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WORLDVIEW AND MORAL FOUNDATIONS OF PERSONALITY FORMATION IN THE SYSTEM OF INITIAL GENERAL MILITARY TRAINING

Introduction. Initial general military training occupies a distinctive place among educational practices that connect the individual with the state and collective responsibility. Its formative potential lies not only in preparing a person for action under demanding conditions, but also in shaping a stable understanding of duty, lawful authority, solidarity, dignity, and self-limitation in the use of force. Research on worldviews demonstrates that broad systems of belief provide individuals with meaning and interpretive frameworks for social reality [8; 9]. Developmental studies of moral identity show that ethical commitments become progressively internalized as central features of mature moral functioning [6; 7]. The philosophical and moral architecture of military preparation cannot therefore be treated as an optional supplement – it is constitutive of its pedagogical legitimacy.

Worldview and Moral Identity as Foundations of Formation. A worldview is a relatively integrated system through which a person interprets life, social order, and personal obligation. In educational settings, worldview formation involves the cultivation of evaluative judgment, awareness of common goods, and the ability to situate oneself within a normative community. In the context of initial general military training, the worldview dimension becomes especially salient: trainees encounter questions not reducible to technique – why defend the political community, what conditions make coercive force legitimate, and how personal freedom relates to collective duty. Without coherent responses to such questions, training risks producing compliance without conviction.

The moral component of personality formation depends on the emergence of moral identity – a relatively stable self-understanding in which ethical commitments become part of who the person is. Kingsford et al. [6] characterize moral identity as central to mature moral functioning, while Krettenauer [7] emphasizes its developmental

movement from externally anchored responsibility toward internally organized moral maturity. For initial general military training this has direct implications: if trainees are expected to remain disciplined under conditions of uncertainty, moral norms must become internal standards rather than externally imposed rules. The pedagogical task is therefore to establish a worldview in which service, statehood, law, and human dignity are linked within a coherent moral horizon.

Military Socialization as a Moral Process. Research on military socialization supports the claim that institutional settings shape value development. Schmitz Wortmeyer and Branco [11] demonstrate that military institutions canalize moral development through structured practices, while emphasizing that subjects actively reconstruct rather than passively absorb values. This is decisive for pedagogy: formal exposure to patriotic or ethical content does not automatically produce moral formation. Values are mediated through group life, institutional consistency, role modelling, and reflective interpretation. The training system teaches not only through what it declares, but through what it rewards, tolerates, and exemplifies.

Empirical work on officer formation adds further nuance. Brooks et al. [4], in a survey of 1,468 United States Military Academy cadets, found that a substantial group's adherence to professional norms was conditional rather than robust. Bell et al. [2] showed that norms of civilian protection are shaped not only by military training but also by prior moral orientations. These findings indicate that early training cannot assume a morally neutral starting point. Entrants bring pre-existing value configurations, and education must engage with them deliberately. Early neglect is corrected later only with difficulty.

Resilience, Moral Injury, and the Ukrainian Context. Crane et al. [5] demonstrated that self-reflection and emotion-regulation training strengthen resilience in officer cadets, while Navickienė and Vasiliauskas [10] linked cadet resilience to self-efficacy and professional achievement. Ethical education and resilience training should therefore not be separated institutionally. This is reinforced by work on moral injury: Brémault-Phillips et al. [3] show that moral injury emerges when military experience conflicts profoundly with a person's values. Vikan [14] argues that military ethics can be taught as a form of resilience – ethically grounded formation reduces the risk of moral failure under stress. Moral education delayed is often moral education weakened.

In the Ukrainian context, the worldview and moral dimension of military-related education has acquired intensified relevance. Sevruk et al. [12] argue that current standards of military professionalism require systematic ethical education rather than episodic moral instruction. Urych and Matyasik [13] confirm that defence-oriented preparation of young people in Europe combines educational purposes, civic integration, and structured cooperation between armed forces and civilian society. Accordingly, initial general military training in Ukraine should be conceptualized as a civic-pedagogical institution whose aim is the formation of a responsible citizen-defender – not merely a technically prepared novice.

Conclusion. The system of initial general military training should be understood as a formative institution of civic, worldview, and moral development. Its long-term effectiveness depends on whether it succeeds in shaping a person who can unite discipline with dignity, courage with restraint, and service with reflective responsibility. Contemporary research converges on one conclusion: military-related education becomes pedagogically sound only when competence formation is inseparable from value formation [12; 13]. The personality ideal appropriate to initial general military training is not that of the mechanically obedient performer, but that of the morally grounded citizen-defender – a person capable of acting under pressure without losing normative orientation. In the present Ukrainian historical situation, this educational ideal is not merely desirable. It is strategically and ethically necessary.

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