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## **Ethical recommendations on the consideration of enhanced veteran soldiers**

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### **Abstract**

Will combatant enhancement techniques give rise to a new elitist caste of enhanced soldiers for whom the long-term effects of the use of enhancement techniques will require reinforced medical or societal monitoring?

The proposed article, after a philosophical reading of the concept of enhancement and a proposed definition of what an enhanced super soldier is, will look at what will characterize this new "caste" of enhanced soldiers who have benefited from techniques on the battlefield that granted them to go beyond human limits, for better operational efficiency.

Based on the observation that veterans may already experience difficulties when returning to civilian life after operational missions, it will show that these enhancement techniques amplify this phenomenon. One of these aspects will focus on the differences in perception and feelings that these soldiers will experience, combined with a transient feeling of superiority on the battlefield. Another one will concern the society's view of these individuals, admired as long as they are operational, but for whom empathy for their sacrifice and the duty performed can fade after years.

It then goes on to demonstrate the need for society to provide regular support for these veterans formerly enhanced, and in particular to ensure medical and psychological supports over time.

This article attempts to provide possible answers to anticipate these issues and challenges, starting on works made in France as part of the research program on the enhanced soldier led by the research center of the Saint -Cyr Military Academy since 2015, extended to the Long-Term Veteran Care.

### **I. Introduction**

We are on the threshold of a major anthropological change with profound ethical repercussions. New scientific and technical innovations may now provide unprecedented opportunities to strengthen human capacities both physically and cognitively, but with a direct effect on the human body, reversible or not.

Given that a Nation's moral duty is to ensure victory by providing its soldiers with the best technology available, it is clear that enhancement techniques can bring operational benefits.

Nevertheless, the characteristics of anthropotechnics bring the risk of an imbalance between operational efficiency and the safety of the combatant, with the risk of distorting and neglecting human frailty, which is an integral part of everyone's dignity, with disastrous consequences.

In addition, enhancement, even if limited in time, can have physical or psychological effects that do not stop at the end of the mission. An enhanced soldier thus becomes marked with the seal of enhancement. He enters a new category of combatant, which the Nation must constantly monitor to ensure that any secondary or lasting effects do not affect his psychological balance.

Even more so when he leaves the military. It will be up to civil society to welcome this "enhanced veteran", and to look after him in recognition of the risk he has taken by enhancing himself for the success of the mission. This respect over the long term will also ensure that enhancement techniques are accepted by the armed forces.

## II. A philosophical approach to enhancement

In the special issue of the journal *Defense Nationale* on the needs and prospects of increasing the Fighter's abilities, which has been published in France in 2017, the Chief Medical Officer Frederic Canini considers that "enhancement is the application of a strategy to healthy humans whose aim is to increase their physiological capacities in intensity or duration, in an invasive or non-invasive, temporary or reversible, even permanent and irreversible way" (see *definition of enhancement just after*). This strategy can be physiological, psychological, technological, pharmacological, or any combination of these. Note that if the application of the same strategy on the medical level is aimed at an injured, sick or disabled person with the aim of returning to a status quo ante, we speak of a therapeutic or reparative approach, and we leave so the framework of our study. The increase in performance having as its objective the slogan set out above, it comes up against the exceptional and new character offered by enhancement technologies and the framework of their uses<sup>1</sup>.

Historically focused on pharmacology and the improvement of the weapons carried by the combatant, the focus has shifted towards technological approaches and techno-integration, which is defined as "the symbiotic coupling of humans with technology to amplify human physical and cognitive capabilities<sup>2</sup>".

Nevertheless, even if today, the improvement of physical performance undoubtedly goes through devices external to the body (for example the exoskeleton), rather than direct action on the body that is risky and has uncertain effects, the prospective engineering of the human body obviously provokes very contrasting reactions, ranging from enthusiasm to fear. Especially since the constraints are multiple with its implications on the legal and ethical levels in the individual, societal, medical and military spheres.

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<sup>1</sup> Canini, *Ethique médicale et Homme augmenté : quelques pistes de réflexion*, 181.

<sup>2</sup> Reschke, *Neural and Biological Soldier Enhancement: From SciFi to Deployment*.

On an individual level, it faces:

- i. the inter-individual variability, based on the observation that no one is identical to another (e.g.: genetic polymorphism and epigenetic modulation of the genome).
- ii. the intra-individual variability. It states that an individual differs depending on the moments of his life. Thus, exposure to operational constraints not only leads to states of fatigue and stress that are reversible in the short term, particularly through sleep, but also physiological wear that is more difficult to reverse.
- iii. the informed consent of the individual.
- iv. the risk of addiction and/or side effects, including unsuspected effects. The new techniques considered to improve human performance are, for many of them, based on technologies whose long-term health risks are unknown.

On a societal level, it faces:

- v. the way a society thinks of itself. The expected level of individual performance and the definition of health and well-being most often depend on the wealth of society and the ease of access to the technologies it offers. Western society, technophile and demanding in performance, seems determined on this point to test the surpassing of limits, subject to respect for the individual and their humanity and opening up a relative room of manoeuvre for the armed forces, which will thus be less constrained ethically and legally. Authoritarian regimes, for their part, will probably see anthropotechnics as a new power policy<sup>3</sup>.
- vi. a society which is increasingly demanding with how the army preserves the safety and health of its recruits, including in foreign operations. However, the paradox is that it demands the best to give the soldier -who defends it- the best chance of succeeding in his mission, as well as the means to protect his own life and those of the individuals he is in charge of.

However nowadays, a new scientific approach is replacing the old empirical or psychological approach. A better knowledge of the physiological mechanisms of Man combined with new technologies which have an effect on the human body will allow the fighter to push his physical and mental capacities (cognitive or perceptive) to higher levels than the natural limits, whether they are the capacities of one's body or the extension of the limits of one's tactical environment.

On the military level, it faces:

- vii. the possible affirmation of a "performance caste"<sup>4</sup>, where it would be a question of improving one's performance not to be better than others but simply to be normally integrated into the military unit. This will notably be the case in elite military units such as commandos or specialized units. The

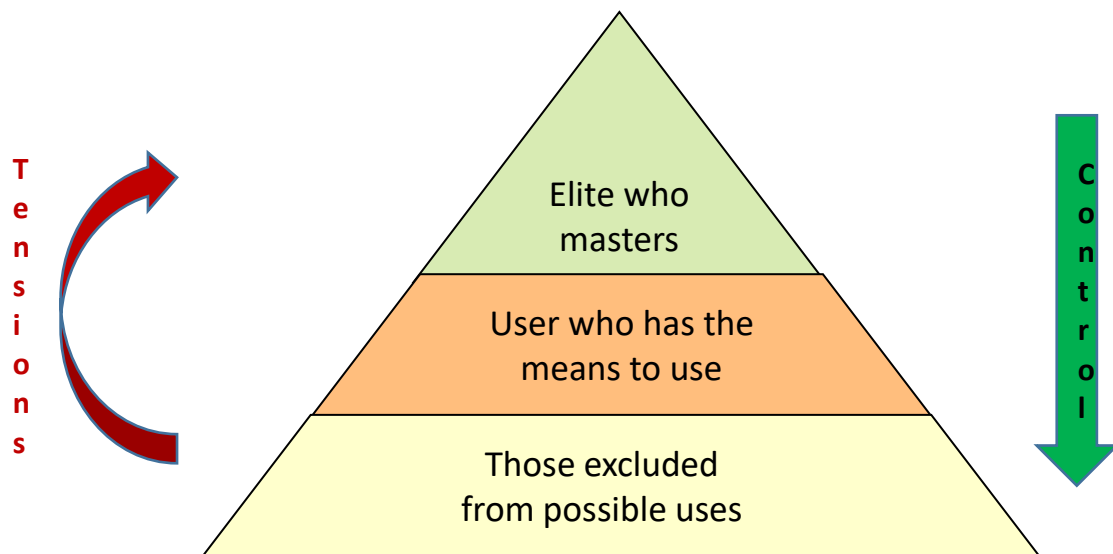
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<sup>3</sup> Reyni , *Le savant (g n ticien) et le politique (augment )*. *Le politique face aux usages soci taux de l'augmentation et leurs impacts pour le monde militaire*, 119.

<sup>4</sup> Chneiweiss, *L'homme r par *.

artificial enhancement of the fighter would thus risk becoming a norm, imposed directly or indirectly by the recruiters of such units who themselves define the minimum physical and physiological capabilities expected of a soldier for a position in that unit.

- viii. the increase in inequalities between those who will have access to technologies and the others, with a direct impact on the moral strengths of non-enhanced soldiers deprived of the means of enhancement, leading to a reduction in individual and collective, physical and moral strengths of the troops.



The diagram above indicates the risks of control by those who master the technologies over those who do not have access to them. Applied to the military world, it can create a break in the cohesion between Army units.

On a more general level, the fundamental question posed is that of the risks which arise from the “go beyond” of natural capacities and from the discontinuity or ruptures in the behaviors that are deduced from it. We list here the major ones:

- i. the loss of the purpose of enhancement which is to optimize the combat potential of an individual, and not to transform the latter into a dehumanized machine;
- ii. to consider the individual only as an object and not as a subject, implying an objectification of the person. The risk here is to consider that the subject is no more than a material that we will shape so that it can meet specific specifications <sup>5</sup> and ultimately to touch on what makes a Human, namely their dignity and their natural balance.
- iii. the temptation of always more, which can be translated into an ethic of recruiting the “future best”, without having complete control of the evolution of the enhancement over time. Because we can know objectively who is the

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, *Soldats et environnements augmentés : une approche éthique fondamentale*, 195.

- best at time t1; but, we will only ever know with a relatively imprecise probability who may remain so until t2, given the variability of each person over time;
- iv. the increase in natural inequality and differences within the same group;
  - v. the temptation of exclusion within an entity for those who do not want to enhance themselves.
  - vi. the temptation to master individuals through techniques to control the latter's body or mind, for the purposes of collective performance undoubtedly, but to the detriment to their capacity for free will.
  - vii. the risk of annihilation of human indicators such as fear, fatigue, pain, which are necessary signs for leaders to command their soldiers and essential for them to anticipate any physical or psychological breakdown. Any technique annihilating these indicators will pose a real problem for the leader.
  - viii. Enhancement must not cause man to lose his humanity. The harmony of the trilogy "body, mind and soul" that constitutes his humanity should be fairly preserved and nourished by a transcendence that goes through the teaching of philosophy and ethics.<sup>6</sup>

### III. Definition of enhanced soldier

The slogan for enhancing fighter's performance could be: go beyond your human limits, for greater operational efficiency.

For a definition of the enhanced soldier, the Saint-Cyr Military Academy Research Centre gives the following one in the Military Review of the US Army University Press: "Enhancing a soldier is the action of rendering him or her more efficient during military operations by:

- strengthening intellectual skills (mental, psychological, cognitive) and/or physical abilities, or by letting the soldier acquire new skills;
- using technologically advanced equipment worn by the soldier to enhance performance;
- using nontherapeutic substances or using static dynamic implants (nanomaterials, prostheses) or applying suitable gene therapeutic treatment; and
- applying enhancement for short-or long-term usage that can even be irreversible provided its effects are controlled.

Efficiency is meant there as operational efficiency. In other words, an individual's capacity to achieve results in fulfilling a mission"<sup>7</sup>. The purpose of the enhancements primarily focuses on the fighter's abilities and performance.

Nevertheless, only the means of enhancement which cross the body barrier and consist in acting on the soldier in an invasive manner are retained by the French Defense Ethics Committee. For this committee, "augmentation practices do not cover

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<sup>6</sup> Pinard Legry & de Boisboissel, *What are the ethical limits to the fighter enhancement?*, 156.

<sup>7</sup> de Boisboissel and Le Masson, *The enhanced soldier: definitions*, 2021

all devices, weapons or techniques that augment a soldier's abilities to fight or defend, but only those that lead to crossing the body barrier. They encompass, firstly, practices, techniques, technologies, and devices, medical or not, which consist in invasively intervening on the soldier to increase their physical, cognitive, perceptive, and psychological abilities and, secondly, practices designed to prevent a health risk, particularly vaccination and medication, as well as certain substances administered for augmentation purposes<sup>8</sup>.

#### IV. Ethical limits to enhancement

Nevertheless, it raises ethical questions. First, all forms of enhancement do not respond to an initial need for care and are therefore non-therapeutic. Moreover, they can propel the individual beyond his own limits, allowing him or her to go beyond what seems to be normality: acquiring nyctalopia, for example, allows the acquisition of a capacity that man does not possess<sup>9</sup>.

This ethic of enhancement for the purposes of increasing military performance nevertheless clashes with the ethical codes of military medicine, military doctors being only the guarantors of the preservation and maintenance of the health of the soldier in operation. The aim here is to go beyond human limits through anthropotechnics, therefore the traditional vision of medicine is no longer merely therapeutic or remedial, but also meliorative. Thus, any practice must be in accordance with the conscience of the doctor and his status. Ethics, centered on the individual, then resonates with medical ethics, which materializes in a corpus of rules and prescriptions that govern their profession. Even if it might be justifiable from a military ethical point of view, it may be not from a military medical ethical perspective.

In addition, unlike deontology, ethics cannot be a position of principle. It must face reality on a case-by-case basis while respecting ethics, in particular the difficult balance between not taking medical risks and maintaining the optimal or even exceeded level of one's capacities over time<sup>10</sup>.

Ethical limits must be set on the opportunities for enhancement for military purpose, as Military necessity cannot be an argument superior to the constraints given by the Law and the customs that regulate armed conflict<sup>11</sup>.

We will list here those that seem to be the main ones to us:

1. Enhancement must not dehumanize the soldier, who must remain within the limits of human normality at the physical and physiological levels. If we take him out of human normality, then there will be a rejection of what he is or was, automatically generating a feeling of depression for him.

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<sup>8</sup> French Defense Ethics Committee on the enhanced soldier, Opinion on the Defense Soldier.

<sup>9</sup> de Boisboissel, *Definition and characterization of soldier performance enhancement*, 7,

<sup>10</sup> Canini, page 184, RDN soldier enhanced.

<sup>11</sup> Ruffo de Calabre, *Striking the balance between military necessity and the enhancement of military personnel*, 37.



2. Enhancement must, in no way, alter the individual's sense of judgment, in order to enable him to always act with respect for International Humanitarian Law and Humanity, and to maintain his sense of judgment and responsibility for his actions.
3. Respect the corporeality of human beings. An individual is above all a body, with its integrity, its riches and its limits. Respect for the integrity of this body is one aspect of respect for humanity and its inalienable rights. Thus, brain implants, intrusive couplings with machines could constrain us. Excessive use of certain drugs that allow soldiers to stay awake and perform for long hours well beyond ordinary limits, could lead to illnesses or disabilities, or even significant addictions. The question therefore arises as to whether we want to systematically develop bodily enhancements, leading, in the medium term, to pathologies or destruction, or even significant weakening of the capabilities of our veterans<sup>12</sup>?
4. Informed consent must be the basis of any enhancement: individual consent of course, but also consent of the Armed Forces, doctors, politicians and society as a whole, although there is always a risk that we will not be able to ensure that we are fully aware of all the possible effects of the enhancement. Transparency in the decision-making process of the enhancement methods employed will therefore be necessary. Soldiers must be given explicit information which can be traced, to protect both the institution and the soldiers concerned. This process must be followed up over the long term to take into account changes occurring over time in the state of knowledge about the potential consequences of an enhancement. It is a rule defined by the French Defense Ethics Committee in 2020 that however adds that "in some operational situations, it will be inappropriate for a military commander to have a heterogeneous combat group in which some members are enhanced and others are not<sup>13</sup>".
5. Clearly define the framework for using an enhancement and make it compatible and adjusted to the tactical or strategic situation of the moment. We will not consider the same enhancement techniques for a peacekeeping operation or for the defense of one's Nation in the event of an invasion of the territory by a large enemy force. Likewise, on the legal level, because if the end justifies the means, anything is possible, anything would be allowed, including exceeding the Law, that must remain unacceptable.

Therefore, safeguards shall be put in place, in particular to prevent the use of enhancement techniques:

- if they make an individual more vulnerable by creating an imbalance between their increased capacities and their reduced capacities through a rebound effect;

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<sup>12</sup> Lambert, *ibid.*, 196.

<sup>13</sup> French Defense Ethics Committee, *Ibid.* 6 and 24.



- if they affect the responsibility of the combatant by disinhibiting him or causing him to lose his capacity for judgment;
- if they alter respect for the adversary and dehumanize combat by inhibiting soldiers' empathy.

#### V. Enhanced soldier: recognition of a new community of soldiers

As colonel Eric Ozanne, former commanding officer of the 2nd Foreign Legion Infantry Regiment, points out, today it is intensive training and an *esprit de corps* that forge the cohesion of a unit and push each individual who composes it towards their optimum potential. It is this *esprit de corps* which leads each soldier to surpass himself or herself on the battlefield and which will motivate him to fulfill their mission at all costs. But enhancing performances through technological means will disrupt this traditional approach for all armies in the world today. It will thus create a demand for results that will no longer depend on the moral strength of the individuals themselves, but on technology.

The effects are threefold:

1. Only those who will have access to this technology, necessarily expensive and adapted to the individual, will be able to exceed their limits and join this caste.
2. The individual must adhere to the requirement of the enhancement having effect on his own body, even if it means accepting temporary or even permanent effects.
3. The military unit that employs them must constantly monitor the effects of the enhancement on soldiers and ensure that they maintain at least their physical capacities and their capacities for intellectual discernment and at most increase them.

Some enhancement innovations may thus provide solutions to operational constraints inherent to a specific military function. Take for example the case of snipers, who may require for all their members a higher visual acuity than the average. We can clearly see that membership in this elite specialty will go through exceptional criteria required for any candidate, either through natural selection during recruitment, or obtained by technological means (eye surgery or implant placement) after the recruitment, but subject to the initial agreement of the applicant. Snipers will therefore be fighters defined by their military function, but also by the physical attributes required for their function. Until now, the criteria focused only on the intrinsic qualities of soldiers.

We can therefore speak of a community of enhanced combatants, or even of a caste in the sense that this community is a closed group of operational soldiers, reserved for designated or voluntary members, who have given their consent, with acceptance by the military and medical authorities, under the cover of an authorization previously given by the political world. Which requires a very strong legal framework.

A certain number of attributes will characterize it:

- A) The effects and advantages provided by the enhancement: a unit will be defined by its potential aptitude. For example, the "golden ears" of the French Navy provide precise hearing acuity. A commando unit will ensure that its members

will be operational in a hostile environment without any rest for 72 hours. An infantry unit will provide movement on foot for all its combatants with all their equipment over a distance of 100 km per day, etc.

- B) The duration and reversibility of the increase or even its irreversibility.
- C) Its possible secret nature, in order to protect its members.

Recognition of this enhanced community, or this caste, will require acceptance of the sacrificial aspect of enhancement.

## VI. The special case of veterans

The exhaustiveness of the remarks allows us to come to the precise subject of this article, which concerns the management of veterans who have been enhanced in the past or who will always be enhanced due to the conservation of irreversible enhancement technologies in their bodies. The topic is decidedly new, but is crucial if we want to take into account the effects of enhancement in its entirety and before its deployment.

It is always difficult for a soldier to return to civilian life. For multiple causes, but we will consider three main ones:

- a) Be distanced from the "esprit de corps" when one member leaves definitively the military unit;
- b) the loss of access to extraordinary action means that military equipment provide, in particular weaponry, and which gives a feeling of superiority over ordinary civilians;
- c) a third concerns the side effects of operational experience, food or sleep deprivation and the constant exposure to danger and stress.

Moreover, the soldier's return to civilian life is strongly marked by his operational experience. The feeling of discrepancy risks to be very strongly accentuated by the experience of implementing enhancement techniques and their effects. First, because the latter will have given him a feeling of superiority and extraordinary power, again in the literal sense of the term. From superhero or superman, the latter will return to an existence where nothing will stand him out from others, and worse, where no means of action will be given to him to overcome adversity. This will also be amplified by the fact he is leaving the favorable environment of his unit, where he was accompanied by his comrades and the Army health service as long as he was a member.

Then because the techniques having an effect on the human body will necessarily have a physiological impact on the individual with the effect that their sensory or proprioceptive memories will remember them. Finally, because it is also not trivial to enhance an individual by enabling him to go beyond his own human limits, with this feeling of going beyond them which he will have to put into perspective with humility: his finitude is certainly reevaluated, but it will always remain a finitude. A fortiori if the technologies are irreversible in the case of anthropotechnical acts. This is the case of our previous snipers who will return to civilian life with ever-enhanced visual acuity compared to the average individual.

## VII. New ethical rules for the enhanced veteran

All soldiers are also citizens who return to the civilian world at the end of their career. For them, there is a moral obligation for the Armed Forces to preserve the physical and psychological integrity of their combatants, in order to free them from short-and long-term psycho-physiological after-effects.<sup>14</sup> All the more so because if veterans are not supported over the long term, they will collapse into depression, or into bad habits such as drugs or alcoholism.

This moral obligation is reinforced by a legal obligation reflected in the spirit of the Article L.4111-1 of the French Defence Code according to which the statute of the military offers those who leave military duty the means to return to a professional activity in civilian life and ensures that military retirees maintain a connection with the institution<sup>15</sup>.

Consequently and as previously indicated, it is inconceivable to consider enhancing combatants without ensuring that long-term effects and potential after-effects due to this enhancement do not affect their return to civilian life. In the case of equipment worn by the fighter, the body's memory will be limited to the effects provided by each equipment. We will take as a comparison the knights of the Middle Ages who lived daily with their hauberk on their back, in order to get used to the weight and build up their muscles accordingly. A knight had to be in armor because his strength posture was strongly linked to his equipment. In addition, removing it corresponded to an inability to participate in combat.

In the particular case of a fighter who has lost some of his initial abilities through injury and whose surgery enables him not only to recover them but also to acquire new ones, if the means used involve internal (implants) or external (orthoses) components that cannot be removed under penalty of losing them, functional monitoring of this equipment must be ensured, as well as replacement in the event of obsolescence. In the case of using pharmacological means of enhancement, it is the individual's ability to no longer be addicted that must be controlled, which can involve constant medical monitoring on this issue. Because of the satisfaction or feeling of power it can provide, an increase of any nature could lead to addiction and dependence, due in particular to the "reward system" it can create<sup>16</sup>.

In the case of implants - restorative or strengthening the intrinsic capacities of the combatant-, their functional monitoring must be carried out until its removal or the death of the veteran. Thus a bionic eye is not guaranteed to function *ad vitam aeternam* but it is inconceivable that a veteran previously enhanced by this bionic eye could find himself blind overnight for lack of spare parts.

In the very particular case of enhancement methods that have a direct and irreversible effect on the human body, it will be appropriate to define as a safeguard the preservation of normality when returning to normal life, in order to maintain an ethical order arising from existing natural norms. The philosopher Canguilhem<sup>17</sup> writes that

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<sup>14</sup> Pinard Legry, & de Boisboissel, Ibid. p 152.

<sup>15</sup> French Defense Ethics Committee on the enhanced soldier, Ibid.,18.

<sup>16</sup> French Defense Ethics Committee Ibid., 17.

<sup>17</sup> Canguilhem, *Le normal et le pathologique*.

nature is made up of a set of “norms” which are also sometimes called “laws” which imply repetitions in the growth and development of human beings and phenomena: it is therefore by deducing a certain number of almost invariable norms that we obtain a certain definition of human nature. For the author of this article, normality corresponds to capacities that are found in a distributed manner throughout society. There are people who have a visual acuity of 20/12,5<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, no-one has a visual acuity higher than 20/10. From then on, any enhancement that does not fit into the canons of our human nature will appear contrary to the naturalness of Man, thereby artificially creating abnormal beings which will without a doubt question human normality. If we exaggerate, a soldier who returns to civilian life with an extra arm would be objectively considered abnormal, even if this extra arm gives him much greater action capabilities than a normal human with two arms. In the same way, an enhancement that remains visible would mark the individual unfavorably towards society. In addition, enhancing the soldier's performance must not take away his nature, at the risk of seeing his social relationships, his psychology, his way of life and his self-confidence be affected, or even radically shaken.

#### VIII. The need for structured support over time

It would be utopian to believe that a simple disbarment would exempt the civil society from having to accompany the veteran back home, and this regardless of the types of possible returns to civilian life for enhanced veterans. Here, we will differentiate three: the voluntary one, the one linked to age and the one due to medical reasons. Indeed, the reason for the dismissal of the soldier greatly influences his future. The establishment of technical, psychological and medical support over time seems necessary and must be structured accordingly.

Physiological and psychological support tools, based on the cognitive functions of the individual such as methods of optimizing resources (respiratory, mindfulness meditation, etc.), must be made available to any enhanced veteran. It will allow them to cope with adversity in their return to common life.

Facing the versatility of society, support mechanisms must be set in place by institutions but also by individuals themselves. Institutions will have to monitor enhanced soldiers medically (psychologically and physically) and politicians will have to unwaveringly commit to this monitoring.

The esprit de corps of a military unit being the cement of collective action, these military units must regularly honor their veterans. Regardless of the type of enhancement, they must always integrate enhanced veterans into their traditional ceremonies, thus commanding respect for these elders, and promoting for younger children a positive image of their past commitment.

The enhanced soldiers' elders club will also have to promote the heroism and sacrifice of these individuals and explain it to the civil society. Such clubs will have to fight to constantly explain the meaning of their past sacrifice and make civil society understand

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<sup>18</sup> Refer to SNOF, Syndical National des Ophtalmologistes de France, <https://www.snof.org/sites/default/files/tableau-2-correspondance-acuit%C3%A9.pdf>

the meaning of their commitment. Without support relays of this type, the risk would ultimately be the civil society's oblivion or the misunderstanding of this sacrifice.

Indeed, the structuring support for enhanced veterans will have a certain cost. Nevertheless, it is the necessary cost for a society, which must accept to support those who have risked their lives to defend it. It is a moral duty that can be facilitated by calls for donations from associations or by the civil society itself.

#### IX. The challenge of the Nation's perception over time

An enhanced soldier or veteran must never be discredited by his Nation. Responsibility whether a war is just or unjust does not depend on the soldiers who carry it out, who are sometimes unaware of this nature, but on the political leaders who give the orders (war is above all a political decision) and as well as military leaders who execute them. It would therefore be unjustified to discredit the soldiers.

However, if we take the example of the Vietnam, Indochina or Algerian wars, the performers on their return to their country were largely rejected or ignored, notably due to the "people's courts" of the time having judged these conflicts unjust. We can mention for example that communism and anti-colonialism in France have thus rejected the action of its soldiers in Indochina, while they were fighting to prevent this part of the French empire from sinking into communism. US veterans suffered from the defeat of the Vietnam War, a war rejected by US citizens for many various reasons (devastation and violence of the war, suspicion of an intervention in a foreign civil war, lack of clear objectives etc.). Enhancement will only increase tenfold this judgment of history a posteriori: it will be a multiplying factor of the non-acceptance of enhancement by society if the reason for the military intervention is not considered fair. Which confirms the fact that any military cause must therefore be just and justifiable over time. However, if society's vision should not change on enhanced veterans over time, who can anticipate tomorrow's judgments of our children about our current History?

As a result, the basis for the use of enhancement techniques refers to the legitimacy of war. It happens that a posteriori judgment of the legitimacy of a military commitment can call into question the vision that a society may have of an enhanced veteran. In particular by popular courts, which have become essentially virtual courts these days and therein lies the main pitfall, that of worsening the negative perception of an enhanced veteran not only because the cause he defended could be considered as unfair in hindsight, but also because this soldier will have implemented all possible means of enhancement to succeed in his mission.

Disinterest and disapproval for military matters are often temporary facts. To this end, it is interesting to note the differences in temporalities between a generation more or less equivalent to 20 years in the civilian world, equivalent to 30 years in the academic world (the time of a position for a professor officiating at the university), and which can be 5 years in the political world. Consequently, it only takes a simple change in leadership at the civilian or political level to significantly change the perception of the Army by its own soldiers and by the population. However, the latter is now ultra-connected and fundamentally versatile through all the modern tools at its disposal

(communication, social networks, etc.). It is also strongly influenced by ideological currents, which, as history shows, often do not survive their generation.

This is why a Nation must ensure the protection of its veterans over time. Even a government which does not share the vision of its predecessors having launched (or suffered) a war, must protect those soldiers who fought for it. Konrad Adenauer's government thus had a duty to take care of former Wehrmacht veterans, except for criminals, whatever one might think of the Nazi regime. The thing is difficult, of course, but it is ethically necessary and the political structures of a country must integrate this necessity into its constitution.

The support mechanisms put in place for veterans vary from country to country. For France, it took several reports and legal judgments to take into account the consequences of the Gulf War in 1991, among its soldiers. There is now a Veterans Health Observatory. For the sake of transparency and better perception of the French Army, nicknamed "the Great Mute", among the population, various reports are regularly made public, on sometimes-sensitive subjects such as wounded soldiers. One recommendation would therefore consist in creating an observatory for enhanced veterans.

## X. Conclusions

The responsibility of the army and society regarding the enhancement of soldier performances is non-derogable. Depending on the context and the specificity of the military function, enhancement can be considered as a form of sacrifice, because the soldier agrees to go beyond the limits of his human capabilities for the sole purpose of ensuring the success of a mission entrusted to him.

For the enhanced veteran returning to civilian life, who is above all a veteran, he must be treated with respect because this soldier has agreed to risk his life and expose himself for a cause greater than his own existence. Structurally, the State thus has a duty of gratitude and support towards all its veterans, enhanced or not.

A veteran must not become a vicarious victim of popular vindictiveness, under the pretext that he represents the state entity against which the inhabitants feel some grudge at any given moment. On this point, it would be a double penalty for the person concerned: to be rejected by the citizens of a country for defending the interests to which he has contributed, as well as for the sacrifice of his enhancement, which will have upset his own, limits.

In any case, the enhanced veteran, member of the specific caste of those who have accepted an invasive action of the technique on their own body, must never be a second-class citizen, but as far as possible benefit from special consideration and monitoring, in continuity with the systems existing to date, as well as other more specific ones, still remaining to be specified and launched.

From a philosophical point of view, however, the ethical and legal foundations laid down in previous centuries are still valid in the case of enhanced veterans, because they are centered on respect for humanity. However, certain adjustments could be



made mainly because these technologies and the possibilities they offer on the human body were unimaginable at the time.

To conclude, let us take a step back and be careful not to fantasize about the reality of tomorrow. The French philosopher Jean-Michel Besnier reminds us that posthuman utopias signify the fact that we are becoming slaves to the technical world that we have created. For its part, the war in Ukraine reminds us that the characteristic of the soldier is to be able to last in an operational military environment over time, without any particular enhancement other than that of the moral force that allows him to hold out in all conditions, even the most difficult. The Armies will always have the mission of training men and women capable of facing adversity, whatever the technological means made available to them, even after their time spent in an operational unit.

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