Harry Sebborn recalls the traditions and the music as factors that maintained his interest in the Army, Harry Sebborn, Personal Communication, 7 November 2006

¹²⁸William H. McNeill, *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995, p. 2

created such a lively esprit de corps among the poverty stricken recruits and urban outcasts ... that other social ties faded to insignificance among them.”¹²⁹ This also led to “unthinking readiness to obey their officers and an almost complete disregard for competing attachments.”¹³⁰

In addition, soldiers “who had been well exercised by digging and drilling during the day could be counted on to go peacefully to sleep at night, so that armies became much more comfortable neighbours for civilians” rather than escaping boredom “by indulging in drink and other sorts of dissipation.”¹³¹

McNeill goes so far as to claim that “the modern superiority of European armies over others was largely due to the psychological effect of the sort of close-order drill [he] had experienced.”¹³² He also states that prolonged drill “allowed soldiers... to create a new, artificial primary community among themselves, where comradeship prevailed in good times and bad and where old-fashioned principles of command and subordination gave direction and meaning to life.”¹³³ In short, he sees the cultural construct of the regimental system as being entirely due to the psychological effect of close-order drill.

His admission that not all his comrades enjoyed drilling as much as he did¹³⁴ undermines his conclusion. He uses other examples to demonstrate the sort of muscular bonding that exists on parade, but these show groups of workers moving together towards the accomplishment of a specific repetitive task¹³⁵.

Soldiers' movements on the parade ground may no longer be useful on the modern battlefield, but group movement still has an effect on morale. “Throughout the military career, dancing remained the way warriors asserted their corporate identity

¹²⁹McNeill, p. 3

¹³⁰McNeill, p. 111

¹³¹McNeill, p. 130

¹³²McNeill, p. 3

¹³³McNeill, p. 131

¹³⁴McNeill, p. 3, footnote 2

and prepared for battle.”¹³⁶ A performance of a Maori haka, still used in various forms by today's New Zealand Army¹³⁷, has been directed compared to “a regiment at drill”.¹³⁸ This suggests that a Maori haka shows that same significance and benefits of a European drill. Both are equally appropriate, as a means for the New Zealand Army to celebrate its corporate identity through its bicultural history.

Military bands are a further example of military display. When threatened, they also provided a demonstration of the willingness of the British Army to retain their symbols:

The British Army solution... is convenient and traditional; bandsmen are to be stretcher bearers in war, leaving the 'real' soldiers free for the fighting. By continuing this tradition of centuries, musicians are given a justifiable war role, conveniently allowing regiments to retain their military bands.¹³⁹

In this case, regimental tradition was retained without harm to army efficiency or values.

Regimental Talismans

Roman legionaries would fight fiercely to protect their standard. The eagle held religious importance, being the solid form of the legion's *genius*, or guardian spirit.¹⁴⁰ In Roman civilian life, the Genius was represented by the father for his ability to prolong the family.¹⁴¹ The “loss of an eagle in battle was seen as a national disaster”¹⁴², “an indelible disgrace and entailed the disbandment of the corps.”¹⁴³ For Romans, this meant that the legion had lost its regenerative or 'fathering' spirit.

¹³⁵McNeill, p. 51

¹³⁶McNeill, p. 103

¹³⁷Second Lieutenant A. White, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

¹³⁸Anonymous British report quoted in Andrew P. Vaydu, *Maori Warfare*, (Wellington, 1969), p. 62, quoted in McNeill, p. 103

¹³⁹McManners, p. 298

¹⁴⁰Anglim et al., p. 56

¹⁴¹H. Stuart Jones, *Companion to Roman History*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912, pp. 269-271

¹⁴²Anglim, p. 56

Like Roman eagles, British "Colours... had a highly practical function of being visible rallying points in the smoke and confusion of battle."¹⁴⁴ New colours are consecrated before use by the regiment, the old ones being retired to the chapel where they are left to decay.¹⁴⁵ The existing Colour is never altered. The Colours consist of two: the Regimental Colour, and the King's/Queen's Colour. The Regimental Colour was considered the more important: "Kings and Queens must come and go; the Regiment lives forever."¹⁴⁶

Regimental Colours may not house a guardian spirit, but they do hold special significance. When they were carried into battle, they "were frequently reminders of those actions from the cuts and holes they bore. As such they took on even greater significance... Thus, the Colours came to be regarded very much as the soul of the regiment".¹⁴⁷ Although there are tales of soldiers going to extreme effort to save the Colours¹⁴⁸, "after 1882, 'in consequence of the altered formation of attack and extended range of firing', they were no longer taken into action", but still retained their symbolic value.¹⁴⁹

Uniforms within the British Army evolved by various means. Some units designed their own uniforms¹⁵⁰; others are variations on historical dress, for example: the Yeoman of the Guard in Tudor dress¹⁵¹; other features, such as the French-style bearskin of the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, have been adopted to commemorate the regiment's role in an historical event, in this case, the Battle of Waterloo.¹⁵² The primary purpose of these subtle differences in cut, style and colour is not to

¹⁴³Jones, p. 213

¹⁴⁴ Ian F.W. Beckett, *Discovering British Regimental Traditions*, Discovering Series No. 292, Buckinghamshire, UK: Shire Publications Ltd., 1999, p. 68

¹⁴⁵French, p. 87

¹⁴⁶Richardson, p. 15

¹⁴⁷Beckett, p. 69

¹⁴⁸Beckett, p. 70

¹⁴⁹French, p. 87, with a quote from PRO WO 32/6701. Ellice to GOCs at Home, 17 Jan. 1882

¹⁵⁰Beckett, p. 19

¹⁵¹Beckett, p. 8

distinguish friend from foe, but to affirm a soldier's regimental identity.

Technological advances in the accuracy and range of weaponry have long since rendered ceremonial dress, like Colours, imprudent on the battlefield. Other means are used to emphasise regimental differences:

[L]ike the Colours, regimental Badges badges have a special symbolism, the more so since Colours have ceased to be carried in action and since badges rather than lace and facing colours on uniforms have become the primary means of distinguishing one regiment from another.¹⁵³

National identity is also a point of difference: "the collar badge of the Scots Guards is a thistle, that of the Irish Guards a shamrock leaf and that of the Welsh Guards a leek."¹⁵⁴ Because recruitment for regiments is not strictly according to nationality¹⁵⁵, a soldier's national identity has been subverted to regimental identity.

Even rank is symbolic. Soldiers salute an officer's commission, not his person.¹⁵⁶

Regimental customs often recall or reenact past events or practices. Examples include the Cameronians carrying rifles into church, as they "were not safe from attack by James II's forces even at prayer."¹⁵⁷ "It might also be argued that particular sports are also in the nature of military customs."¹⁵⁸ Examples include snooker, polo, hunting, football and cricket. Sport has survived as a part of regimental life, due to being "regarded as having an essential part to play in cultivating military virtues."¹⁵⁹

Mascots are a special case. "[S]everal regiments use live animals as mascots, such

¹⁵²Beckett, p. 26

¹⁵³Beckett, p. 71

¹⁵⁴Beckett, p. 27

¹⁵⁵"Many a kilted Highlander had never seen Scotland before arriving at his regimental depot." Richardson, p. 17

¹⁵⁶Second Lieutenant A. White, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

¹⁵⁷Beckett, p. 76

¹⁵⁸Beckett, p. 77

¹⁵⁹Beckett, p. 77

as the ram of the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, the goats of The Royal Welch Fusiliers and The Royal Regiment of Wales, the antelope of The Royal Fusiliers, and the wolfhound of The Royal Irish Rangers”¹⁶⁰. Mascots form a tradition to connect the present regimental community to its past. They are part of its immortality; a regiment that has 'always' had a mascot of a particular type and even the same name¹⁶¹ can be seen to have an 'immortal' mascot.

While treated as symbols, mascots are still animals and can sometimes remind their regiments of that fact:

The Royal Welsh regiment mascot, a six-year-old male goat named Billy... ruined the [parade to mark the Queen's birthday] on June 16 2006, at a British Army base in Episkopi, Cyprus... Billy darted from side to side, throwing soldiers off their stride¹⁶².

As an animal, Billy could hardly be blamed for his behaviour, but he had failed the regiment as a symbol. Consequently, Billy's punishment was symbolic: demotion from lance corporal to fusilier.¹⁶³

The symbols of the regimental system are “merely signs of belonging to a group”, “an archaism” and “mere vanity, individual and collective”.¹⁶⁴ Their value lies in the values they symbolise: the affirmation of the regiment as a stable, close-knit and immortal community. These values are desirable, being those under greatest threat during the uncertainty, chaos and danger of battle.

Individual Expression

According to Swartz and Jordan, “The elements of culture, shared understandings,

¹⁶⁰Weston, p. 147

¹⁶¹Beckett points out that The Royal Welch Fusiliers' Regimental Goat was always named Billy and The Welch Regiment's Goat was always named Taffy until the latter's disbandment in 1969. Beckett, p. 79

¹⁶²'Demoted for Acting the Goat', *The Dominion Post*, Monday June 26, 2006, p. B2

¹⁶³From the name of the goat, the regiment was misnamed in this report and must have been The Royal Welch Fusiliers. Beckett, p. 79

¹⁶⁴O'Leary, p. 10

exist as parts of the personalities of the individuals who share the culture.”¹⁶⁵ An individual recruit leaves behind many shared civilian understandings upon joining a military culture.

Transferring from one culture to another is never an easy process, particularly from a civilian culture to a military one: “Uniformed organisations tend to be 'greedy institutions'. They demand a lot from their members in terms of unlimited liability in risk and availability, and the organisation's control extends to aspects of personal life much more than in civilian organisations.”¹⁶⁶ This feature of regimental life allows much less scope for individual self-expression and interests than civilian life.

However, “although all the elements of culture are personality components, not all personality components are elements of culture.”¹⁶⁷ This means that civilian life might not provide opportunities for self-expression that are available within the Army. For example, the Army offers greater opportunity for the subjugation of the self to the collective:

There is something in men (perhaps not in women) that makes them need to give themselves in this way, perhaps part of some primitive pack instinct. The military life, especially in war, gives a satisfaction to men that civilian life cannot provide.¹⁶⁸

This subsection examines the trade-off made by the soldier and the processes of transferral between military and civilian cultures.

Initiation

Initiation into the army is not only a process of gaining professional skills: “the overall process concentrates as much on the development of values and attitudes as it does on competencies.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵Swartz and Jordan, p. 158

¹⁶⁶Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 45

¹⁶⁷Swartz and Jordan, p. 158

¹⁶⁸McManners, p. 367

¹⁶⁹Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 45

For some members of British society, the process was not entirely unknown: "Moving sideways, from one institution into a very similar military version, public-school boys find themselves on familiar ground. The process of socialization into the army is very much easier for them, and they find their feet to out-perform others much earlier."¹⁷⁰

"Military basic training works by first breaking down the civilian identity of each individual, before building him back up as a soldier – in a continual slog of almost unendurable pressure."¹⁷¹

This is similar to puberty rites, where a candidate is "divested of his former status before he can assume the new... The admonition 'Get your hair cut – you're in the Army now' demonstrates the removal of the civilian status and the assumption of the new status of 'soldier' with uniform, dress, style, regulations and equipment"¹⁷².

This is more difficult in the military elite units than the socially elite regiments:

All the selection processes used by elite or special force units achieve two purposes. Firstly, through applying strict entry standards they maintain both the quality of the unit and its perception of itself; and secondly, the highly realistic and testing experience gives successful candidates a tremendous and enduring self-confidence that enables them to overcome seemingly impossible situations of real operations.¹⁷³

Socialisation can be made more difficult by "semi-professional forms of bastardisation [which]... imply a reward:... if membership were too easily attained it would not be worth having."¹⁷⁴ Once gained, "the professional identity becomes so embedded in the individual's self-image that he/she has difficulty in imagining any other occupational role."¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰McManners, p. 36

¹⁷¹McManners, p. 113

¹⁷²Anon., *Mystical Rites and Rituals*, p. 25

¹⁷³McManners, p. 65

¹⁷⁴Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 45

¹⁷⁵Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 45

However, the struggle for membership can lead to disillusionment soon after training is completed: "exposure to the 'real job' after the training institution can be disappointing, with the job they are asked to do often seeming a far-cry from what they signed up to do".¹⁷⁶ Teamwork and trust in organisational support can offset this early-career crisis.¹⁷⁷

This peacetime membership is only one aspect of army socialisation. "Military training, despite its increasing technological bent, must still condition men to kill and withstand the brutality of an environment totally different from anything they might experience in civilian life."¹⁷⁸ The civilian injunction against killing must be modified to train the recruit for battle:

The process of deadening the emotions of soldiers starts during basic training and is perpetuated in the way people talk and relate to each other in the day-to-day inter-relationships of military life, as well as in the shared group philosophy of units.¹⁷⁹

In this way, the regimental system promotes an ethos that emotionally prepares the soldier for battle: "Until the first casualties, a war is uncannily similar to a large peacetime training exercise. For each individual, this unreality continues until something happens that affects him personally."¹⁸⁰

The community spirit appears to shield soldiers from the emotional consequences of battle, until individual experience separates one from the rest. This aspect will be further discussed in War: A Function Fulfilled?

Existentialism

Once within the regimental structure, it is unreasonable to assume that all civilian values are removed from the recruit. In particular, the value of individuality requires some expression and is the most troublesome in a community-focused organisation.

¹⁷⁶Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 46

¹⁷⁷Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 46

¹⁷⁸McManners, p. 96

¹⁷⁹McManners, p. 103

¹⁸⁰McManners, p. 106

However, this value is important to morale.

Upon taking command of the 14th Army in 1942, Field-Marshal William Slim realised that, to rebuild shattered morale, he needed to engender personal pride in each soldier. He successfully used the analogy of a clock to communicate to his soldiers the belief that each, no matter how small his role, had a vital contribution to make to the whole effort.¹⁸¹ The demoralising title of the 'Forgotten Army' illustrates the effect when individuals feel they have become 'lost' within the system.

For the military, their most visible and colourful ceremonies formalise and underline hierarchal relationships in similar ways to civilian communities:

in tribal society rituals are constituted to specific social relationships according to the affiliations of the members of the cults. Only persons occupying specific positions in those relationships can participate, and they do so in terms of the specific ways in which they are related to one another. Moreover, in the ritual, apart from using special symbols (in the form of things, words or actions), they act their specific roles in secular life, either directly, or sometimes indirectly... or in some particular symbolic form... This type of analysis has shown that in some of the rituals the enactment of secular relationships involves a statement, in an exaggerated form, not only of the harmonious and unifying aspects of the relationships, but also of the conflicts which reside in them. This is one of the main means by which emotion is aroused, which is then fixed on socially approved values: out of the very conflicts which exist in normal life, on special occasions the value of and ideal of life without conflict is emotionally and intellectually established.¹⁸²

Many of these processes can be witnessed on the parade ground. The hierarchy of rank is enacted through shouted orders, precise movements, and ceremonial symbols of rank take on an exaggerated form, such as drill canes and swords. McNeill's experience of drill shows how his emotion became focused on teamwork. Disagreements may be common in day-to-day life (as was seen by the fact that McNeill's experience of drill was not shared by all his comrades), but drill offered McNeill a glimpse of the ideal of life without conflict.¹⁸³ He called this muscular

¹⁸¹ William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1956, p. 186

¹⁸² Anon., *Mystical Rites and Rituals*, p. 16

¹⁸³ McNeill, p. 3

bonding.

However, even in day-to-day business, military culture is firmly based on hierarchy. For example, there are strong rules on how officers are to be treated. It is even a legal offence for a soldier to swear at an officer, an event of lesser note when occurring between civilians.

In hierarchal civilian cultures, there are regular festivals to relax these constraints of societal structures and roles:

The... dramatic aspects of the revelry sometimes overlap with another common motif, in which the normal order of things is overturned. Servants or fools become rulers, Lords of Misrule dominate the festivities of many countries, men dress as women.¹⁸⁴

Military culture offers similar opportunities to relax hierarchal constraints. During the times when joining the Army was a lifelong career, regimental messes, although not as carnivalesque as civilian reversal festivals, provided an environment where soldiers could relax outside the strict rules of their lives. Here, military matters were a forbidden subject of conversation.¹⁸⁵

During the days when a soldier spent his entire life and career within the regiment, less official opportunities to escape the hierarchal pressures were during leave, when soldiers gained an appalling reputation centring on drunkenness and prostitution (as few were permitted to marry).¹⁸⁶ Corporal punishment could not address the underlying cultural pressure: that recruits from a highly individualistic society were incompletely welded into a fully-communal organisation and provided with few opportunities to escape the strain imposed by hierarchal relationships.

Today, once initial training is complete, military culture is no longer the environment where soldiers live their entire lives. In fact, they become equally

¹⁸⁴ Anon., *Mystical Rites and Rituals*, p. 49

¹⁸⁵ Beckett and Simpson, p. 43

¹⁸⁶ McNeill, p. 130

members of both civilian and military communities.¹⁸⁷ Regimental messes provide an opportunity for side-along communication¹⁸⁸ and a relaxing of the strict hierarchy of the parade ground.¹⁸⁹

Absolution

Finally, military organisations need to provide absolution before the soldier is reintegrated into civil society. Maori warriors could not return to their home village until the priest had spiritually removed them from service to the war god.¹⁹⁰ As a counter-example, United States soldiers in Vietnam could fly from the war zone back home within a space of twenty-four hours. Often robbed of any affirmation by homeland peace activism, some were subjected to scorn as soon as they arrived at the airport.¹⁹¹

The psychological problems faced by Vietnam veterans highlight the value of absolution:

In war, extreme vigilance and specific learned survival techniques are vital, but, like psychic numbing, when combatants return home these responses cannot simply be switched off... Particularly in America, many veterans sleep with weapons beside them, or sleep so lightly that any slight disturbance brings them to full and often aggressive wakefulness.¹⁹²

In addition to this conditioned reflex, soldiers must also come to terms with death: "Seeing people die, whether or not you killed them yourself, has a terrible effect on individuals, creating very strong, long-lasting feelings of guilt."¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Maj. D. Millner, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

¹⁸⁸ Ernie Gartrell, Personal Communication, 26 September 2006, Kuschnereit, p. 3

¹⁸⁹ Kuschnereit, p. 2

¹⁹⁰ Elsdon Best, *Notes on the Art of War*, Edited by Jeff Evans, Auckland: Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd., 2001, pp. 147-148

¹⁹¹ Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, First Paperback Edition, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1996, p. 278

¹⁹² McManners, p. 371

¹⁹³ McManners, p. 333

For some, these feelings are particularly strong:

Death Guilt is at its strangest and most intense when men have come face to face with an enemy whom they have gone on to kill. Despite knowing that in such situations one must either kill or be killed, men still feel guilt at not being the one to have died.¹⁹⁴

Absolution is an incomplete process. Hanson recounts how his father, “usually late at night after he had opened a bottle of good bourbon or scotch”¹⁹⁵, would tell 'stories' of his personal experiences of war. This was a family tradition, as Hanson's grandfather had done the same.

For those without sons willing to listen, regimental comrades provide an audience who have experienced the same and are most likely to listen and not judge:

The scars of war are the complex and (mostly) normal reactions of normal people to very abnormal events. The emotions raised by war and combat are so strong that only veterans understand them, hence the importance of keeping combat units together after wars.¹⁹⁶

War: A Function Fulfilled?

In choosing higher commander from line infantry and cavalry regiments, the regimental system recognised the Army's ultimate role as preparation for battle. As mentioned earlier, the British Army retained their regimental bands by assigning them a useful role in battle¹⁹⁷; various writers have argued that the regimental system provides a corporate ethos that is essential to morale and fighting spirit.¹⁹⁸ But how well has the regimental system actually performed this function?

“An occasional drawback... was that there was a tendency for a relatively small number of casualties to exert a disproportionately serious effect on morale.”¹⁹⁹ If

¹⁹⁴ McManners, p. 335

¹⁹⁵ Hanson, p. 20

¹⁹⁶ McManners, p. 367

¹⁹⁷ McManners, p. 298

¹⁹⁸ Richardson, p. 15; O'Leary, p.3

¹⁹⁹ Richardson, p. 17

interpersonal bonds make up the supportive nature of the regimental system, then the breaking of those bonds through casualties can leave soldiers doubly bereft; the dead are not only friends, but the support network upon which the soldier depends:

In a hostile and dangerous environment, rejection by the group is the worst fate of all. Comfort, reassurance and protection from danger are available only from the group. For each lonely individual, earning and retaining the approval of comrades is the single most important motivating factor of all.²⁰⁰

So what happens to soldiers when a large number of those comrades are killed?

The regiments provided a tribal identity for groups of soldiers – and convenient organizational blocs so that the Staff could rotate men in and out of the line, supply them and organize the attacks. The regiments were also the means by which the Staff judged morale and combat effectiveness, using composite unit personas created (and even invented) by their individual commanding officers.²⁰¹

During battle, grief is postponed:

The units that fought in the Falklands War were very close-knit, with strong personal bonds between their members. The closeness turned casualties and deaths into deeply personal events, but while the war continued, soldiers had no time to stop and grieve for their friends²⁰².

A curious insight can be gained by studying the Falklands War, in which a few regiments participated out of the entire British Army.

On the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands, the prospect of war was almost a welcome one for the British Army. For individual soldiers, battle was a supreme test, one which they didn't appear to consider would be lost. "Many peacetime soldiers feel that as part of their training (its climax) they should experience being in battle."²⁰³ "Being blooded in combat is an initiation rite, a graduation ceremony for

²⁰⁰McManners, p. 80

²⁰¹McManners, pp. 82-83

²⁰²McManners, p. 331

²⁰³McManners, p. 301

soldiers that has no equivalent in any other walk of life.”²⁰⁴

At that time, the British also considered war a rarity. “The chance to do well in a battle does not come to professional military men very often in their careers (if at all), so there is an understandable self-interest in ensuring that they and their unit make their mark.”²⁰⁵

Problems arose when war proved to be a different experience than expected:

There is a terrible disparity between the idealized view of war (and heroism) expressed back home, and the reality of degradation and unspeakable suffering war veterans have witnessed, experienced and caused.²⁰⁶

Apart from the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), combat changes the participants' outlook. For soldiers, being blooded in combat “affects them for the rest of their days, and separates them from the rest of humanity... for most, combat is the time when they come face to face with the reality (and fragility) of their lives.”²⁰⁷

Veterans also come to question the basic tenets of the regimental system:

The British Army had a vast reservoir of experience from which its expertise, traditions and attitudes have grown... Peacetime soldiers are given very clear ideas on what constitutes heroism and cowardice... whereas soldiers with combat experience... are not always quite so certain.²⁰⁸

“For professional soldiers coming home from war, returning to the peacetime military routine and a peacetime hierarchy that did not experience the fighting can be almost as difficult as enduring the war.”²⁰⁹ Difficult as this is from the veterans'

²⁰⁴McManners, p. 118

²⁰⁵McManners, p. 235

²⁰⁶McManners, p. 356

²⁰⁷McManners, p. 118

²⁰⁸McManners, p. 95

²⁰⁹McManners, p. 361

point of view, the gulf of experience must be even more perplexing for those who remained behind. Veterans had direct experience of the Army in peacetime, whereas those without battle experience have little reason to question their military culture and find the attitude of those 'lucky' enough to have proven themselves in battle 'foreign'.

Whether it is the experience of war or disillusionment with the values of the regimental system that marks the war veteran, the reaction of the regimental community deserves some analysis: McManners feels that the system failed its Falklands War veterans, particularly those who suffered from PTSD: "Senior officers in the armed forces, however, preoccupied with peacetime affairs, have been too busy to be concerned with the post-combat reactions of a relatively small number of servicemen".²¹⁰

"Men have always had problems in settling down after a military life, particularly when returning from war to the peacetime army."²¹¹ If these problems have always existed, regardless of whether the entire army or merely a portion went into combat, then envy at veterans for having proven themselves in battle, not the difficulty associated with providing psychological help for those suffering from PTSD, forms a major reason for the perceived rejection experienced by Falklands veterans.

But envy does not appear to be the main reason. One Falklands veteran received a clue after the war: "On the ship on the way home, our platoon commander advised me to go elsewhere as he said I wasn't Parachute Regiment material [Carter was in fact awarded the Military Medal]."²¹²

This is interesting, as it suggests that the Army was not rejecting Carter – his award proved that – but the commander obviously felt that there was no longer any place for Carter in the regiment. Personal envy cannot totally explain similar experiences by other veterans.

²¹⁰McManners, p. 399

²¹¹McManners, p. 379

²¹²McManners, p. 363

“The British Army's regimental system is a wonderful source of comradeship and motivation for its card-carrying members, but can slam the door in the face of those who for one reason or another are outsiders.”²¹³

It appears that the regimental system reacts in the same way as any other human community. Those who have shown themselves as no longer sharing the beliefs, attitudes and traditions can find themselves excluded. From this, we can conclude that, despite the inbuilt contradictions of the regimental system, there is a remarkable degree of homogeneity of expression. This makes sense, as the same types of symbols are used to express difference: uniforms, badges, insignia and Colours. The same features that mark any regiment as separate from all others and thus bind it together (unity through common difference) make it easy to reject those who no longer obey regimental tenets without question.

British Falklands War veterans faced a cultural rejection, not a personal one. This is not to say that their experiences at rejoining a peacetime army were any less painful, but it highlights a caveat associated with the regimental system. It can bind soldiers in a peacetime army to fight as a team, but, as an entity, can be cold and callous once soldiers have fulfilled that function.

Conclusion

There is no simple definition of a regimental system.²¹⁴ Instead, there are several definitions, all equally valid and reflective of its multi-layered nature.

A regimental system is a particular form of military culture that encourages an *esprit de corps* focusing on a family-like structure. It groups an army into regiments, purely administrative units, and is most useful as a cultural buffer during constabulary duty for a wide-ranging empire. As a form of induction into family life, its myths and family emphasis help to instill a set of desirable values into new

²¹³McManners, p. 49

²¹⁴Allan Mallinson points out that it is difficult for any work to “truly come to grips with... the regimental system”. Allan Mallinson, “A Dictionary of Military History.” *History Today* Vol. 46.n 9 (Sept 1996): 54(2). *InfoTrac OneFile*, Thomson Gale, Massey University Library, 18 Jan 2007, <http://find.galegroup.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/itx/informark>

recruits.

The regimental system's focus on community is independent of other professional values: expertise and responsibility. Consequently, it's most visible in line infantry regiments, where professionalism is of lesser importance. Its contribution to military efficiency is based on the assumption that it is an essential component of *esprit de corps* and group cohesion.

A regimental system is also a means of keeping an army apolitical. Officers' focus on their regiments and subsequent competition amongst themselves prevent them from fulfilling personal ambition at a higher level. This control is most important in line and cavalry regiments, as traditionally these provided officers for higher level command.

It is also a subculture of its parent country, and constantly evolves in response to changes in this parent culture. Unlike other communities, membership into the military is not gained at birth, nor do the military breed specifically to provide the next generation; they are dependent on the parent community for new soldiers. Army recruits, having grown up in the parent culture, bring parent cultural values into the army.

The regimental system is its own greatest myth. The regiment is not a tactical unit, but a consensual and collective imaginary community for its members. Aside from the histories of each particular regiment, the system's value is promoted through rivalries and legends at the national level, for example: that the Falklands War was a triumph of the regimental system over the continental system. As myth, a regiment's existence is more felt through its members than visible in any tangible form.

Its value on the battlefield is contestable. Under prolonged and heavy stress, regimental spirit shatters. Just as high moral values do not provide soldiers with reason to fight, regimental values likewise fall away. Cultural focus narrows to the small group within which each soldier finds himself while under fire. Survivors and replacements have little in common; it is often left to officers to construct cultural cohesion on the spot.

The Falklands War example also reveals that the regimental system, far from being primarily concerned with promoting group cohesion and morale, is mainly concerned with its own survival as a corporate entity. Minorities, such as a relatively small number of veterans, who show themselves as separate from the main cultural identity, can swiftly find themselves marginalised.

The regimental system does not apply only to regiments; as a form of military culture, it is highly adaptable to smaller units. Just as regiments identify themselves as distinct through minor differences, battalions, companies, platoons can also distinguish themselves through variations on the same symbols. The key ingredients are solidarity through pride and belief in the group's fighting abilities.

The regimental system, while reinforcing the chain of command, paradoxically relaxes this hierarchy into a paternalistic structure. Regimental messes allow an opportunity for informal communication across the ranks that might be considered inappropriate within the formal structure.

A central irony of the regimental system is that a regiment bases its values on its battle histories with its honours to the regiment and to individual medal winners; yet the system itself functions best during constabulary duties for far-flung empires²¹⁵, where the greatest threat to a soldier was long periods of boredom.

Taking all these features together allows a sense of a regimental system, but there is no universal definition. These features also underline key influences on the regimental system, such as the army's parent culture; the effects of professionalism; and the operational demands placed on the army.

²¹⁵Hanson, intro

Section II: New Zealand's Way of War

Introduction

While cultural anthropology has proved a useful tool in defining a regimental system, there is one fundamental assumption that must be redressed in this study. It has been developed as a tool to study and compare primitive cultures with our own. As such, it is based on the assumption that all cultures function in a similar way, differing only in finding different answers to the same questions: how to find food and shelter; how to raise children; treatment of the sick and elderly; how to transmit information; disposal of the dead; allocation of tasks and roles.

Most countries' military forces are fed, clothed, sheltered and cared-for within that country's infrastructure:

Servicemen and women are set apart from the rest of society, governed by different rules, having volunteered away many of their basic rights as citizens. They are expected to do their duty and serve without considering their own interests. They are told that their superiors will look after them (take care of their families, make decisions about their careers, comprehensively decide what is best for them). Thus free of the normal worries of civilian life, service personnel are able to devote themselves wholeheartedly to their military duties.²¹⁶

With these cultural questions answered, a military culture can concentrate on questions specifically directed towards the conduct of operations.

Just as a civilian community forms different answers to basic human requirements, depending on what's available in its own unique geography, climate and history, so too does a military community work within its own set of strengths and restrictions. These factors collectively make up a background that is most easily studied as a country's way of war.

What is a Way of War?

National ways of warfare have received a lot of study. Liddell Hart puts forward

²¹⁶McManners, p. 98

the idea that "[t]he historic British practice was based, above all, on mobility and surprise – apt to Britain's natural conditions and aptly used to enhance her natural strength while opposing her opponent's weaknesses."²¹⁷

From this description, Liddell Hart saw Britain's main focus over three centuries was competition with countries on the European continent. Other countries use their relative strengths in industry and technology (the United States); high population (China); and high levels of military training (Germany).²¹⁸ A way of warfare consists of several factors: social; economic; political and cultural, that all influence a country's military resources and, through these, its military culture.

Therefore, it not unreasonable to conclude that there is a way of war that is unique to New Zealand. Many features of New Zealand's regimental system are directly inherited components from three cultural sources: the Maori; the British and the ANZAC experience. Additionally, the policies of successive New Zealand governments have determined the resources and direction of the New Zealand Army. While it is easy to see how policy can affect military culture, the true relationship is a two-way one.

The aim of this section is to explore how New Zealand's military cultural history and government policies have combined to shape the New Zealand regimental system.

Historical Influences on New Zealand's Way of War

There are three major cultural components which have exerted an historical influence on New Zealand's way of war. The first was inherited from the British; the second from the Maori and the third is the ANZAC legacy of New Zealand troops fighting overseas. Any understanding of New Zealand's way of war would be incomplete without a study of these three components and how each has contributed

²¹⁷ Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *The British Way in Warfare: Adaptability and Mobility*, New Edition, Authorized facsimile of original, Published on demand by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan USA, Great Britain: Penguin Books Ltd., 1942, p. v

²¹⁸ Glyn Harper, 'A New Zealand Way of War and a New Zealand Style of Command?', in Harper and Hayward, eds., p. 29

towards the way New Zealanders conduct operations today.

The Western Way of War

John Keegan theorises that western countries have inherited a western way of warfare from the ancient Greeks.²¹⁹ This western way of warfare centres on the concept of decisive battle with its “notification of intent, mutual acknowledgment of the upcoming collision of forces, and obedience to the decision of the battlefield dead.”²²⁰

Previously, “primitive warfare... involved a great deal of skirmishing and posturing but little spilling of blood.”²²¹ “[T]he Greek manner of battle was ... a deliberate attempt to harness, to modulate, and hence to amplify if not sanctify the wild human desire for violence through the stark order and discipline of the phalanx.”²²² The point of battle was to limit war to “a *brief* nightmare that the hoplite might face only once a summer” (original emphasis)²²³ and to spare their communities and farmland from enemy armies.²²⁴

Courage and strength in close-ranged pitched battle were the defining qualities of ancient Greek hoplites²²⁵, archery being particularly despised as cowardly. Diomedes in the *Iliad*, shot by Paris, scornfully tells him: “this is the blank weapon of a useless man, no fighter.”²²⁶

Greek warfare was both instrumental, a means of furthering state policy; and as existential, a test for the vitality of a society and a personal test for the warrior that

²¹⁹ John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*, London: Random House (UK) Ltd., 1993, p. 391

²²⁰ Hanson, p. 227

²²¹ Harper, p. 28

²²² Hanson, p. 16

²²³ Hanson, p. 25

²²⁴ Hanson, pp. 30-31

²²⁵ Hanson, p. 14

²²⁶ Homer, *The Iliad of Homer*, Translated with an Introduction by Richmond Lattimore, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951, 11.390

allows him to know himself better.²²⁷ “[T]he existential experience of war is found in every culture.”²²⁸ War “has offered... an existential experience found in no other walk of life. For war generates those supreme moments of danger and intensity of emotion that enliven the spirit... It teaches us a great deal about ourselves. We may fail the test and be paralyzed by fear, or we may rise above it and find in ourselves hidden depths and inner reserves of strength.”²²⁹

The ancient warrior also identified himself through his enemy: “war is existential because it involves... the ambiguous relationship between the warrior and the adversary. This intersubjective realm is ambiguous because the enemy is to be killed but not dishonoured.”²³⁰ “To be defeated is no disgrace. But to be humiliated is to be defeated by an enemy whose deed can never be celebrated in poetry.”²³¹ This legacy of Greek warfare goes some way towards explaining the frustration that paralysed the United States land army when the North Vietnamese army refused to be drawn into a “Western-style shootout”.²³²

Several features of the ancient Greek style of war have survived to the present day: the discipline and cohesion of the modern regimental system owes much to the Greek hoplite's desire to protect and gain respect from comrades who were also family and friends in civilian life²³³; the Western attempt to confine war to decisive battles; and to separate warfare from the parent community. The West has also inherited “romanticism and glory... in the struggle against vastly superior numbers”²³⁴ and the celebratory style of recounting battles and the deeds of the participants.

Because New Zealand is predominantly a Western culture, its army often working

²²⁷ Christopher Coker, *Waging War Without Warriors? The Changing Culture of Military Conflict*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2002, p. 21

²²⁸ Coker, p. 29

²²⁹ Coker, p. 30

²³⁰ Coker, p. 31

²³¹ Coker, p. 38

²³² Hanson, p. 11

²³³ Hanson, pp. 30-31

²³⁴ Hanson, p. 15

in concert with other Western culture, the evolving nature of the Western way of war deserves some examination for its effects on New Zealand's regimental system.

"Soldiers are not as other men... War... must be fought by those of a world apart, a very ancient world, which exists in parallel with the everyday world but does not belong to it... Ultimately, however, there is only one warrior culture."²³⁵ Keegan's comments highlight some interesting points.

Firstly, as supposed at the beginning of this section, using the tools developed to study civilian culture must carry with it the caveat that the aims of military culture are not those of the civilian. When a soldier enlists and brings into the regimental system a set of civilian values, there is a lag time between that 'snapshot' of civilian culture and the point at which the soldier has advanced far enough within the organisation to express these values. This explains why "the warrior world adapts in step to the civilian... [but] at a distance."²³⁶

Reform of any regimental system is a long-term process that will only show its full effects after a generation. This explains the British Army's slow progress in adapting the Cardwell-Childer's reforms

Secondly, the existence of a single warrior culture means that soldiers of different countries would have more in common with each other than with civilian nationals of their own respective countries. To some extent this is true. Identification with adversaries in the Western tradition appears to bear this out.

However, the Western military tradition is changing. Shaw writes that present Western attitude is that "if averting risk to military personnel means increasing the risk of civilians being killed or harmed, then that unfortunately is a price civilians must pay." That attitude, a complete turnabout from the way ancient Greeks regarded battle, is only possible when the risk to one's own society has become negligible.

Because battle is a distant phenomenon for most Westerners, expectation of death

²³⁵Keegan, p. xvi

²³⁶Keegan, p. xvi

during military service has faded. Survival and victory are expected outcomes. As armies compete for volunteers on a close footing with civilian employment opportunities, they have had to present many of the same attractions, including employee health and safety. Thus western warfare is focusing further from the area of risk.

Although Western literature still tends to celebrate the idea of battle, the reality is no longer as straightforward as it was in ancient Greece and in medieval Europe. Because the distance of time tends to smooth history into simplistic lines, battle may have always been as complicated as we are coming to realise in modern times. Even today's veteran soldiers prefer to remember the camaraderie of serving rather than the stress of actual combat.

As the idea of decisive battle recedes further into the past, it is becoming more apparent that it was never more than a construct, a shared Western dream "that war can be a precise, clinical, spatially and temporally discrete affair without fundamental ramifications for society and politics."²³⁷ Assumptions about battle and war are constantly being undermined. The fundamental assumption, that war is divided into campaigns and dependent on victory in battle, has to be seriously questioned if the West is to adapt to the 'new' face of warfare.

The ramification for the regimental system is that their celebration of battle, with their mythology, traditions and symbols, has become disproportionate to the actual demands that military personnel face in the field. This means that Western countries, including New Zealand, will come under increasing pressures to find sources of regimental ethos outside the traditional focus on battle. This will be made more difficult as civilian media culture continues to celebrate conflict.

Maori Cultural Influence

Maori culture is a strong feature of modern New Zealand culture as a whole. Maori is an official language of New Zealand. Television news anchors greet their audiences with "Kia ora. Good evening." Maori food, such as kumara and puha, can

²³⁷Shaw, p. 2

be bought in season at supermarkets, although only the truly adventurous will sample fermented corn or kina (sea urchin). The New Zealand national anthem includes Maori lyrics and most New Zealanders will recognise the tune and lyrics of 'Pokarekareana'. The New Zealand All Blacks rugby team is known worldwide for the stirring haka they perform before matches.

Maori have made valuable contributions to New Zealand's military culture. This topic could form a study in its own right but, in the interests of brevity and balance, this thesis will only include a brief overview of major contributions.

The first aspect of Maori culture to examine is the relative importance placed on individuality and *communitas* (community spirit). One aspect of a regimental system is its focus on promoting community spirit amongst recruits raised to place a high value on individuality. Therefore, the proportion of individuality and *communitas* in Maori culture influences how important this promotion of community spirit is within the New Zealand Army.

There is little doubt that Maori have a greater community focus than Europeans. Traditional *marae* and *pa* were built for communal living. The *whanau* (family) is a much more extended structure than the Western nuclear family, with cousins, aunts and uncles assuming nearly fraternal or parental roles, respectively. If we consider the focus on individuality as a Western trait and *communitas* as an Eastern one, how far along the spectrum does Maori culture lie?

Death myths are particularly revealing in answering this question. Descriptions of an afterlife mirror societal structures and the destiny of the dead reveals how much value is placed on individualism. In the western tradition, death is personified into a distinct deity who acts as the Supreme Judge in determining a spirit's place in the afterlife. Each person faces that judgment as an individual.

Since anthropologists define myths as stories that embody the values important to a culture, folklore should provide clues to cultural values. A study of death myths across various cultures reveals an interesting pattern. Western tradition favours a definite personification of death: death gods and goddesses judge the souls of the dead in a kingdom mirroring the structure of the living society that believes in

them.²³⁸ These observations reflect a Western value of individualism, their legendary heroes performing great deeds and earning a deserved reward in the afterlife.²³⁹ Human beings have always died. How they lived determines the afterlife they gain for themselves.

In contrast, the Eastern tradition does not focus on a death deity but on the origin of human death. This postulates a distant time when human beings were immortal. It suggests that such cultures regarded their ancestors, not as individuals, but as an immortal community.

Eastern cultures value the community over the individual. Individual death is not commemorated; focus is diverted to the reaffirmation of the community. This attitude suggests "an historical perception of the survival of communities: individual death would be unnoticed by an ancient people [looking back at] the lifetimes of their ancestors."²⁴⁰ A myth explaining individual death reconciles the perception of ancient communal immortality with the observation of individual death.²⁴¹ There is no judgment after death. This tradition postulates a common destiny for the dead, without reward or punishment.²⁴²

The fascinating aspect of Maori death myths is that they combine elements of both. Hine-nui-te-Po is the Maori death goddess who is also the ancestral mother of all human beings. She awaits to welcome her children after life. However, she was inactive until the Maori hero, Maui-tikitiki-a-Taranga, attempted and failed to conquer her, becoming the first human to die. This myth encompasses a death deity in the Western tradition, and an Eastern-style explanation for individual death. Maori tradition also postulates a common destiny for the dead, the spiritual home of Hawaiki, and details a long journey from Cape Reinga. There is no Western-style

²³⁸Carol Phillips, *Faces of Death: A Study of Death Deities*, An Assignment Written as part of the Requirements for Paper 176318 Sociology of Death and Dying, Massey University School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, 2003, unpublished, p. 36

²³⁹Phillips, p. 37

²⁴⁰Phillips, p. 38

²⁴¹Phillips, p. 38

²⁴²Phillips, p. 37

judgment of the dead.

From this we can conclude that Maori culture placed some value on individualism, but were more aware of the value of community. Because Maori culture already focuses strongly on community values, they had less need for the construction of an artificial community for the purposes of unit cohesion: a formalised regimental system. The symbols, myths and traditions of British regiments are intended to bind individuals from divergent lifestyles into a corporate identity. These features, not as necessary to people who are already community-focused, can be embraced with rather more enthusiasm than by those of more individualist cultures:

The fact that became clear was that the Maori was, and is, a natural warrior. They were "happy in the service", taking joy from a smart turnout, filling in the dull hours of sea transport by arms drill set to the music of an old gramophone in waltz time.²⁴³

The second feature of Maori culture is the effect of tribal structure. European immigrants treated Maori as one race, but Maori saw themselves as people of different tribes. "The expression, 'tangata maori'... meant simply 'ordinary person'."²⁴⁴ Unfortunately, present day New Zealanders can only gain glimpses of pre-contact Maori life, as European contact altered cultural expectations. But tribal affiliation remains a strong feature of Maori culture.

The famous 28th (Maori) Battalion took advantage of Maori tribal ties, in the same way that British regiments attempted to do by regional recruiting:

Originally the [28th] battalion was put together on a basis that was partly tribal. A Company was Ngapuhi, B Company Arawa, C Company Ngati Porou, D Company other tribes and Headquarters a mixture. This promoted the sharpest rivalry – but not too much must be made of it. There was no "blood feud" complex between the tribes.²⁴⁵

In this way, the Maori reacted to a regimental system in a similar fashion to the

²⁴³Mentiplay, p. 57

²⁴⁴King, p. 22

²⁴⁵Mentiplay, p. 57

Gurkha.²⁴⁶

A third, and possibly most important, Maori contribution to the New Zealand way of war lies in the existential facet of Maori warfare.

Maori had a more complex way of war than the Western tradition. War was less focused on the decisive, disciplined battle but could involve raids, ambushes, haka (ritual display) or makatu (curses) as means of settling inter-tribal differences.²⁴⁷ Wars could reach through several generations in a cycle of revenge and retaliation,²⁴⁸ and might be ended by a non-violent encounter.²⁴⁹ War was highly ritualised, good fortune in battle considered to be dependent on the accurate interpretation of omens²⁵⁰ and the exact completion of complicated rites²⁵¹, all presided over by the tohunga (expert or priest):

The main objects of such rites, &c., were the averting and prevention of disaster on the battlefield, and the placing of the tapu on the warriors and their weapons, i.e., the dedication of the warriors to Tū, the supreme god of war.²⁵²

For Maori, war was never simplified to protect communities. "When a war party starts out in quest of blood vengeance, the first person met by them is slain, although possibly a relative. To spare that person would be an evil omen for the party."²⁵³

As Maori did not follow the Western way of war, Europeans were quick to dismiss Maori as overly superstitious and foolish, quick to take offence and war-loving. Best describes meeting an old man who "had retained the caution and suspicion necessary to retain life in pre-Pākehā times", whose behaviour while traveling on "along a bush

²⁴⁶Richardson, p. 17

²⁴⁷Best, pp. 225-234 (the pa); pp. 184-185 (the attack); p. 262 (ritual revenge); p. 175 (war dances)

²⁴⁸Best, p. 153

²⁴⁹Best, p. 87; see also p. 262

²⁵⁰Best, pp. 20-36

²⁵¹Best, pp. 164-174

²⁵²Best, p. 164

²⁵³Best, p. 20

tract was instructive and amusing withal.”²⁵⁴

However, as mentioned earlier, “the existential experience of war is found in every culture”²⁵⁵ and Maori are no exception in displaying an existential warrior ideal. They fought at close quarters, their only long-range missile weapon being “a rough spear thrown by hand... or by means of a whip.”²⁵⁶ Best discounts any idea of Maori using bows, even for hunting, as these would unduly frighten birds.²⁵⁷ Maori agreed with the British that a great warrior was necessarily of good family.²⁵⁸ Toa (warriors) enjoyed testing themselves against worthy opponents: “even a general hand-to-hand engagement was... a series of single combats... each warrior selecting an adversary and engaging him with spear, club or battle-axe.”²⁵⁹ These observations point towards Maori having a strong warrior ideal.

This existential dimension of Maori warfare during the New Zealand wars can be found in accounts of gallantry between adversaries. At the battle of Gate Pa, 29 April 1864, the British “attack was bloodily repulsed... During the night, a number of defenders left the pa to tender aid and water to the British wounded.”²⁶⁰ Although Maori often removed their dead from the battlefield, there are still sites in New Zealand where Maori and Pakeha (European) are buried together.²⁶¹

The wars were prevented from being inter-racial by the presence of Maori on both sides.²⁶² Throughout the New Zealand wars, Maori from one tribe might aid British and colonial forces against another Maori tribe and, in the case of the Northern War,

²⁵⁴Best, p. 8

²⁵⁵Coker, p. 29

²⁵⁶Best, p. 136

²⁵⁷Best, p. 137

²⁵⁸Best, p. 152

²⁵⁹Best, p. 148

²⁶⁰Taylor, *Tribe of the War God*, p. 24

²⁶¹Nigel Prickett, *Landscapes of Conflict: A Field Guide to the New Zealand Wars*, Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2002, p. xxiv

²⁶²King, p. 16

the British were aided by one faction of the Ngapuhi tribe against another.²⁶³

However, their tribal affiliations also prevented coordinated action against colonial settlement: Maori bore “a great resemblance to certain divisions of the Celtic race in their ceaseless inter-tribal wars and utter incapacity to form themselves into a united nation”²⁶⁴

There was also a growing respect for the way that Maori had adapted to the rugged New Zealand landscape:

Born and raised in a land of dense forests, swamps, and fern-clad plains and hills, the natives are accustomed from their childhood to roaming the waste places of the earth, and finding their way across country in any direction. Skilled in forest lore are they, and keen to note the trend of range and spur and creek. Masters of woodcraft are they.²⁶⁵

These factors made an impression, particularly on British soldiers, who, unlike the colonials, were not in direct competition with Maori for land. Those with Scottish and Irish roots, could sympathise with various Maori tribes resorting to war to protect their lands from alienation:

In the [New Zealand] wars of the 1860s militia and volunteers swelled the numbers available to three thousand, but between them and the regulars feeling was always strained.... There must have been occasional Highlanders who remembered how their own people had been dispossessed to make room for sheep, like the Maoris now.²⁶⁶

In this sense, the New Zealand wars were an important means of cross-cultural communication and demonstrate how the existential facet of war can create respect between adversaries.

19th Century Maori have left a legacy of myths (used here in the anthropological sense) that focus on the character of the existential Maori warrior. The Maori is a

²⁶³ Richard Taylor, 'The Northern War 1845-46', Lecture, Massey University, 15 August 2001

²⁶⁴ Best, p. 151

²⁶⁵ Best, p. 121

²⁶⁶ V.G. Kiernan, *Colonial Empires and Armies 1815-1960*, 2nd Edition, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998, p. 106

'natural' warrior, courageous and clever, cautious and adaptive to adverse conditions. "Maoris were a warrior race for whom bravery in battle was the supreme virtue."²⁶⁷ "Maori had been tough, talented and chivalrous opponents who had been enormously respected by the professional British soldiers."²⁶⁸

Maori adapted well to New Zealand's British-based military structure and responded well to a regimental system. Writers have often attributed this adaptability to the myth of the Maori as a 'natural warrior'. However, a significant part of their adaptation to a regimental system was due to the greater emphasis on the tribal community within Maori culture.

While Maori had the cultural background to adapt to the European-style regimental system, their contribution to New Zealand's military culture was restricted. The Maori military culture continued to evolve separately from the settler one. Maori served in separate special units in World War I And World War II, and were officially excluded from the Boer War altogether. There was a parallel development of Maori awareness, not only of a group identity separate from the European, but also of a new military culture, that still retained features of pre-contact times.

British Cultural Influence

The British cultural influence is more difficult to extract from New Zealand culture as a whole. The process of European colonisation introduced many of New Zealand's cultural institutions and the British connection was maintained well into the 20th Century: "For much of its history, New Zealand's sense of national identity was inextricably linked to that of the United Kingdom... Most New Zealanders proudly considered themselves 'British' subjects"²⁶⁹.

Certainly, New Zealand's present military structure is Western; the New Zealand

²⁶⁷Kiernan, p. 104

²⁶⁸Gordon McLauchlan, *A Short History of New Zealand*, Auckland: Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd., 2004, p. 73

²⁶⁹Capie and McGhie, in Liu et al., p. 232

Army's hierarchy, organisation and symbols are almost entirely taken from the British model²⁷⁰. Although the "origins of the New Zealand Army's modern infantry units are to be found in the various voluntary corps of military settlers raised for service in the New Zealand Wars and in the militia units raised under the provisions of the Militia Ordinance 1845",²⁷¹ the various arms and services trace historical links to their respective counterparts in the British Army.²⁷²

However, when New Zealand and Britain met as allies in the world wars, soldiers in both armies soon realised there were differences between their military cultures. British soldiers saw New Zealanders as astoundingly informal, risking the maintenance of discipline; New Zealanders saw the British as being overly-concerned with ceremony, at the expense of the practical.²⁷³ What is interesting about these observations is that both sides saw the other's approach as foolish and militarily inefficient.

So what caused New Zealand military culture to diverge from the British? One important reason is that the regimental system that Cardwell and Childers created was never experienced in New Zealand:

The British Government implemented its Self Reliant Policy in 1865, and the following year began withdrawing its Regiments from New Zealand. Most of the Imperial troops had left New Zealand by 1867, with the very last departing in January 1870.²⁷⁴

However, the first of Cardwell's reforms, the 1870 Enlistment Act,²⁷⁵ was passed that same year. Therefore, the regimental system practised by various British regiments stationed in New Zealand was not the formalised construct that the Cardwell-Childers reforms introduced into the British Army.

²⁷⁰Section III will discuss this further

²⁷¹*Why?* Chapter 1, Section 7, para. 1255

²⁷²For example: "The history of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery is linked to the Royal Artillery of the British Army." *Why?* Chapter 1 Section 3, para. 2101

²⁷³Harper, p. 33

²⁷⁴Richard Taylor, *Tribe of the War God: Ngati Tumatauenga*, Napier, New Zealand: Heritage New Zealand, 1996, p. 27

One of the features of the old system was the gentlemanly amateurism in the British officer. This is not to say that they were not professional, but points out that these regiments had not yet incorporated professionalism as a cultural tenet. Certainly, cultural amateurism was easily transferred; when New Zealanders “have taken up arms as a nation, it has been in a spirit of amateurism, within the 'civilian into soldier' tradition.”²⁷⁶ This amateurism has been costly in blood in times of crisis²⁷⁷.

However, there was far greater cohesion in the New Zealand Army than in the pre-Cardwell British Army. This was due to two major factors.

Firstly, New Zealand had not developed the same class stratification as Britain. While Edward Gibbon Wakefield had inspired British emigration with the dream that “a flourishing little Albion would be established in the South Pacific”²⁷⁸, few of Britain's gentry were inspired enough to emigrate themselves: the “upper ranks of [New Zealand settler] society were a kind of supercharged middle class, not a nobility of the British kind”.²⁷⁹ The “British concept of the leisured wealthy” was a role New Zealand settlers played after work²⁸⁰. This meant several available socially-acceptable occupations for the sons of New Zealand's elite; unlike their British counterparts, they experienced no especial financial encouragement towards careers in the Army.

Likewise, a settler colony could not produce the same levels of urban unemployed that formed the majority of the British Army's enlisted men. New Zealand lacked the two extremes of British social class that characterised their line infantry.

Secondly, the settlers themselves had discovered a new independence from the

²⁷⁵Weston, p. 142

²⁷⁶King, p. 16

²⁷⁷King, p. 16

²⁷⁸McLauchlan, p. 85

²⁷⁹Matthew Wright, *Reed Illustrated History of New Zealand*, Auckland: Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd., 2004, p. 109

²⁸⁰Wright, p. 108

constraints of Victorian society:

the early settler was in an environment which was both a physical challenge and a threat. He had come from a rigid settled society where expectations were very much determined from birth. The New Zealand environment offered no such set of determined expectations, a man could become his own master and there was a premium on labour.²⁸¹

The Imperial Army were an uncomfortable reminder of the society and former status that the settlers had left behind, "particularly the arrogance and haughtiness of the officers"²⁸². The settlers wanted a more egalitarian structure, even to the point of democratically electing their own officers.²⁸³ The 1858 Defence Act "attempted to resolve the problem of raising a reliable local defence force by providing for the establishment of volunteer corps and a militia force. Those who enrolled in a volunteer corps undertook a greater military responsibility in an emergency, but their right to choose their own officers and adopt some minor points of procedure was conceded."²⁸⁴

Thirdly, the terrain itself revealed differences in tactical approach:

the settlers went for more mobile decentralised formations which utilised the bushranging skills, which many of them as small farmers had. They adopted the tactics of the mobile patrol, continually harassing the enemy, destroying his crops and communications. To do this they were prepared to operate in the bush for long periods day and night. By contrast the Imperial regiments did not like night operations or following the enemy through the bush. Their troops were less specialised, trained for large set piece battles on open plains.²⁸⁵

Against this background, it is easy to see why British soldiers tended towards greater admiration of the Maori, as ally and adversary, who had a more developed

²⁸¹K.C. Hooper, *The Rise of New Zealand's Military Tradition: The Wellington West Coast and Taranaki Regiment (5 Battalion RNZIR) 1855-1964*, A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. In History in Massey University, Palmerston North: Massey University, 1979, p. 1

²⁸²Hooper, p. 2

²⁸³Hooper, p. iv

²⁸⁴Hooper, p. 15

²⁸⁵Hooper, p. 3

military culture than the struggling nascent one the settlers were attempting to form, in direct opposition to the British model.

The settler culture had a strong direct effect on the character of the territorial forces. This was exacerbated by the election of officers, who “were invariably local politicians or prominent citizens much involved in local issues, factors which caused divisions within the ranks.”²⁸⁶ While local recruiting under the threat of Maori attack provided cohesion through local relationships and common interest, “in prolonged periods of peace they proved quarrelsome little bands, especially subject to local social and political rivalries.”²⁸⁷

While settler units vigorously rejected some aspects of the British regimental system, they embraced others: “in the long period of peace until World War I, the local units tended to either disintegrate or become semi-social clubs, in an era devoted to bright uniforms, town parades, and garrison balls.”²⁸⁸

With a parent culture that “exulted a hard day's work”²⁸⁹ and none of the social pressures that produced the enormous social gap in the British Army, it's little wonder that the New Zealand Army is more egalitarian in nature than its British counterpart.²⁹⁰ Even after the departure of British troops had removed the source of rivalry between colonial and Imperial units, egalitarianism remained a feature of the New Zealand Army and does so today.

This egalitarianism was an established feature by the time of World War I, although the reasons for it appear to have been forgotten: “New Zealand soldiers treated their officers with respect but still regarded them as equals... [and] could not understand the deference with British Other Ranks showed to their officers.”²⁹¹

²⁸⁶Hooper, p. 7

²⁸⁷Hooper, p. 7

²⁸⁸Hooper, p. 3

²⁸⁹Wright, p. 108

²⁹⁰Lt-Gnl J. Mataparae, Personal Communication, 17 October 2006

²⁹¹Harper, p. 34

Britain's direct cultural influence on the New Zealand Army was as an example. The settler culture, incompatible to an identical structure, saw British Imperial troops as a combination of factors to be rejected or accepted. This closeness of civilian and military culture within the New Zealand colonial troops meant that local political concerns influenced the beginning of New Zealand's military culture.

However, the British example appears to have passed on the idea of a regimental system. Indirectly, New Zealand has relied on Britain's regimental boards on such matters as the granting of battle honours after the World Wars; and some New Zealand regiments recognise British sister regiments.

The ANZAC Tradition

For the Australians, Canadians and New Zealanders the Boer War marked the birth of their military reputation, the courage and initiative of the mounted riflemen marking them out from their British counterparts. The reported exploits of the contingents in South Africa saw a resurgence of volunteering enthusiasm in each country, and a belief by the public that the part-time militias and volunteers had proved they could respond effectively when the Empire needed them.²⁹²

Thus the ANZAC soldier entered World War I under an established cultural myth. The values were the 'citizen-into-soldier' tradition and mirrored an outdoor, hard-working ethic suitable for bush clearing and establishing colonies. In fact, these qualities were the ones Britain specifically valued in its colonial troops and were the same as those of the rural recruit of the 1800s. Thus the ANZAC soldier had strong similarities to a British example that allowed him to be incorporated into the British cultural consciousness.

At the beginning, there was a British awareness that the New Zealand soldier was different from his Australian counterpart:

The New Zealander is much more like the Englishman... more appreciative of appearances, he has a neater uniform, more brass and colour and cut about it – and less a child of nature than the Australian and more given to showing his respect for authority viz saluting. Therefore it is the custom of the British to contrast the New Zealanders' discipline and

²⁹²Pugsley, p. 49

appearance to ours – and he honestly prefers him [the New Zealander] and no doubt believes he is right.²⁹³

Even so, the outbreak of World War I to coincide with New Zealanders' growing awareness of national identity: "While there was a desire to retain umbilical links with Britain, there was an even stronger one to establish parallel traditions which New Zealanders could be proud to uphold in their own right."²⁹⁴ While New Zealanders responded to both world wars with support of Britain, the ANZAC experience has left a lasting cultural impact.

"We are a nation that knows how to weep over our dead"²⁹⁵, a trait that separates the New Zealand and the Australian ANZAC traditions.

In New Zealand... the focus has always been on the cost of war and the names of the dead on the memorial; the parade has always been secondary to this. New Zealand memorials rarely list all those who went to war; they list the dead, and through the dead they illustrate the impact that war has had on New Zealand.²⁹⁶

Further, "the actions on which [New Zealanders] have dwelt most consideredly in retrospect – Gallipoli, Crete, Cassino – were not even victories"²⁹⁷ 'New Zealanders have experienced military successes; but they have not boasted about them.'²⁹⁸

Australia also inherited the ANZAC tradition, but regards it in a different fashion than New Zealand:

In Australia the word 'Anzac' is used solely in national terms as a synonym for 'Australian'. Australians see themselves as 'Anzacs', and the spirit of Anzac as the national spirit of Australia unique to Australians alone. It represents everything that the Australians believe about themselves and their country. It is the spirit of aggressive self-confidence

²⁹³ Pugsley, p. 31, quoting his own book, *On the Fringe of Hell*, p. 65

²⁹⁴ King, p. 15

²⁹⁵ Chaplain Wayne Toleafoa, RNZN, Wellington Cathedral Remembrance Sunday Sermon, 12 November 2006

²⁹⁶ Pugsley, p. 35

²⁹⁷ King, p. 14

²⁹⁸ King, p. 14

that New Zealanders never had.²⁹⁹

So why should New Zealanders have inherited a so more dismal cultural legacy than Australians, their partners in ANZAC?

Firstly, the "New Zealand Military Service Act of 1916 had instituted a system of conscription that came into effect once insufficient volunteers were available to meet the intake quota."³⁰⁰ Australia resisted conscription³⁰¹ throughout the Great War; consequently, service for an Australian was a greater personal sacrifice:

Totally dependent on volunteers, who were no longer coming forward to fill the ranks, the Australian Corps was committed to hard fighting with under-strength units, with no prospect of reinforcements to sustain them. This meant that when an Australian soldier was wounded he faced being returned to the line after convalescence, when his wound and service record should have seen him returned to Australia.³⁰²

The Australian ANZAC, having chosen to go to war, developed that 'spirit of aggressive self-confidence' in reaction to pressures to fight harder and for longer.

By comparison, "New Zealand maintained very efficient recruitment, training and reinforcement procedures."³⁰³ The burden of participation was lighter for the New Zealand ANZAC soldier, but the choice to serve was absent from 1916.

New Zealand's "casualty rate in proportion to population was the highest in the Empire."³⁰⁴ "In all, 124,000 men were mobilised in New Zealand during the War and 100,444 troops served overseas. Of these, 16,697 died and 41,317 were wounded – an appalling 58% casualty rate."³⁰⁵ This national cost, bringing New Zealand a sense of disillusionment of war, was the result of several factors.

²⁹⁹Pugsley, p. 20

³⁰⁰Pugsley, 'The Second New Zealand Division 1945' in John Crawford, ed., *Kia Kaha: New Zealand in the Second World War*, Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 96

³⁰¹Pugsley, p. 32

³⁰²Pugsley, p. 69

³⁰³Taylor, *Tribe of the War God*, p. 58

³⁰⁴King, p. 160

³⁰⁵Taylor, *Tribe of the War God*, p. 58

Taylor notes that New Zealand's "willingness to send men overseas, together with our ability to provide reinforcements, might be seen to have contributed to our high casualty rate."³⁰⁶ Certainly, there was "resentment... when it was found in 1917 that New Zealand was being asked to send a larger percentage of reinforcements than Australia...[and] anger... that New Zealand was being penalised because of the efficiency of its reinforcement administration."³⁰⁷

In addition to raising a greater proportion of its population, New Zealand's casualty rate can also be attributed to basic inexperience during the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915:

At the start of a war, there is inexperience at every level. Mistakes are being made all the time. Well-trained troops will push on, despite confusion and error, using their experience and common sense to minimize the effects of these mistakes.³⁰⁸

For New Zealand, the lesson was particularly bitter:

Anzac as a place and an experience caused a bitter sense of failure and an awareness of the enormous cost of poor planning and faulty administration. It saw the emergence of a high degree of professionalism in both forces that continues to be a defining characteristic to this day.³⁰⁹

It also showed an emerging awareness that, in matters of strategy, New Zealand's interests were subordinate to those of major powers.³¹⁰ This damaged the cultural belief "that people descended from British stock were a special race who exemplified particularly admirable virtues... [and] the conviction that the Empire would never put a foot wrong in foreign affairs."³¹¹

In fact, a mythology of the British as distant and uncaring planners, "the habit of the British High Command to move New Zealand and Australian troops without

³⁰⁶Taylor, *Tribe of the War God*, p. 58

³⁰⁷Pugsley, p. 68

³⁰⁸McManners, p. 230

³⁰⁹Pugsley, p. 27

³¹⁰Pugsley, p. 310

question into dangerous situations”³¹², has grown around the events at Gallipoli. Pugsley offers the example of Lieutenant-General Stopford's failure with IX Corps at Suvla in August 1915:

In a demonstration of the power of the media and of film in particular to create a mythology, the blame for failure at Anzac has shifted to IX Corps, whose objective was always 'incidental' to that of the ANZAC Corps.³¹³

In effect, New Zealand fell out of love with Britain: “[n]ever again would we go to war with such innocence and enthusiasm”³¹⁴, and entered the Second World War “determined to retain its national identity in allied policy making”³¹⁵, “more conscious of national concerns, and... prepared to question Britain's judgements.”³¹⁶ As importantly, “participation in international conflict was seen as part of the national growing-up process; as part of the transition from nursling colony to contributing partner.”³¹⁷

New Zealand's present regimental system does not follow the traditional British model. The military units set up by colonial settlers consisted of volunteers, motivated by the desire to protect their communities and inspired by adventurous tales of such famous units as Von Tempsky's Forest Rangers. In this, they apparently mirrored the conditions that Cardwell had attempted to re-establish in Britain: these young men had a genuine interest in protecting their communities; their units were sufficiently small to prevent a large gulf between officers and soldiers; and their structure drew upon the community bonds fostered in civilian life. However, community bonds, as shown in Taranaki, have the potential to bring civilian disputes into the regiment.

³¹¹King, p. 100

³¹²Mentiplay, p. 40

³¹³Pugsley, p. 85

³¹⁴Taylor, *Tribe of the War God*, p. 58

³¹⁵King, p. 162

³¹⁶Pugsley, p. 309

³¹⁷King, p. 15

In addition, Maori military culture was separate from the settler one: the New Zealand Army began with two regimental systems that evolved separately but converged with common experiences in overseas war.

However, these cultural trends, although they explain some character traits of the New Zealand Army, are not the main factors defining New Zealand's regimental system today.

Modern Restrictions on New Zealand's Way of War

The idea of a way of war is a relatively modern one, and usually ignores the historical aspects that have just been examined in favour of the effects of available resources. For example, Hayward makes short assessments of various countries' ways of war in these terms: "immense industrial strength, high levels of technology and a rich and varied human capacity" in the case of the United States.³¹⁸

Applying the same form of assessment to New Zealand tends to underline weaknesses rather than strengths: a small isolated country with a more agrarian than industrial economic base. Such an assessment is worthwhile, as it defines the limitations of New Zealand's strategic ability: finding out what New Zealand cannot do is a definite step in discovering what it can do. Paradoxically, these factors, seemingly weaknesses, also have their advantages.

Limitation 1: Isolation

Hensley identifies New Zealand as being "singularly fortunate"³¹⁹; "Geography has given us a moat of such size as to make us virtually invulnerable to invasion."³²⁰ He concludes New Zealand's defence needs are small. Just as Britain eventually discovered that maintaining a military presence over such a distance could not justify the financial cost, it is assumed that any potential invader would make a similar conclusion under a cost-benefit analysis.

However, that same 'moat' is also a highway for almost all of New Zealand's trade: "We have therefore a lively self-interest in the stability of international order, especially of those regions through which our trade passes."³²¹

The reasons why New Zealand maintains an armed force at all are mainly economic. The size and isolation that form a defensive benefit are a disadvantage to

³¹⁸ Hayward, in Harper and Hayward, p. 29

³¹⁹ Hensley, p. 137

³²⁰ Hensley, p. 136

³²¹ Hensley, p. 137

commerce. Access to foreign markets is heavily reliant on long transport routes and it is these that New Zealand seeks to protect. The most efficient and cost-effective way of doing so, rather than fighting large wars, is to prevent them by promoting regional and global stability. This has the additional effect of granting New Zealand some say in the control of these regions.

Limitation 2: Population Size

Due to its low population, New Zealand cannot provide armed forces of the same scale as most of its allies. As seen earlier, even conscription has only produced a force that must work as a junior partner within alliances of greater partners. Consequently, the New Zealand Army operates under a cultural pressure to conform to other countries' forces and the ways which they operate. Traditionally, New Zealand's major ally was Britain, but after World War II, Britain reduced its force commitments in the Pacific.

The United States seemed a natural ally after World War II, as a country with a significant border on the Pacific, and presumably, with the same interest in promoting stability in the region. But, as a reluctant ally in the ANZUS agreement, there is some doubt that US interests ever coincided with New Zealand and Australia's. It may have been with a sense of relief that New Zealand's nuclear-free policy caused the dispute that broke the ANZUS agreement.

The pressure to conform to the technological standards of the United States' Armed Forces is in keeping with their way of war. Although New Zealand still labours under the expectations of larger countries, as it has done for most of its history, the method by which the New Zealand Army responds to this pressure has remained essentially the same: to produce professional soldiers capable of adapting to circumstances within the field.

A second problem is the New Zealand Army relies on volunteers for recruitment. Like those of many Western countries, the New Zealand Army must train its personnel at all levels: army training can instill in recruits desirable qualities for employment in the civilian market; very few civilian-trained recruits can be recruited

into higher positions in the army without this training. Armies invest a lot of training in each recruit; retention is therefore a higher priority.

This problem brings on the pressure to use all resources, particularly human resources, to best effect. A regimental system, as seen in Section I, is one means of introducing a corporate ethos that can act as a force multiplier. This ethos can help maintain a sense of professional pride when New Zealand soldiers work within the structures of larger partners so that they don't get the demoralising sense of being lost in the system.

International Cultural Contact Point

Warfare is not only a means of asserting one's will over an adversary; it is a form of communication. In battle, the fear of death is replaced by the fear of letting one's comrades down, and the fear of their thinking one a coward. These fears are common to all soldiers, and can lead to professional identification with an adversary. Even when hampered by a language barrier, this can be an effective and convincing way for two sides to reveal their values, their differences, and their professional similarities. As a minor example, British regiments have spread various sports, such as cricket, throughout the British empire.³²²

Again, New Zealand's size and isolation become advantages: where a larger nation's intentions might be mistaken as conquest, a small and distant country cannot hold such territory. Therefore, locals are inclined to accept that New Zealand's presence is motivated by the desire to promote peace.

This has a direct bearing on our military culture. New Zealand personnel have had greater practice as a coalition partner than other nations working in present-day peacekeeping operations. This advantage is another major factor in New Zealanders' reputation as effective peacekeepers:

Principles [Brian Poananga, former New Zealand Chief of General Staff] learned in Malaysia and Borneo have been tested in Papua-New Guinea. Covering the long borders, the New Zealanders hit on the idea of sending

³²²Beckett, p. 77

patrols to key areas. But these were special patrols. "Each had a commander, a radio operator, and young fellows who had been on farms and had an ability to look after pigs, chickens, fencing, water problems. There was always a medic, and we had to have a guitar, for the music-making." The patrols helped the villagers, the information on dissident infiltration improved – and the reaction by New Zealand forces was so much sharper. Brian Poananga remembers that an empathy developed. The villagers tended to fight it when the patrols had to move on – and he learned another lesson : "That we must not develop any area beyond the level of its own ability. We had to be careful not to leave a vacuum when we pulled out."³²³

From these experiences, New Zealanders have learned to listen and to respect the physical and cultural needs of local people. It is not only the multicultural nature of New Zealand's civilian society that has fostered this characteristic of the New Zealand soldier; it is the realisation that the New Zealand Army has always had to work within a greater team.

Limitation 3: Economic Pressures

As the main assumption underlined in New Zealand's White Papers is that New Zealand is under very little threat of direct attack, any armed force has been considered strictly within terms of financial cost. With a low population, no major military industry and geographical isolation, it has been assumed that any invading nation would realise very little gain for the expense of mounting and sustaining an invasion force. It was this factor that prompted Britain's eventual withdrawal of her troops from New Zealand in the late 1860s.

These factors, particularly the low population, also restrict the size of the New Zealand Defence Force. Successive governments have consistently continued the theme of asking how money may be saved in the sustainment of New Zealand's defence. The Resource Management Report of 1988 pursued this theme to an extraordinary degree, identifying several measures to reduce the costs of the New Zealand armed forces of that time.³²⁴ This report not only suggested how New

³²³ Mentiplay, p. 69

³²⁴ Derek Quigley et al., *New Zealand Defence: Resource Management Review 1988*, Wellington, New Zealand: Strategos Consulting Limited, 1988

Zealand might maximise the value gained from defence spending, but also suggested that New Zealand could first assess the minimum credible contribution to be made to international security and then spend as little as possible on the capability to make that contribution. It was a bold, almost reckless, approach, as assessing the minimum contribution that New Zealand's allies would accept would require an accurate analysis of New Zealand's international reputation amongst many allies. Secondly, publishing this suggestion has the effect of 'tipping one's hand', having the contradictory effect of having to raise that minimum contribution just to ward off the reputation-damaging idea that New Zealand is less willing than others.

However, there were safe ways New Zealand could reduce its expenditure while appearing to improve her armed forces. In particular, the report questioned the need for a territorial battalion to support two regular battalions on operations and recommended the sale of land and buildings in urban centres that supported the territorial force. The report envisioned that territorial training would take place at the main training depot at Waiouru. In addition, territorial forces were noted for providing a social atmosphere, rather than military ethos, and fitted in more with New Zealand social and sporting interests than with any interest in military service.³²⁵

Taylor writes that this was an apparent threat to the regimental system.³²⁶ Waiouru is isolated from major population areas, as it provides a site where artillery and heavy weapons training may take place safely. The closure of territorial training depots within urban centres restricts civilian access to military culture and impairs civil-military relations. Without access to territorial barracks, the community bond is broken.

In battle servicemen and women give their all, trusting that if anything goes wrong they will be looked after properly by the services. If for political, legal and financial reasons the government and responsible ministries do not wholeheartedly respect this trust (they seem at present to take it for granted), there is the danger that it may disappear. The effect of this would be far more damaging to the security of the nation than any

³²⁵Ernie Gartrell, Personal Communication, 26 September 2006

³²⁶Taylor, *Comrades Brave*, p. 176

defence cut.³²⁷

New Zealand's Territorial Regiments are experiencing this effect presently. There are several reasons for this.

Firstly, regimental messes, shown above to be important for side-along communication within a hierarchal system, are being held less frequently. Before 2000, messes were arranged by military cooks and stewards at a cost of \$20 per person. Now that a civilian company holds that contract to provide this service, a regimental dinner costs each participant \$70.³²⁸ 7 Battalion went to the James Cook hotel in Wellington for a regimental dinner in 2006, demonstrating that the concept of a regimental mess is becoming more akin to that of a company dinner.³²⁹ This factor affects both regular and territorial forces. Because the present funding system focuses on inputs and outputs, cultural effects such as messes are ignored, because their value cannot be as easily measured as the benefits of a piece of equipment.

Secondly, the Territorial Regiments do not have the same amount of access to equipment as the Regular Forces. They also get a smaller share of resources for training, repair and maintenance. Their status is that of semi-ready reserves.³³⁰ Additionally, territorial soldiers' earnings are taxed at the higher secondary rate³³¹. Employers' unwillingness to grant time off to employees wishing to take part in the annual camp also discourages participation. When territorial soldiers participate in overseas deployments, many will take short-term contracts through the Regular Force because of the better conditions of service.³³² These factors convey the damaging impression to territorial soldiers that they are 'poor second cousins' to their Regular Force counterparts.³³³

³²⁷ McManners, p. 403

³²⁸ Major Hibbs, Waiouru Military Camp, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

³²⁹ Ernie Gartrell, Personal Communication, 26 September 2006

³³⁰ Major P. Gregg, Waiouru Military Camp, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

³³¹ Heather Roy, Member of Parliament, ACT, Personal Communication, 26 October 2006

³³² Major P. Gregg, Waiouru Military Camp, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

³³³ Major P. Gregg, Waiouru Military Camp, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

Thirdly, the closure of territorial depots has cost community support.³³⁴ But how far has that support diminished?

Question: Is New Zealand's Military Culture Slipping from the National Consciousness?

As seen earlier, New Zealand's early amateurism has been costly in the early stages of war, where parsimony in maintaining professional forces has come at a high price in casualties. And yet, New Zealand politicians have treated the proportionately high price New Zealand has paid in war as purchasing the right to a greater voice in international affairs.³³⁵

New Zealand's national focus on wartime casualties can produce aversion to war. The anti-nuclear stance has been interpreted as an indicator of a New Zealand anti-military attitude.³³⁶ But is this true? Are New Zealanders presently anti-military? Two recent public events cast some light on present public attitude.

On 17 October 2006, Peace Action Wellington staged a protest against the Defence Industries Conference at Te Papa, blockading the main doors. They consisted largely of young people in their early twenties and numbered about seventy, the largest turnout in the past four years. Apart from some initial scuffling at the entrances and efforts to gain entrance to the museum, the protest was peaceful. The event had been advertised on buses and yet, there was a proportionately small turnout for an event staged during lunchtime on a weekday in a capital city. This incident, minor apart from inconveniencing visitors to the museum, nonetheless was covered by both TV1 and TV3 News stations and the Campbell Show that evening.³³⁷ While the protest itself was small, it generated a proportionately large amount of media interest.

While New Zealanders may not be pacifist, neither are they overly militaristic. The

³³⁴Major P. Gregg, Waikouru Military Camp, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

³³⁵King, p. 15

³³⁶*Resource Management Review* 1988, p. 43

³³⁷Personal Anecdote, 17 October 2006

recent military pageant to celebrate the Year of the Veteran, while advertised in newspapers and on television, barely filled a third of the Westpac Stadium³³⁸. Since veterans were scattered throughout the audience³³⁹, it appears likely that most of the audience were family members of veterans and performers.

From these observations, New Zealand civilians presently regard military matters as irrelevant to their own lives. They show no strong emotion either for or against the military. History has shown that New Zealand can show enthusiasm or distaste at the prospect of war, but are unlikely to put much effort into supporting the armed forces during peacetime.

Conclusion

Keegan's idea of a single warrior culture also explains how the Maori seemed to gain respect on the battlefield, but were slower in translating that respect into political leverage. Today's interpretation of pre-contact Maori being extraordinarily warlike is doubtful³⁴⁰; the musket was simply a new way of settling old scores. But, as a means of communicating with European settlers, warfare was effective. This hints that the New Zealand Wars were necessary in order for a cultural understanding to grow between Maori and settlers.

“Like many British institutions, the regimental system evolved haphazardly rather than by any conscious design.”³⁴¹ The New Zealand experience is similar: the New Zealand regimental system evolved and grew in response to cultural pressures and is still being shaped by political demands. All armed forces develop a military culture, but the challenge is to control that culture's development, a task that involves the creation and fostering of appropriate role models.

For New Zealand, this model echoes the self-reliance of the settler culture. New

³³⁸ Personal Observation, 3 November 2006

³³⁹ During the pageant, they were asked to remain standing after the National Anthem, so the audience could applaud them. 3 November, 2006

³⁴⁰ King, p. 22

³⁴¹ Mills, <http://www.regiments.org/regiments/r-system.htm>

Zealand soldiers tended to be more focused on the task at hand than in parade-ground discipline. This disregard of the ceremonial aspect of the British regimental system suggests that the New Zealand Army never saw a serious need for the kind of constructed corporate identity that the British found so important at the time of the Cardwell reforms. Part of this is due to the lack of social stratification that characterised British society. Secondly, New Zealand's Army has seldom been large enough to show the same patterns of xenophobia and identity that characterises a regimental system. Thirdly, the Maori influence has rendered New Zealand's cultural outlook as not entirely European, and this has a direct effect on the corporate identity of a regimental system.

New Zealand inherited most of its military attitudes from Britain, although she did not inherit the Cardwell-Childers reforms. By 1870, the year of the Enlistment Act, the last British troops left New Zealand. However, many British soldiers retired and settled in New Zealand, some participating in the Armed Constabulary. New Zealand therefore inherited the idea of a regimental system from an army where the concept had become seriously flawed.

New Zealand tended to concentrate her military on ground forces, as the Land Wars were still within her recent history. New Zealand has never built a navy on the same scale as the British, nor felt any need for one: "[a]t the beginning of the twentieth century... New Zealand sheltered comfortably under the shield of the Royal Navy."³⁴²

Since colonisation by Britain, New Zealand's size and geographical isolation have made the prospect of military invasion extremely unlikely. At first, British troops were stationed here to protect British citizens, including Maori who were granted citizenship under the treaty of Waitangi. This military reliance on Britain by the colonial government was a vital bargaining chip for various Maori tribes. The first Taranaki War, sparked by the controversial Waitara purchase, had the effect of gaining British attention and intervention to overturn the sale. Faced with land alienation by the colonial government, reacting to pressures of incoming settlers,

³⁴²Pugsley, p. 53

Maori uprisings were, for a short time, effective means of political protest.

New Zealanders reflect on their own reputation for peacekeeping, and doing it well; how others assess New Zealand's performance is questionable. Thakur asserts that "a continuing dispute with another country undermines New Zealand's credibility as a peacemaking exemplar."³⁴³ This observation is of a dispute in the arena of international politics and therefore falls outside the focus of this thesis. The cultural myth exists and, as long as it represents the value of forming and maintaining such relationships, New Zealand soldiers will have a source of inspiration to do so.

³⁴³Thakur, p. 316

Section III: New Zealand's Regimental System

Introduction

Identification of the shape of New Zealand's Regular Force requires closer inspection of what is prevalent today, rather than a survey of its historical roots.

If New Zealand held a European-style regimental system, we would expect several trends. Firstly, there would be a social hierarchy of regiments, focusing its values through regimental histories, with participants taking pride in the unique place and character of their regiments. The focus of each regiment would be on its regular force, professional soldiers relating more intensely to their regiment and territorials taking some identity from their lead and, according to official hopes, being inspired to full-time careers.

Secondly, we would expect to see a higher level of professionalism in the regimental corps and service arms than within infantry units. Both would have some emphasis on community, with a family-like ethos.

Thirdly, with a shorter history, New Zealand's regiments would have less entrenched traditions, fewer symbols and fewer myths. The values of military service would be similar, if not identical to European ones, as the New Zealand Army has to find answers to the same military cultural pressures.

Additionally, the obligations placed on a junior partner within various coalitions exert greater pressure for New Zealand personnel to adapt to others' methods of doing things. The need for a regimental system within these conditions becomes greater, as it would be the cultural factor that prevents New Zealanders feeling lost within a foreign organisation.

This adds up to an overall picture of a regimental system that New Zealanders can take a pride in, without it becoming an artificial community that assumes an overwhelming and detrimental influence on army personnel. But is this true? Does New Zealand's smaller army and pressure to relate to and work well with a variety of people – coalition partners, locals, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and

the media – help avoid the troubles that occasionally break out in larger armies? If so, how can such troubles be recognised and avoided? This final section will investigate these questions.

Administrative Organisation

Overall Army Structure

The New Zealand Army consists of 17 different corps, each fulfilling a basic role on the battlefield.³⁴⁴ The Arms corps of the New Zealand Army are the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery; Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps; The Corps of Royal New Zealand Engineers; The Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals; the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment; and The New Zealand Special Air Service.³⁴⁵

The Services corps are the New Zealand Intelligence Corps; Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment (The Duke of York's Own); Royal New Zealand Army Medical Corps; Royal New Zealand Dental Corps; Royal New Zealand Chaplain's Department; New Zealand Army Legal Service; The Corps of Royal Military Police; Royal New Zealand Army Education Corps; New Zealand Army Physical Training Corps; and Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps.³⁴⁶

As each group specialises in its own role and has its own *esprit de corps*³⁴⁷, each group deserves to be studied separately. If the New Zealand Army follows the pattern of four types of regimental system discussed in Section I, we would see a spectrum of regimental ethos that ranges from professional pride to pleasure at being part of a community with a proud history and communal atmosphere. However, as this study focuses on the consensual community of the regimental system, this subsection will concentrate on the character of the New Zealand Army as a whole, and of the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, in particular.

³⁴⁴ *Why?* Chapter 1, Section 1, para. 1001

³⁴⁵ *Why?* Chapter 1, Section 1, para. 1002

³⁴⁶ *Why?* Chapter 1, Section 1, para. 1003

³⁴⁷ *Why?* Chapter 1, Section 1, para. 1001

Infantry Regiments

Because one of the functions of a regimental system is to encourage recruits, a good source of information on the regimental ethos is the Internet. This has become especially true of New Zealand, as local depots have been closed due to expense. The face of the Army has moved from the street parade to the screen. This heading will therefore analyse what each regiment has chosen to present to the public as their visible expression of their regimental system.

1RNZIR – The Regular Force

The regular force consists of two battalions: 1 Battalion RNZIR is a cavalry unit forming part of the 2 Land Force Group combat element³⁴⁸, based in Linton; 2/1 Battalion RNZIR is a light infantry unit of 3 Land Force Group, based in Burnham. This is the only New Zealand regiment consisting of full-time soldiers, and was formed as part of the 1962-1964 reforms. Despite this, both battalions of the regiment have been granted battle honours going back to the New Zealand Wars, the Boer War, the two World Wars and South East Asia.

2nd Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast Regiment

The Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast (CNMWC) Regiment is a territorial regiment that traces its history to settler units formed under the 1845 Militia Act. Formed in 1999, from an amalgamation of several elements that had themselves arisen from the 1962-1964 amalgamations, the CNMWC regiment has inherited battle honours from New Zealand's overseas wars. It consists of five infantry companies scattered throughout the region, with various support and service elements.³⁴⁹

This regiment's web page focuses on its structural history. Only one battle honour, "South Africa", from the Anglo-Boer War, is specifically mentioned; the accounts of

³⁴⁸ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/2-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁴⁹ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/2-cant-nmwc/default.htm>, Last accessed 31 January 2007

World War I and World War II mention the regiment's Victoria Cross winners: Sgt H.J. Nicholas, Capt C.H. Upham, Sgt J. Hinton and Sgt C Hulme. This more personal appeal suggests that individual gallantry might make a greater impression on potential recruits than the collective battle honours.

The web page also outlines the regiment's changed role from a "purely infantry unit" to one of training individuals "to take their place alongside RF [Regular Force] soldiers on operations as infantry, engineers, signalers, logistics, and medics."³⁵⁰ The focus on individual roles seems apparent: if recruits are to be eventually part of the 3rd Land Force Group, there is little benefit to be gained from forming an intense community spirit within the regiment.

3rd Auckland (Countess of Ranfurly's Own) Battalion Group

This regiment was formed by amalgamating the Auckland and Northland regiments in 1964, each of whom trace their beginning to early volunteer militia groups. They form part of 2 Land Force Group.³⁵¹

This regiment's web page mentions but doesn't name three Victoria Cross winners in the Auckland regiment, but does mention the 21 battle honours emblazoned on its Regimental Colour; the regimental motto (Sisit Prudentia – Ever Prudent); and the regimental stable belt pattern. This suggests a greater community focus than that of CNMWC regiment.

There is an additional page on the Ranfurly Company³⁵², outlining training and areas of expertise a potential recruit can expect to gain. The community focus is still apparent: "You'll be a team player in an exceptionally tight team."³⁵³

³⁵⁰<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/2-cant-nmwc/default.htm>, Last accessed 31 January 2007

³⁵¹<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/2-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵²<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/3-auck-nth/ranfurly-coy.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵³<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/3-auck-nth/ranfurly-coy.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

4th Otago and Southland Battalion Group

The 4th Otago and Southland Battalion Group appears to have started sluggishly. The Dunedin and Invercargill Militia Battalions were established in 1860, but the first volunteer unit did not receive Government recognition until 1862, due to lack of local interest. The present structure dates from a 1948 amalgamation of the Otago Regiment and the Southland Regiment; it was unchanged but renamed during the 1964 reforms.³⁵⁴ They form part of 3 Land Force group.³⁵⁵

This regiment's web page mentions "New Zealand's most decorated soldier ever, Sgt Dick Travis [who] earned his VC and other medals serving with the Otagos."³⁵⁶ It also lists the battle honours of the Regimental Colour; its motto (Kia Mate Toa – Fight unto Death) and the Regimental Belt, with the Mackenzie Tartan pattern of the Queen's Own Highlanders. Although these features would suggest this regiment has a particularly strong affiliation with Britain, the regimental badge sports a Maori figure, the huia feathers in his hair revealing his status as a chief.

5th Battalion Wellington West Coast and Taranaki

This regiment is a 1948 amalgamation of the Wellington West Coast Regiment and the Taranaki Regiment, both dating from before the official raising of New Zealand troops. In 1964, it was named 5th Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry, and renamed 5th Battalion Wellington West Coast and Taranaki "to recognise the regional links of the unit."³⁵⁷ This regiment is part of 2 Land Force Group.³⁵⁸

This regiment has inherited the Battle Honour "New Zealand" from its ancestral

³⁵⁴<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/4-o-sth/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵⁵<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/3-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵⁶<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/4-o-sth/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵⁷<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/5-wwct/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁵⁸<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/2-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February

unit the Taranaki Rifle Corps. "No other unit has ever been given its country's name as a Battle Honour in the history of Britain, her Empire and the Commonwealth."³⁵⁹ The web page specifically mentions "Colonel William Malone, who fought the epic battle for Chunuk Bair during the Gallipoli campaign."³⁶⁰

The web page also lists 22 Battle Honours on the Regimental Colour. The Regimental Stable Belt is that of the Hampshire Regiment; the traditions of the Hampshire Regiment are also followed in the patterns of the belt. This suggests a strong tie to British units.

6th Hauraki Battalion Group

"6th Battalion (Hauraki) is unique among the Territorial Force battalions of the New Zealand Army in that it is the only one never to have been amalgamated."³⁶¹ Thus it has an unbroken ancestral history from 9 July 1898. Its present structure consists of "an Infantry component and a Mounted Rifles sub-unit."³⁶² It forms part of 2 Land Force Group.³⁶³

The web page mentions "Trooper George Bradford... the first New Zealand soldier to die in an overseas war"³⁶⁴, and Lieutenant General Lord Bernard Freyburg VC; lists 21 battle honours; displays its motto (Whakatangata kia kaha – Acquit yourselves like men, be strong); and notes that "[m]any soldiers from the Regiment served with the 28th (Maori) Battalion".³⁶⁵

With the omission of the stable belt colours, the British connection remains

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³⁵⁹<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/5-wwct/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶⁰<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/5-wwct/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶¹<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/6-hau/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶²<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/6-hau/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶³<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/2-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶⁴<http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/6-hau/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

unmentioned on the web page. Focus instead tends towards New Zealand, with strong ties to Maori.

7th Wellington (City of Wellington's Own) and Hawkes Bay Battalion Group

This regiment “was formed by the amalgamation of the 5th Wellington Regiment and the 9th Hawke's Bay Regiment in 1964.”³⁶⁶ They form part of 2 Land Force Group.³⁶⁷

The regiment's web page lists 21 battle honours; their motto (Kia Toa – Be Brave); the regimental stable belt of the York and Lancaster Regiment; and the hexagonal-shaped blaze worn behind the badge on the beret to symbolise “the close connection between 7 WnHB and the New Zealand Rifle Brigade of the 1914-18 War”.³⁶⁸

This regiment's web page focuses fully on the collective history of the regiment, as there is no mention of individual soldiers.

Hierarchies and Rivalries

The web site public face of the New Zealand Army reveals some aspects of New Zealand's regimental ethos. Several themes recur: the brief histories all lists ancestral units from the colonial days, and some reveal connections to British regiments; battle honours, mottos and regimental belts are readily-identifiable symbols of a regimental culture; and, some mention individual heroes while others focus on casualties and losses of the group.

The idea of a regimental social hierarchy has been complicated by New Zealand's history of playing the junior role to more powerful allies. Part-time training during

³⁶⁵ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/6-hau/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶⁶ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/7-wnhb/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶⁷ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/structure/org-charts/2-land-force.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

³⁶⁸ <http://www.army.mil.nz/our-army/territorial-force/7-wnhb/default.htm>, Last accessed 8 February 2007

peacetime and swift expansion on the outbreak of war has retained battle honours and histories to the territorial forces. New Zealand's Regular Army has a much shorter history and a much slimmer claim to the histories of the Territorial Regiments. This factor is a source of (usually good-natured) discussion between the two groups, offering territorial soldiers some measure of pride when regulars receive priority in equipment and training.³⁶⁹

As discussed in Section I, the British regimental system shows four forms, varying according to their relative mixture of focus on the social hierarchy and professional pride. The funding situation in New Zealand appears to steer the territorial force towards a social focus and the regular force towards professional pride. Individuals within the system show tendencies towards being 'regimental' or 'field'. This suggests that New Zealand's regimental system might have a sorting effect, encouraging those with a more professional focus towards its regular force.

This does not mean that New Zealand's regular force has discarded all facets of a regimental system. Displays of VC winners outside barrack rooms allow some inspiration for new recruits, and naming those rooms after these New Zealanders fosters some pride and sense of group identity.

New Zealand's regular army is also small, consisting of only 1 regiment, but 2 battalions. The hierarchy of regiments cannot apply when there's only one. Competition between the Territorial regiments, whether unifying or divisive, has few opportunities to develop since it follows a system of regional recruiting.

As discussed earlier, cost cuts to defence and the Territorial Force in particular has promoted a kind of 'Cinderella' attitude: that the Territorial Force is relatively undervalued as an organisation, despite holding historical honours and a richer cultural identity than the Regular Force. While self-identification as the underdog can promote a determination to survive despite the odds, the much greater risk is that it can damage morale to the degree that the organisation becomes ineffectual. In New Zealand's case, this situation could lead to the mistaken impression that the Territorial Force is no longer worth the effort of funding.

³⁶⁹ Major P. Gregg, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

The Regimental Corps, if following the European model, would display the most profession-focused variant of the regimental system. Each corps fulfills a different role within the Army and has different areas of expertise and responsibility. These differences should make competition between corps less noticeable than between infantry regiments who fulfill the same role and have more scope to prove who can perform that role more effectively. However, as shown in the case study, the regimental corps can sometimes compete in ways that can be damaging to organisational efficiency.

The New Zealand Army's regimental structure displays some unique elements. New Zealand practicality is expressed in the phrase: 'there are 17 arms in the army because there are 17 functions'³⁷⁰. Our military history is held firmly by the territorial forces, but New Zealand's attitude to past wars is one of mourning the dead more than of celebrating the achievements. Another aspect of New Zealand's regimental system is how it has revealed some adverse effects of the focus on defence funding. It is easy to see why Taylor called it a threat to the regimental system: its output focus ignores the effects of intangibles such as culture and morale. Worse still, its message, unintentional or not, is that a Defence Force is optional, reducing the value of a military career.

The descendants of these first units are today's Territorial Forces. The symbols of the regimental system are highly visible today. A visit to the New Zealand Army website reveals the rich traditions, symbols and histories that are a physical expression of a well-established military culture. The battle honours won in the Boer War and both World Wars have the potential to underpin a tradition of pride in the regiment.

But this is confined to the Territorial Force. With the abolition of Compulsory Military Training, it was decided that New Zealand's defence needs would be better met by profession full-time soldiers. The myth (which was shared with Australia) that a New Zealander becomes a natural soldier with very little training had been dispelled by the expensive lessons in the early stages of World War II. The

³⁷⁰*Why?* Chapter 1 Section 1, para. 1001

increasing demands of technology and the changing nature of operations highlighted this need. The nucleus of the New Zealand Army changed from the community-based Territorial regiments to a more national structure revolving around two Regular Force battalions.

Corporate Identity: Beliefs and Values

As a whole, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) “has a unique culture that is underpinned by shared values of commitment, loyalty, integrity, and professionalism.”³⁷¹ The New Zealand Army has a slightly different list of values: courage, commitment, comradeship and integrity, but these are not incompatible with those of the NZDF. This particular subsection will examine the New Zealand Army core values and how they fit into those of the NZDF framework.

Courage

The New Zealand Army includes both physical and moral courage in its definition.³⁷² Physical courage has traditionally been seen as essential in a soldier, cowardice in the face of the enemy being an offence that carried the death penalty early in the last century. As seen earlier in this thesis, cohesion within the army replaces the fear of death with the fear of letting comrade's down and of appearing a coward in their eyes. This underpins physical courage; moral courage is the ability to stand by one's own principles, sometimes risking the good opinions of one's own comrades. This makes moral courage the harder value to display.

Commitment

The essential elements of this value are “serving the interests of all New Zealanders” and “putting others before self when necessary”.³⁷³ The NZDF also lists commitment as one of its values, but focuses its definition on “successfully accomplishing military objectives” and “pride in achieving results above and beyond

³⁷¹NZDDP-D, Part 1, Chapter 1, Para.1.21, p. 1-8

³⁷²New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/at-a-glance/values.htm>

³⁷³New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/at-a-glance/values.htm>

expectations.”³⁷⁴ The main difference is the army focus on the utilitarian ideal of self-sacrifice for the good of the group.

Comradeship

As “the basis of all Army teams”, this value can be considered the one which defines all the others. “It means looking after each other, understanding that more can be achieved by working as a team than as individuals.”³⁷⁵ It is the traditional value underpinning physical courage. It echoes the utilitarian focus of the Army definition of commitment; its teamwork element is essential to “successfully accomplishing military objectives”.

However, comradeship in the New Zealand Army parallels loyalty within the NZDF as a whole: “NZDF personnel possess a strong sense of comradeship...[and] a strong sense of loyalty to friends, allies and like-minded coalition partners.”³⁷⁶

Integrity

The New Zealand Army website defines integrity as requiring “honesty, sincerity, reliability and consistency.”³⁷⁷ The NZDF goes further than a shopping list of additional qualities: integrity involves “neutrality and the ability to work in an honest and cooperative manner with other groups to achieve a peaceful solution.”³⁷⁸ These different definitions show different focuses: the NZDF regards integrity at the operational level, considering how New Zealand personnel can display this value to others; the New Zealand Army regards integrity as a quality within the individual soldier, an ethic that is difficult to express in words. Interestingly, the New Zealand Navy does not list integrity as one of its core values, but focuses on courage,

³⁷⁴NZDDP-D, Part 1, Chapter 1, para. 1.17, p. 1-6

³⁷⁵New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/at-a-glance/values.htm>

³⁷⁶NZDDP-D, Part 1, Chapter 1, para. 1.18, p. 1-6

³⁷⁷New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/at-a-glance/values.htm>

³⁷⁸NZDDP-D, Part 1, Chapter 1, para. 1.19, p. 1-7

commitment and comradeship.³⁷⁹

What about Professionalism?

The New Zealand Army website does not list professionalism as one of its core values. Their mission statement, however, states that “personnel, led by professional and trusted leaders, will be physically and mentally prepared to meet the rigours of military operations.”³⁸⁰ This uncomfortably recalls the situation pre-World War II, when the New Zealand Army shrunk to a core group of professionals hurriedly and incompletely training large numbers of conscripts.

However, the NZDF do list professionalism as a military value: “a professional approach to the conduct of military operations... a relaxed and friendly professionalism that prefers attaining professional excellence with quiet modesty rather than fanfare or outspokenness.”³⁸¹ The lessons of the ANZAC tradition have not been forgotten, neither by the NZDF nor by the New Zealand parent culture.

Ngati Tumatauenga

The concept of Ngati Tumatauenga is one that distinguishes New Zealand from other countries. It represents the blending of “martial traditions of the British soldiers and the Maori warrior”. As seen earlier, Maori and Pakeha soldiers tended towards separate but parallel evolving cultures during the world wars. Ngati Tumatauenga is the official recognition of the union of both within New Zealand military culture as a whole.

“The New Zealand Army's Ngati Tumatauenga culture blends the customs and traditions of both our major cultures, the European and the Maori, to create something that is not only unique but is relevant to the demands of future years.”³⁸²

However, Ngati Tumatauenga is not confined to a bicultural fusion of Maori-

³⁷⁹Royal New Zealand Navy Website, <http://www.navy.mil.nz/know-your-navy/values/default.htm>

³⁸⁰New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/at-a-glance/mission.htm>

³⁸¹NZDDP-D, Part 1, Chapter 1, para. 1.20, p. 1-8

Pakeha martial culture: it is an evolving concept that acknowledges and embraces multiculturalism. The emphasis is on the soldier, rather than ethnic origins:

“On 30 July, 1994 we demonstrated our warrior ethic yet again. As one team, soldiers old and new, retired and serving, we picked up our house, our mantle, and carried it with [tiers] and seat... The weight of our house on our backs reminded us that it is the soldiers' lot to carry their “houses” on their backs and move willingly to the nation's call. So too do we affirm that we are Ngati Tumatauenga – The Landless, for our duty is to the whole land without compromise.”³⁸³

Ngati Tumatauenga is also the uniquely New Zealand expression of a portable 'home' and 'family', discussed in Section I: “Ngati Tumatauenga acknowledges [that] the Army is one family of people bound together by the ethic of service to our country, military professionalism, common values, and mutual respect, mutual trust and camaraderie. As one people we are one tribe.”³⁸⁴

Corporate Identity: Myth

To an outsider, the most obvious myth of the New Zealand Army is a picture of the New Zealand soldier. As shown in the previous section, the three historical cultural influences towards New Zealand military culture were the Maori warrior, the British soldier, and the Anzac soldier. It should not be surprising therefore that strong elements of each of these are present in the New Zealand Army's image of the New Zealand soldier.

Egalitarianism has formed the basis of New Zealanders' view of themselves as soldiers: “greater informality... greater reliance on initiative, ... willingness to dispense with the rulebook when the rules did not seem especially helpful.”³⁸⁵ What is also apparent is a growing sense of military confidence and professionalism: “What emerged from the twin crucibles of Greece and Crete was basically the New

³⁸² *Why?* Chapter 3 Section 1, para. 3002

³⁸³ Eruera Brown (Army Marae Administrator), quoted in New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army-culture/default.htm>

³⁸⁴ <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army-culture/ngati-tumatauenga.htm>

Zealand soldier's belief in himself and his abilities. It became apparent that on even terms (and perhaps given equal weapons) he could stand against the best troops on the Axis side.”³⁸⁶

This strange blend of professionalism and informality has contributed to an ability to improvise:

It seems that New Zealanders (and other people tell us this) have a special aptitude for those “private army” kind of forces which have a habit of growing up during a world war. Certainly the record proves this, for New Zealanders led partisans in Yugoslavia, Greece, Crete and elsewhere, put muscle into the original Long-Range Desert group, wore the grey beret of Land Forces Adriatic and provided coastwatchers as far afield as South-East Asia.³⁸⁷

Although the histories associated with much of this cultural myth are firmly in the hands of the Territorial Battalions, the values and the myths themselves have become part of the New Zealand Army as a whole.

Corporate Identity: Symbols

Many New Zealand Army symbols are taken directly from the British Army. For example, belt colours affirm the wearer's identification with a particular regiment, as symbolised by colours of significance to its origin. In the case of the Hauraki regiment, the blue and gold stripes symbolise the River Thames and the gold of the Crown.³⁸⁸ These symbols are English, acknowledging no connection to New Zealand.

However, with the advent of Ngati Tumatauenga, the New Zealand Army has Maori elements incorporated into some symbols, creating some distinction from their British Army forebears.

³⁸⁵King, p. 16

³⁸⁶Mentiplay, p. 39

³⁸⁷Mentiplay, p. 61

³⁸⁸Taylor, p. 200

The New Zealand Army Badge³⁸⁹

Originating in 1949, the badge was identical to that of the British Army with the exception of NZ in gold letters under the main crown. In 1954, the crown atop the lion and the main crown changed with the accession of Queen Elizabeth II.

The present badge replaces one crossed sword with a taiaha and incorporates the words Ngati Tumatauenga on a scroll under the gold letters NZ. This badge received approval from the Queen and has been in use since 2002.

The New Zealand Army Band³⁹⁰

Unlike the historical British Army regimental bands, the New Zealand Army Band has made no pretense that they are primarily musicians. In their colourful red jackets, they perform at State and Ceremonial occasions, and at various home and overseas events.

Since they represent the entire Army, they are not, strictly speaking, a regimental band. Music at internal army occasions is provided by a PA system, rather than a live band.

The New Zealand Army Band therefore provides a unique place in civil/military relations, a visible external symbol of the New Zealand Army, and of New Zealand in general. Unlike their historical regimental counterparts, they are not a source of pride and competition between regiments.

Decorations³⁹¹

The New Zealand Cross, the uniquely New Zealand decoration, was instituted in 1869, to be awarded to colonial troops as an equivalent to the Victoria Cross, for which only imperial troops were eligible. Today, New Zealanders are eligible for this medal in addition to other medals within the British and New Zealand structures.

³⁸⁹New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army-culture/badge.htm>

³⁹⁰New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army-culture/nz-army-band.htm>

³⁹¹New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army->

This type of symbol is therefore of a European nature.

Commemorations

The most familiar commemoration for New Zealanders is ANZAC Day (April 25). This date, in 1915, was the day when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed at Gallipoli. Ceremonies begin at dawn, with a military march and a memorial and wreath-laying service at local war memorials. This continues a tradition that began in 1916.

However, because the ceremonies begin so early, those who have no family or personal motivations to witness the ceremony have any incentive to wake early enough to attend. With the aging and deaths of servicemen present at Gallipoli, the tradition has reached the stage where it may fall away. One encouraging sign is the attendance of Gallipoli veterans' grandchildren, marching and displaying their grandfathers' service medals. Anzac Day's focus has adapted to become "the main day of remembrance for the fallen in all wars."³⁹²

New Zealanders, in focusing on those who died, have acknowledged a national debt without truly taking the Anzac soldier as a symbol of themselves. Australian memorial services are more celebratory. The Anzac soldier has become an Australian national symbol, one to be shared as part of their cultural consciousness. Pugsley points out that the Australian focus on participation has resulted in some argument over who has a claim on the legend of the Anzac.³⁹³ These arguments are likely to fall away with time.

The second commemorative day in the New Zealand calendar is Armistice Day (November 11). This day also dates from World War I, in this case the end of the war. It is a day marked throughout the Commonwealth. Like Anzac Day, Armistice Day is a day when New Zealanders remember the fallen.

history/decorations.htm

³⁹²New Zealand Army Website, <http://www.army.mil.nz/culture-and-history/nz-army-history/anzac-day.htm>

³⁹³Pugsley, find references

Conclusion

New Zealand's symbols are a mixture of Maori and European, reflecting the bicultural nature of New Zealand, and its growing multicultural awareness. They represent a mixture of present and past, reflecting the values that New Zealand soldiers have chosen as part of their cultural self-image. However, symbols can still be the basis of dispute.

At present, there is a cultural conflict between the New Zealand Army and the Anglican Church. Reverend Frank Nelson, Dean of the Wellington Cathedral, has objected to Altar Guards bringing rifles and fixed bayonets while escorting Regimental Colours into the cathedral during Remembrance Sunday celebrations. His objection is based on the Cathedral being a place of peaceful worship and sanctuary; that the ceremonial presenting of arms is intimidating to the rest of the congregation; that the New Zealand Army, as guests in the Wellington Cathedral, have an obligation to respect the wishes of their host; and, most stunningly, the fact that weapons are not even allowed in Westminster Abbey, apart from ceremonial swords, and those only on specific occasions. He has no idea why the custom of allowing weapons into the church originated and reports that his colleagues at Westminster are bemused that this has been allowed in New Zealand.³⁹⁴

The New Zealand Army Ceremonial document, NZ P6A, notes that “[a]ltar guards have been used at specific services in Catholic churches for some time.”³⁹⁵ Paragraph 11, Note 1a states “Bayonets are to be fixed, and swords are to be drawn, before the guard enters.” It is this part of the ceremony that the Dean specifically objects to.

However, the issue has reached an impasse, as the New Zealand Army Territorials appear as reluctant to forego their traditions as the Dean of Wellington Cathedral. The resolution has been 'no weapons, no Colours' and, during the 2005

³⁹⁴Reverend Frank Nelson, Personal Communication, 27 September 2006

³⁹⁵*New Zealand Army Ceremonial*, New Zealand Army Code No NZ P6A, Chapter 4, Annex A, para 1, Wellington: New Zealand Army Publication, 2005

Remembrance Sunday celebration, only the three Service Flags were presented.³⁹⁶

Individual Expression

As mentioned in Section I, a regimental system is a means of introducing a community focus to recruits raised in an individualistic society. The New Zealand Army is keenly aware of this and has initiated a 22 week Enhanced Basic course. The pilot class has recently graduated. The initial impression is a hopeful one: "The Enhanced Basic team leader, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Guiney, is pleased with the results of the pilot 22-week course. Not only did the recruits gain enhanced skills, but they appeared to have an enhanced *esprit de corps*, one of the key aims of the course."³⁹⁷ In-depth results will be analysed over the next two years³⁹⁸ and there are hopes that the enhanced course will improve the New Zealand Army's retention rate.³⁹⁹

The problems associated with a regimental system are also likely to be enhanced. Firstly, "Most soldiers are xenophobic. By identifying closely with their own group, unit or regiment, they inevitably discriminate against outsiders – usually with a keen sense of humour."⁴⁰⁰ A second concern is that, with enhanced skills, the recruits are likely to have greater expectations of using these skills. The exposure to the 'real job' that Jans and Schmidtchen mentioned can carry a correspondingly higher disappointment.⁴⁰¹ Finally, casualties within the unit will have a greater psychological effect, especially with today's Western expectation of zero casualties.

As long as due care is taken to offset the negative effects of a greater *esprit de corps*, there is no reason why the New Zealand Army should not gain maximum benefit from running enhanced basic courses.

³⁹⁶ Reverend Frank Nelson, Personal Communication, 27 September 2006

³⁹⁷ *Army News: Celebrating 2006 in the NZ Army*, Wellington: HQ NZDF, p.10

³⁹⁸ Major D. Millner, Personal Communication, 25 September 2006

³⁹⁹ Lt Col. Steve Guiney, *Army News: Celebrating 2006 in the NZ Army*, Wellington: HQ NZDF, p.10

⁴⁰⁰ McManners, p. 113

⁴⁰¹ Jans and Schmidtchen, p. 46

Another challenge for the New Zealand Army is the New Zealand culture of binge drinking.⁴⁰² The present attitude is to promote the idea of host responsibility⁴⁰³ and a zero tolerance on drug use and harassment.⁴⁰⁴ Rules and regulations mirror the values of outer society, but infringements are less tolerated. The army has a stronger system of internal discipline and a greater ability to expel incorrigible soldiers than any civilian equivalent organisation.⁴⁰⁵

Case Study: Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment (The Duke of York's Own)

Just as the Cardwell-Childers reforms of 1870-1881 have been shown to reveal aspects of Britain's regimental system, it seems reasonable to examine a reform within the New Zealand Army for similar insights. The Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment has been selected for two reasons. Firstly, its formation is recent enough for participants of that reform to be clear on its reasons. Secondly, why would a service arm be called a regiment, rather than a corps?

"[T]he then Chief of General Staff, Major General P.M. Reid, issued his Chief of General Staff's Directive 07/96 dated 4 April 1996 authorising the formation of the New Zealand Logistic Regiment."⁴⁰⁶ The three component corps: the Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport, the Royal New Zealand Army Ordnance Corps, and the Royal New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, were officially disbanded on 8 December 1996.⁴⁰⁷ Although part of a reorganisation of the New Zealand Army that had begun in 1992,⁴⁰⁸ this particular amalgamation has been interpreted as intending to "destroy tribalism" amongst the three component corps.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰²Major T. O'Neill, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

⁴⁰³Major T. O'Neill, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

⁴⁰⁴Major D. Millner, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

⁴⁰⁵Major D. Millner, Personal Communication, 13 September 2006

⁴⁰⁶*Why?* Chapter 1, Section 10, Para. 1393

⁴⁰⁷*Why?* Chapter 1, Section 10, Para. 1394

⁴⁰⁸*Why?* Chapter 1, Section 10, Para. 1392

⁴⁰⁹Ernie Gartrell, Personal Communication, 26 September 2006

The reasons for the amalgamation are more complex. The primary concern was efficiency. Under the old system, there were different administrative structures for relatively small units. A battalion group would require a specific appointment to command and coordinate the three logistics functions; this produced “a ludicrous amount of paperwork”.⁴¹⁰

These three separate areas of responsibility produced demarcation disputes, for example: at what point did petrol, oils and lubricants leave the hands of the Royal New Zealand Army Ordnance Corps and become the responsibility of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport? Uniting the three corps into one organisation removed this concern and united the diverse functions towards a common cause.⁴¹¹

These structural and functional difficulties exacerbated internecine rivalries, not a healthy spirit of cooperation. Major General Reid found the idea of a small army divided by internal rivalries “ridiculous”. Worse, the New Zealand Army had somehow picked up a muddled version of the British regimental system, blurring the distinction between a regiment and a branch of service. As discussed earlier, regiments compete with regiments of like function; if service corps were to compete along the same lines, their only competition is their equivalent on the enemy side. New Zealand had “half a dozen corps competing as if they were regiments” as a means of comfort for those who aren't and won't be part of battle.⁴¹² The attitude appeared so firmly entrenched that Major General Reid allowed the new organisation to call itself a Regiment, to soften the blow of amalgamation.

Naturally, there was some resentment to an arrangement calling for close cooperation between three organisations that had seen themselves as fierce rivals. A lot of this resentment is directed at Major General Reid⁴¹³ who has had no contact with the Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment since his retirement.

⁴¹⁰Piers Reid, Personal Communication, 7 November 2006

⁴¹¹Piers Reid, Personal Communication, 7 November 2006

⁴¹²Piers Reid, Personal Communication, 7 November 2006

⁴¹³In 1999, I was surprised when a friend, a Captain at Linton Military Camp, expressed a negative attitude towards Piers Reid, solely on his reputation, and admitted never having met him!

Since its formation, the Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment has become one of only two in New Zealand that have received royal patronage. Although this reform has produced a more efficient organisation, it has still retained the seeds of a cultural problem. With Royal patronage, usually granted to an infantry regiment, and calling a branch corps a regiment, there remains the potential for the same inappropriate internecine rivalries in the New Zealand Army that contributed to the 1996 amalgamation. Although the amalgamation removed the problem of the time, it did little to show the people in the organisation that they were part of a service corps, not a regiment. Unless the underlying cultural misunderstanding is cleared, eventually a new reform, to structure or to doctrine, will become necessary.

Conclusion

The New Zealand Army's focus on values, rather than symbols, is a cultural construct that might not have been possible if the NZDF were larger. The emphasis on force multipliers, such as jointness and cohesion through similar values throughout the NZDF, reflects small size.

Although New Zealand is a small country with a correspondingly small army, it is not proof against the divisive lines drawn by the European-style regimental system. The ongoing dispute between the Dean of Wellington Cathedral and the Territorial battalions highlights a conflict between differing symbols and traditions. In and of themselves, the symbols serve only to reflect values. However, when symbols overshadow the values they are supposed to represent, the effect is to undermine the values, or even to show opposite ones.

The logistics regiment example highlights that New Zealand has inherited the idea of a regimental system, but with little understanding of its functions and purpose. An army will develop a form of military culture as part of the unique pressures of the military and the needs of its parent culture; as the British discovered, this culture must be shaped. The New Zealand Army has done this to an extent by focusing on values, but this does not remove the necessity of monitoring the regimental system constantly for areas where army units may have fallen into practices that fail to reflect desirable values.

The most noticeable change in New Zealand's regimental system is the changing role of the territorial force. In Britain, "Cardwell and Childers had hoped that the auxiliaries would form a bridge between the civilian population and the regimental system."⁴¹⁴ In New Zealand, the nature of that connection has changed. The loss of regional facilities, while nationalising New Zealand's army culture, has made that culture less visible in everyday life. However, the growing prevalence of computer technology has allowed an opportunity for territorial units to express elements of their regimental ethos that they wish known. The balance of these two factors means that potential recruits are often already interested in an army career before accessing the website, not inspired to do so through everyday exposure to regimental ethos.

This is an area where civilian organisations are at a disadvantage. Trust and teamwork are key factors of military culture, and contribute to a 'home' environment that attracts a large proportion of recruits. Where the New Zealand Defence Force has admitted to the problems of recruitment and retention, the proposed solutions have been to improve pay conditions.

However, the Strategos Report survey showed that "The most important reason for leaving the Services was given as disillusionment with the job and lack of job satisfaction."⁴¹⁵ It also found that

The most popular features about Service life were the comradeship, travel, job training and job challenges. The most disliked features were the disruption of personal life, the constant moving, and the discipline and treatment by senior officers.⁴¹⁶

Since the benefits to personnel are not outweighing the disruptions, the cultural influence of a regimental system is not being utilised to its full potential.

Overall Conclusion

Structural reforms have a cultural effect. Major-General Reid's formation of the

⁴¹⁴ French, p. 335

⁴¹⁵ *Resource Management Review* 1988, p. 119

⁴¹⁶ *Resource Management Review* 1988, p. 119

Logistics Regiment was intended to remove inefficiency that had arisen through a lack of definition in areas of responsibility. Although there was resentment at the reform, the cultural effect of uniting into one organisation has been a reduction in the tribalism of the three antecedents.

This New Zealand example, taken in conjunction with the circumstances of the Cardwell-Childers reforms, suggests that the regimental system follows a distinct life cycle, where cultural growth (as shown by increasing morale and efficiency) follows closely after reform, plateaus and eventually declines until reform again becomes necessary.

The idea of a regimental system life cycle has several implications. Firstly, cultural benefits can be optimised by careful timing of reform to coincide with the beginning of the decline phase of the life cycle. Any sooner would be inappropriate, as reform is often treated with caution, even when the reasons for it are obvious.

Secondly, reform cannot be too frequent, as too many changes would remove the long-term benefits of the regimental system, in particular the sense of belonging and continuity. This regimental ethos is important because it reduces individual feeling of being lost in the system in peacetime, and provides a basis for the construction of smaller communities in stressful situations.

Thirdly, there are initial signs when reform will be needed soon. These include an inappropriate overemphasis on cultural symbols, to the detriment of the values that these symbols represent; and a growing unit xenophobia leading to loss of efficiency and coordination with other units. These should not be confused with good-natured rivalry and competition in performing tasks.

New Zealand, with a small and highly educated force of personnel, has less need of a similar regimental system that the British have formed over the last 150 years. Instead, emphasis is placed directly on values, rather than symbols. This emphasis is part of a conscious shaping of the New Zealand Defence Force into a joint services culture, an extension of the early New Zealand push towards a more national and cohesive force. While this lessens the risk of inappropriate emphasis on symbols, it also removes a warning signal in the life cycle of the regimental system.

To a certain extent, the territorial forces have been left in the past. The attention placed on the battalions of the Regular Force (1RNZIR and 2/1 RNZIR) to form the backbone of a professional and efficient army has left an identifiable rift between it and the remaining six (territorial) regiments. The lack of funds, a problem for the NZDF as a whole, is felt particularly keenly by the Territorials; feeling slighted, their culture has turned towards past traditions, histories and battle honours for a source of pride, one that they are reluctant to share with the Regulars. For the most part, this is expressed in good humour, but its mere existence does point to a possible future point of conflict.

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Ernie Gartrell, Honorary Colonel, 7th Wellington (City of Wellington's Own) and Hawkes Bay Battalion Group

Major P. Gregg, Waiouru

Major Hibbs, Waiouru

Lieutenant-General Jerry Mataparae, Chief of Defence Force New Zealand

Major Denise Millner, Waiouru

Reverend Frank Nelson, Dean of Wellington Cathedral

Major T. O'Neill, OCS Recruit Company, Waiouru

Piers Reid, Major-General (rtd.)

Heather Roy, MP, ACT New Zealand

Harry Sebborn, Captain (rtd.), New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers