

**THE AMERICAN MILITARY, THE CIVIC TRADITION, AND MARTIAL VIRTUE:
CIVIC-SOLDIERS IN A CIVIC-ARMY**

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There cannot, therefore, be a more erroneous opinion than that money is the sinews of war.

Machiavelli¹

But the security of every society must always depend, more or less, upon the martial spirit of the great body of the people.

Adam Smith²

The question before this Conference³ "Where do the moral rules come from and how is this relevant for military ethics?"⁴ is easily answered for the American military. All personnel take an oath to support and defend the Constitution, an oath not limited to the Constitutional document. Following Hartle's argument, because the purpose of the Constitution is to guarantee the founding values to all citizens, when we take that oath, we also swear to support and defend the founding values.³ Clearly, the moral rules guiding the American soldier⁴ must be derived from those founding values.

Nowadays, most Americans, and too many military personnel, trivialize an oath of office as simply a rite of passage, or a confirmation of personal importance, rather than the

¹Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Discourses," in *"The Prince" and "The Discourses"* (The Modern Library; New York: Random House, 1950), pp. 308-309.

²Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, eds. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, [1776] 1981), p. 787.

³Colonel Anthony E. Hartle, *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989), especially in chapters 4 and 6.

⁴For the sake of convenience, I will use the terms "soldier" and "army" throughout, as an all-inclusive term referring to all branches of the military services.

voluntary assumption of profound moral obligations.⁵ To honor one's oath, one must know what one is defending, which means the first duty of the American soldier begins with a knowledge of, and belief in, the founding values. At a minimum, this will require our national military leadership to provide a substantial, on-going moral education, centered on the founding values, for all military personnel. Furthermore, it must be a lifetime commitment, involving everyone from the newest recruit to the chiefs of staff; no one "graduates" from the program.

However, there are a number of schools of thought concerning the appropriate interpretation of the founding values. On the one hand, the majority opinion has it that the liberal tradition, primarily through the writings of John Locke, was the dominant influence upon the Founders,⁶ and that the founding values should be interpreted accordingly. On the other hand, a significant minority argues that the tradition of civic humanism was the most influential for the Founders.⁷ This paper is based upon the civic humanist position. It is not my purpose herein to revisit that debate, suffice it to say that even the most ardent liberals

⁵More attention needs to be given to the meaning of the oath and the founding values. The best work to date is by Hartle, *Moral Issues*. See, also, John A. Rohr, *To Run A Constitution* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986). Although too manipulative for my tastes, the importance of oaths was emphasized by Machiavelli. See Sebastian de Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 96-97. Finally, note the emphasis given to the importance of the oath by Leonardo Bruni. Bayley writes: "The citizen was inducted into the militia by means of an oath, the *sacramentum militae*. If the oath had not been sworn or duly renewed, the citizen concerned was not allowed to engage in battle." C.C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The De Militia of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), p. 321.

⁶There are numerous variations upon the liberal theme. The standard work is Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955). For a more recent statement, see John P. Diggins, *The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest, and the Foundations of Liberalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

⁷For example, see the work of Gordon S. Wood, especially *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (New York: Norton, 1969), and *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

concede that civic humanism, if not dominant, was at least quite influential.

In this paper, I argue not only that civic humanism was decisive in shaping the military philosophy of the Founders, but that it is the morally correct interpretation. A growing number of scholars are pressing the case for a civic humanist interpretation of the American founding. Pocock, who has become the doyen of civic humanism, argues that the

debates of the Philadelphia Convention are notoriously the highest point ever reached by civic humanist theory in practice; and though the relative naiveté's of English opposition ideology were transformed by, and into, the Federalism of Hamilton and Madison, they continued to inform the criticisms of the Federal institutions that arose within its own workings.⁸

That being the case, fidelity to the founding values requires that the moral philosophy of the American military establishment be derived from the concept of **martial virtue**, which is the military expression of civic virtue.

Martial Virtue In The Civic Tradition

First, a definition of the civic tradition is needed.⁹ John Robertson writes: "The 'civic tradition' I take to be that body of political ideas, classical and specifically Aristotelian in origin, concerned with the phenomenon of political community in its secular and historical particularity." Its most salient *institutional* features are: a republican form of government;¹⁰

⁸J.G.A. Pocock, "Cambridge Paradigms and Scotch Philosophers," in Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (eds.), *Wealth and Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 239.

⁹Two definitions from *Black's Law Dictionary* will be helpful. First: "Civil. The word is derived from the latin civilis, a citizen. Originally, pertaining or appropriate to a member of a *civitas* or free political community; natural or proper to a *citizen*." Second: "Citizen. One who, under the Constitution and laws of the United States, or of a particular state, is a member of the political community, owning allegiance and being entitled to the enjoyment of full civil rights."

¹⁰This was made emphatic by Machiavelli "through his decision to regard virtue as existing

an established constitution which makes the legislative, executive and judicial offices available to all citizens; and a citizen militia that provides for the defense of the republic. Robertson concludes that "the opportunity with which citizens are provided *to participate in the government and defence of the community* is what makes possible political liberty."¹¹

While civic humanism has been a constant theme in Western political philosophy, it was particularly significant in four eras: in Classical Greece; in Classical Rome; in Renaissance Italy; and in the British and American Enlightenment. There is not space to discuss the various interpretations of civic humanism in the different eras. However, the influence of the civic traditions of Classical Greece and Rome upon the Founders has been most recently discussed by Paul A. Rahe,¹² while the civic tradition of Renaissance Italy has been reintroduced by J.G.A. Pocock and Hans Baron.¹³ Finally, the civic humanism of the Enlightenment is attracting more and more scholarly attention.¹⁴

only in republics." J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machivellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 217.

¹¹John Robertson, "The Scottish Enlightenment at the Limits of the Civic Tradition," in Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff (eds.), *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 138. Emphasis added.

¹²Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). Although he is not a civic humanist, Rahe's ideas -- and his bibliography -- are invaluable. See, also, Susan Ford Wiltshire, *Greece, Rome, and the Bill of Rights* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), and the fine essays of Louis B. Wright, *Tradition and the Founding Fathers* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia).

¹³Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, and Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (rev.ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). For a complete bibliography of Pocock's work, see Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 429-437.

¹⁴For instance, in the book by Hont and Ignatieff, see the essays by Peter Jones, John Robertson, Nicholas Phillipson, and Hont, himself.

The basic elements of civic humanism have remained fairly constant through the years. As to their specific content, the civic virtues are the traditional virtues of Western moral and political philosophy.¹⁵ More specifically, they "are those dispositions a people should strive to exhibit as citizens, with the primacy of the *patria* in mind, and with an aim toward being moral or excellent in a public, political sense."¹⁶

The defining feature of civic humanism, then, is that pervasive, individual virtue is the *sine qua non* for any republic, and that such virtue must be expressed through voluntary citizen participation in all of the affairs of the state—including the defense of the state. The purpose of the polity is to secure the fundamental values of the republic for the citizens—values those citizens consider essential if they are to attain their full human potentials. This presumes a constant human nature that transcends time and culture, and it is in this vein that Pocock writes: "The polity . . . is a contrivance of human intelligence for the institutionalization of *virtu*: for assigning men functions which will require them to act in such a way that their natures are reformed and are once again what they *are*, instead of what they *have become*."¹⁷

Given that grand purpose, civic humanists are insistent that citizens must love their

¹⁵The literature about virtue is quite extensive. For a brief overview, see James D. Wallace, *Virtues and Vices* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978). Note, also, the following: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981); Edmund L. Pincoffs, *Quandries and Virtues: Against Reductivism in Ethics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); J. Budziszewski, *The Resurrection of Nature: Political Theory and the Human Character* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); and J. Budziszewski, *The Nearest Coast of Darkness: A Vindication of the Politics of Virtues* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). For an excellent collection of original essays about the issues of virtue, see Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., and Howard K. Wettstein (eds.), *Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue* (Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Vol. XIII; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

¹⁶Mary G. Dietz, "Civic Good and Virtue," in Lawrence C. Becker and Charlotte B. Becker (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ethics* (New York: Garland, 1992), Vol. I, p. 162.

¹⁷Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 300.

country, but not in a mindless way. Under the precepts of civic humanism, patriotism is a highly moral concept. It requires that the citizen's primary fidelity must be to the values of the republic, and only secondarily to the institutions of the republic. A patriotism that asserts "my country, right or wrong," is not patriotism at all: it is an insensitive nationalism. To qualify as patriotism, it must be "my country, right or not at all."¹⁸ Further, since those fundamental values are the *raison d'etre* of the republic, all civic action must be a reflection of them^¾because it is their actualization that allows for full human flourishing.

Civic humanists have always understood that they would have to defend their republics and, thus, the civic tradition has always contained a philosophy of war and of military service^¾a fact that is quite often overlooked.¹⁹ While the transcendent purpose of a republic is to create and maintain peace, the fact of war cannot be wished away. Therefore, the civic humanists studied what was required to fight and to win, and foremost was the need to be prepared. As de Grazia wrote about Machiavelli: "War, the hell that it is, the gore that it trudges in, at best can be held to a minimum only by preparing yourself to fight."²⁰ But such preparation had to begin with a secure philosophic foundation.

Within the civic tradition exists a martial philosophy, which I shall term *martial virtue*.²¹ When students of civic humanism encounter military issues, they tend to give more

¹⁸H. George Frederickson and David Kirkwood Hart, "The Public Service and the Patriotism of Benevolence," *Public Administration Review*, 45 (September/October 1985), 547-553. This interpretation creates some interesting problems for the military when the civilian leadership violates the tenets of the founding values.

¹⁹For instance, Baron observes that "A history of these early Renaissance ideas and ideals of citizen-soldiership has never been attempted." Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*, p. 560.

²⁰De Grazia, p. 167. For the problems caused by mercenary troops, see Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, trans. L.F. Banfield and H.C. Mansfield, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1525] 1988).

²¹The term most often encountered in the literature is "martial spirit," but I prefer the term "martial virtue." It emphasizes the necessary relationship between the civic virtues and the

attention to the adjective, "martial," rather than to the noun, "virtue." This is a serious error, because *martial virtue is, first and foremost, a moral theory about the good character required in military theory and practice.*

Accordingly, martial virtue will be defined as: those qualities of civic character that impel individual citizens to accept their moral obligation to prepare, support, and fight in defense of the republic^{3/4} which means to fight for the primary values of their polity. It assumes that *the virtues necessary for good citizenship are also the virtues necessary for both military service and warfare.* In other words, martial virtue sets the moral parameters for the soldiers of the republic.

Martial virtue has always been considered an essential part of civic humanism. As John Todd White has written: "The central idea of an anti-army ideology was that the army should reflect the society it was raised to defend. *The citizen and the soldier had to be one.*"²² To illustrate further, Quentin Skinner, in a comment about Machiavelli, wrote: "For the willingness to fight on behalf of one's *patria*, the readiness to employ violence in its cause, had always been treated as an indispensable aspect of the *virtus* of the true citizen."²³ Martial virtue was most often discussed in the context of the debates about the moral and military superiority of citizen militias over standing armies and mercenary troops, and the Founders of the American Republic got caught up in those debates. A particularly influential voice for the militias, during the Enlightenment, was the Scot, Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (1653-1716), who wrote: "A good militia is of such importance to a nation, that it is the chief part of the

military virtues.

²²John Todd White, "Standing Armies in Time of War: Republican Theory and Military Practice During the American Revolution" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1978), p. 210. This is an excellent piece of work and should be published.

²³Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought: The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), Vol. One, p. 130.

constitution of any free government."²⁴

The Founders, Citizen Militias, and Martial Virtue

In Great Britain, in the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, the major political groups debated the issue of what kind of an army they should have.²⁵ The participants fell back upon the arguments that had been raised in Classical Greece and Rome, and in Renaissance Italy. Generally, militias were favored by the republican parties, while standing armies were advocated by the royalists.²⁶

The broad strands of the argument were as follows. Standing armies were called into being by the supreme executive power in the nation. Since military life was a "constant trade to live by,"²⁷ the troops in a standing army could only be employed as soldiers. This represented a real drain upon the treasury of the government, but of more concern to the civic humanists was their constant threat to the rights of the citizens. Any rulers who wanted more power could use the standing army against their own citizens.

Also, there was the question of what kind of men would seek a career as a professional soldier. Many of the proper civic humanists believed "that military service was a mean and

²⁴"A Discourse of Government With relation to Militia's" (1698), in Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, *Selected Political Writings and Speeches*, ed. D. Daiches (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), p. 18. Bruni believed that "arms [were] the *ultima ratio* whereby the citizen exposes his life in defense of the state and at the same time ensures that the decision to expose it cannot be taken without him; it is the possession of arms which makes a man a full citizen...." Pocock, *Machivellian Moment*, p. 90.

²⁵There was no debate about the fact that there had to be a professional navy: the costs and technologies required a permanent force.

²⁶The arguments are well-summarized throughout the superb book by Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959).

²⁷Robertson, p. 149.

repulsive occupation fit only for those who had nothing to sell but their own skins."²⁸ They worried that the presence of a standing army in their midst would be a constant source of moral corruption.

Sometimes a standing army was not sufficient, which led to the employment of hired mercenary units. These mercenaries could be used as independent units, or -- as in the British use of Hessian mercenaries in the Revolutionary War -- mixed in with units of the standing army. The consensus among the civic humanists was that mercenaries were both unreliable and certainly uncivil. They "fight poorly because they are not a part of what they fight for; they lack *virtus* in the field because they lack that *virtus* which can be exercised only in the city."²⁹ Moreover, mercenaries were apt to turn on their employers if they saw the chance for gain in such betrayal.

This brought the debate to the matter of citizen militias -- fighting units raised from among the citizens themselves. This was the position of the civic humanists, who argued from the beginning that military service was not only honorable, but also essential for good citizenship. Hans Baron, writing about Quattrocento Italy, summed it up:

The concept of citizenship which sets the tone of Pericles' speech rests on the conviction that in a healthy republic the citizen must serve his commonwealth on the battlefield as well as in public office.³⁰

In other words, the willingness to personally take the field in battle in defense of the values of the republic is considered the litmus test of good civic character. Every citizen must, potentially, be a citizen-soldier, for the ultimate *moral* test of civic virtue was the willingness

²⁸Bayley, p. 323.

²⁹Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 89.

³⁰Baron, *Crisis*, p. 430.

of all citizens³¹ to fight for the republic that supports the virtues essential to true human happiness. Hence their nearly reverent attitude toward the concept of a citizen militia.

To conclude, they believed that a proper militia could literally save a nation. Note Robertson's summary of Fletcher's ideas concerning the reform of Scotland:

...if at the same time Scotland's liberty and independence were renewed by the essential institutions of free government, a parliament and a militia, then not only would the nation escape the trap of poverty and break the chains of its dependence on England; but it could attain, without corruption, a level of prosperity, culture and political virtue surpassing even that of classical antiquity.³²

This was an argument that the Founders of the American Republic would have been comfortable with. At the beginning of the revolution they had few doubts about the fighting abilities of their citizen soldiers: they only worried whether they had sufficient virtue.³³

By the time of the Colonial debates over independence, the men who would become the Founders had accepted the civic humanist argument about the moral and military superiority of citizen militias—to the extent that they were willing to rest the fate of the new nation upon them. The Founders were familiar with, and impressed by, the militia debates in Great Britain in the late 17th and early 18th Centuries.³⁴ Even though the colonial experience with

³¹I will not deal with the issue of gender in this essay. Women were not expected to be soldiers in the traditions I refer to herein. But times have changed, and I will simply express my point of view, and leave it at that. I believe that gender should be irrelevant to military service, including combat. The only exceptions apply to both men and women: they must be individuals of good moral character; and they must be able to keep up -- to meet the physical, mental, and moral demands of military service.

³²Robertson, p. 150.

³³White, p. vi.

³⁴See J.R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965) and, especially, Lois G. Schwoerer, *"No Standing Armies!": The Antimilitary Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974). For an brilliant analysis of that same argument in 15th Century Florence, see

militias in the French and Indian War had not been successful, nonetheless the Founders had come to believe in the moral and martial superiority of citizen militias. Because militias put "the sword into the hands of the subject. . . .",³⁵ they were seen not only as the most effective fighting force, but also as the ultimate protection from would-be tyrants.

Further, their comparative lack of professional military training would be more than compensated for by their passionate loyalty to the rights embodied in the polity. Robertson summarized Hume's position:

Entrusting defence to a universal militia, which can be called out as necessary in emergencies, will obviate the need for a permanent establishment of any size, and thereby ensure the minimum diversion of the nation's resources. At the same time the involvement of all citizens in the defence of their families and property will harness the improved martial spirit fostered by commercial habits of industry and discipline, while the possession of arms will provide the people with the surest guarantee of their political liberty.³⁶

In that same vein, Neal Wood notes: "Xenophon made the brilliant discovery that an army, like a city, is a community of friends."³⁷ *Thus, the citizen-soldiers would fight as a band of brothers in a just cause*, and it was believed that such martial virtue would defeat anything the British could throw at them.

The Founders agreed with Pericles: "If we turn to military policy, there also we differ from our antagonists [by] trusting less in system and policy than to the native spirit of our

C.C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The De Militia of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961).

³⁵Fletcher, p. 3.

³⁶Robertson, p. 173.

³⁷Neal Wood, "Introduction," to Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, trans. E. Farnsworth (rev.ed.; New York: Da Capo, [1521] 1965), p. lviii.

citizens."³⁸ They drew most of their ideas about the meaning of military service and warfare from their knowledge of Classical Greece and Rome, and the anti-army arguments of the Scottish and English Enlightenment.

One of the myths about the citizens of the Colonies, at the time of the Revolution, was that they were all frontiersmen, adept in the use of firearms and savvy as to the conduct of guerrilla warfare against the Indians. The fact was, however, that most of them, and particularly the Founders, were prosperous farmers or urban gentlemen, with little or no practical experience in armed conflict:

Americans believed they possessed one further advantage that would assure victory; *they had arms and knew how to use them....* In the final analysis [however] there is sufficient evidence to cast serious doubt on the existence of an armed population in America on the eve of the war, at least to the extent that has previously been supposed.³⁹

This lack of experience caused serious problems for the Colonial army, and its commander, George Washington.

So, because the gentlemen of the Continental Congress were steeped in the classics, it was understandable that they would believe the arguments of the civic tradition, and that the colonial militias would triumph over the professional army of Great Britain. They believed this not from experience, but from their reading. Obviously, the professional army of Great Britain, along with their mercenary hirelings, were recruited from the dregs of humanity, and fought only for themselves. It was clear to the Founders that they would never be able to vanquish the sturdy citizen militias of the united Colonies, who -- as free men -- fought for their freedom, their families, and their homes.

³⁸Thucydides, *The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War*, the Crawley translation (New York: Modern Library, 1951), p. 104.

³⁹White, pp. 96, 97. Emphasis added.

This was important for another reason. As White observes:

Dependence on the militia was not recourse to a proven means of colonial defense. Rather, it was a conscious decision based on anti-army ideology and the fundamental tenets of republican thought. It transcended military considerations.... The viability of the militia was, then, a prerequisite for successful revolution, not because of what it meant for success on the battlefield but because a strong militia proved the virtue of the people. . . . *Free societies had to be defended by free men.*⁴⁰

This confidence was typified by George Washington himself. A man of great good character, he believed his citizen soldiers would be cut from the same cloth and, to an extent, they were. But, as events demonstrated, they were inadequately trained, and the militias too often broke before the onslaught of the professionals. Thus it was that the Colonial defeat at the Battle of Long Island had consequences far beyond the clash of arms. It forced Washington to re-evaluate his military philosophy.

For Washington, the Battle of Long Island had been deeply disillusioning (if in the long run educational). His military thinking had been grounded on the hope that his virtuous citizen-soldiers would prove in combat superior, or at least equal, to the hireling invaders.⁴¹

It is not my intention to trace the development of Washington's military thinking. Suffice it to say, he came to rely upon his regular forces as the constant element in his military strategy -- even as he learned how to use his militia units. Out of the refiner's fire came a more sophisticated attitude about what a uniquely American army ought to be. Washington never sacrificed his ideas about the necessity of martial virtue, in both war and peace. While virtue was always his foremost criterion, he began to think anew about how to combine the

⁴⁰White, p. 75. Emphasis added.

⁴¹James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington in the American Revolution (1775-1783)* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), Vol. II, p. 116.

best qualities of citizen soldiers and regular soldiers.

The harsh realities of warfare, along with advanced military organization required more training than occasional (and often bibulous) militia musters on the village green. Washington had misjudged the realities of military training and, after the Battle of Long Island, he came to understand that there had to be a small, professional cadre who could not only train the militia units,⁴² but could serve as the core of a regular army composed of citizen soldiers.

Furthermore, Washington quickly realized the fallacy of the civic humanist belief that any gentleman of proper breeding could easily become a military leader. As Fehrenbach wrote about the modern context:

While few men, legislators or otherwise, have felt down the years that they could command ships of the line, or marshal air armies without specialized training, almost any fool has felt in his heart that he could command a regiment.⁴³

This same attitude prevailed for too long in the civic tradition.

And this brings us back to the quotation from Adam Smith in the epigraph. With his usual perspicacity, Smith understood that more was needed than the citizen armies of yore:

In the present times, indeed, that martial spirit alone, and unsupported by a well-disciplined standing army, would not, perhaps, be sufficient for the defence and security of any society. But where every citizen had the spirit of a soldier, a smaller standing army would surely be requisite. That spirit, besides, would necessarily diminish very much the dangers to liberty, whether real or imaginary, which are commonly apprehended from a standing army. As it would very much facilitate the operations of that army against a foreign invader, so it would obstruct them as much if unfortunately . . . they should ever be

⁴²The importance of the professional cadre can be seen in Washington's frantic attempts to find professional soldiers who could train his citizen levies -- a desperation that led him to rely upon the knavish Charles Lee.

⁴³T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), as quoted by Samuel Zaffiri, *Hamburger Hill: May 11-20, 1969* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1988), p. 245.

directed against the constitution of the state.⁴⁴

What Smith and, eventually, Washington understood was that while militias could be useful in specific situations, they could not fight a modern war. The obvious conclusion, then, was that while the *spirit* of the citizen militia had to be preserved, it had to be based upon a small professional army. A new form of an army was needed.

"Armed Virtue": Martial Virtue and a Civic-Army⁴⁵

The argument of this paper is that the professional military establishment of the United States is, and ought to be, the moral descendant of the ideal of the citizen militia of the civic tradition, rather than the descendant of the ideal of the standing army. As such, its underlying moral philosophy must be derived from martial virtue, which is civic virtue gone to war. For that reason, civic-soldiers must never shift their moral gears when called to military service. As Machiavelli observed:

Many are now of the opinion . . . that no two things are more discordant and incongruous than a civil and a military life. Hence we daily see that when a man goes into the army, he immediately changes not only his dress, but his behavior, his company, his air, his manner of speaking. . . . For a man wanting to be ready-equipped for any sort of violence . . . thinks no dress fit for his purpose but a suit of armor. And as to civility and politeness, how can we expect to find them in one who imagines that such things would make him look effeminate and that they would be a hindrance to his work, especially when he thinks it his duty, instead of talking and looking like other men, to frighten everyone he meets with a volley of oaths and a terrible pair of whiskers?⁴⁶

But times and technologies have changed, and, even as Washington discovered in the

⁴⁴Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p. 787.

⁴⁵White, p. 346.

⁴⁶Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, p. 3.

Revolutionary War, citizen militias are insufficient for modern warfare. Thus, I will refer to the military of civic humanism as a *civic-army*, made up of *civic-soldiers*.

To begin with the obvious, the American military is Constitutionally and properly subservient to the appropriate civil authority.⁴⁷ But, as with citizenship, a purely legal, or utilitarian, relationship is morally insufficient in the civic tradition. A civic-army must be composed of free citizens who serve voluntarily because they believe in the founding values, and who voluntarily surrender some of their civil rights in order to serve. This is equally true for the professional civic-soldier as it is for the draftees called up in emergencies.

It is essential for all of them to remember is that they are citizens first, and soldiers second.⁴⁸ This priority is essential, since a civic army has everything to do with the moral purpose of the government, which is the guarantee of the founding values to all citizens.

For that reason, the civic tradition argues that there is an essential synergistic relationship between good citizenship and military service. As Machiavelli wrote: "But if we consider the institutions of the ancients, we shall find that there is a very close, intimate relation between [a civil and a military life], and that they are not only compatible and consistent with each other, but necessarily connected and interrelated."⁴⁹ The key to a civic-army is the same as the key to a good republic: *everything turns on the moral character of the individual citizen and the individual civic-soldier*.

⁴⁷See the most informative debates, in the relevant sections, in Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner (eds.), *The Founders' Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), in five volumes.

⁴⁸"The aim of the general and his army is victory over the enemy for the sake of the civic purpose of security and prosperity. All soldiers should be citizens, but soldiering should be only a part-time occupation of the citizen." Wood, "Introduction" to Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, p. lxxviii. The conception of a civic-army raises some interesting questions about the privileges of rank, and the treatment of the civic-soldiers.

⁴⁹Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, p. 4.

I will sketch out, in broad outline, the ideal of a civic-army, in seven general categories.

1. Martial Virtue and the American Philosophy Of War.

Based upon my claim that the United States was founded in the civic tradition, that our initial military philosophy was decisively influenced by the civic tradition, and that we must fight in conformity with the founding values, then a uniquely American philosophy of war and military service emerges.

To begin, we must return to the absolutely essential synergy between civic virtue and martial virtue. As Pocock observes:

Military *virtu* necessitates political virtue because both can be presented in terms of the same end. The republic is the common good; the citizen, directing all his actions toward that good, may be said to dedicate his life to the republic; the patriot warrior dedicates his death, and the two are alike in perfecting human nature by sacrificing particular goods to a universal end, *and it may be through military discipline that one learns to be a citizen and to display civic virtue.*⁵⁰

This does not mean that civic humanism either requires or desires war; to the contrary, civic humanism is all about peace. But because the reality of war is always present, a republic must always be prepared for its eventuality. A *sine qua non* of the civic tradition is that *all* of the citizens, rather than unwilling conscripts or hired troops, must be willing to go in harm's way.

Second, in the civic tradition, wars were fought by soldiers who understood and believed in the values upon which the polity was founded. No theme is clearer than this one, as one follows the civic tradition through the ages. It is the belief in the moral rightness of one's *patria* that gives legitimacy to the war—and the civic-soldier is expected to understand clearly what those values are. In the United States, the only justification for war, then, is that

⁵⁰Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 201. Emphasis added.

it justly secures the founding values for all citizens.

Furthermore, this means that all American military affairs must be conducted by men and women cognizant of, and believing in, the founding values. Because of the substance of the founding values, all wars are immoral, because they involve the taking of human life—the ultimate deprivation of an individual's civil rights. But when war comes, it must be conducted—from training to battle—according to the principles of the founding values.⁵¹

Third, as the civic tradition had evolved by the time of the Enlightenment, no wars of conquest or empire were allowed by the tenets of martial virtue.⁵² For America, war can only be morally justified if it is either defensive or protective. For instance, in World War II our declaration of war against Japan was defensive, because we were attacked; the declaration of war against the Nazis was protective, in that it was in support of moral friends against enemies with aspirations of global conquest.

One of the great influences upon the philosophers of the civic tradition was the Greek aristocrat, Xenophon (c434-c355 BC.). In what can best be termed a "historical novel" (perhaps the first of the genre), he burnishes the escutcheon of Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire, in an attempt to describe the Ideal Ruler. Assembling his troops for a campaign, Cyrus exhorts them to nobility, and makes the following—and germane—observation:

...we have no ill-fame to fear: none can say we covet another man's goods

⁵¹I believe there is a very close parallel here to Constitutional law doctrine that the Constitution follows the flag. Within the parameters of the imperative to victory, our treatment of the enemy must be guided by the founding values.

⁵²Of course, in Classic times, the extension of the empire was a primary goal of the state. But that had given way by the time of the Enlightenment. Now we must deal with the issue of wars waged to secure the rights of friendly nations, such as the United States participation in the Korean and Vietnamese Wars. I believe that such commitments can be legitimate but, since it is not the subject of this paper, it will not be discussed.

unlawfully. Our enemy strikes the first blow in an unrighteous cause, and our friends call us to protect them. What is more lawful than self-defence? What is nobler than to succour those we love?⁵³

As the civic tradition evolved, the idea grew that wars should only be fought when provoked, and that the statesman, even more than the general, is the supreme embodiment of the purposes of civic humanism. That idea was central to the thinking of the Founders.

Fourth, civic-soldiers must love peace, and peace-time occupations, more than war. This is another constant theme in the literature. Also, from the earliest times, the civic tradition has understood that warfare can become a narcotic, and that there are some who will become war-lovers—relishing the pomp, powers, and self-aggrandizement of war—to the great detriment of the republic. The civic-soldier must always beware of that temptation.⁵⁴

If wars cannot be prevented, they must ended as quickly (but justly) as possible, so that the civic-soldiers might return to their civic participations as soon as possible.⁵⁵ As Machiavelli wrote about the Roman ideal: "The commanders . . . returned with eagerness to their former manner of living; and the common soldiers laid down their arms with much more pleasure than they had taken them up."⁵⁶

Fifth, the civic-soldier must always be truthful. This may seem an odd—even

⁵³Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, trans. H.G. Dakyns (Everyman's Library; London: Dent, [circa 361 B.C.] 1992), p. 30.

⁵⁴Robert E. Lee summed up the problem in a single sentence, to Longstreet, at the Battle of Fredericksburg: "It is well that war is so terrible -- we should grow too fond of it!" Douglas Southall Freeman, *R.E. Lee: A Biography* (New York: Scribner's, 1934), Vol. II, p. 462. As to the allures of power, Samuel Adams wrote to Paul Revere: "The Soldier should not lose the Sentiments of the Patriot; and the Pride of Military Rank as well as civil Promotion should forever give Way to the publick Good." As quoted by White, p. 201.

⁵⁵"A citizen called to arms, with a home and an occupation ... of his own will wish to end the war and go home...." Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 200.

⁵⁶Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, pp. 17-18.

simplistic—condition, but it is of the utmost importance. Truthfulness, between leaders and followers, and among citizens, is essential to the sense of civic trust. For the military, the first consideration is that they must never lie to the citizens of the Republic. Next, they must never lie to the civilian authorities. And, finally, they must never lie to history in order to protect a reputation. Granted, there are some occasions for secrecy—say, for instance, Project Manhattan—but they are far, far fewer than the facts warrant. To repeat, lying destroys the essential civic trust that holds the Republic together.

2. *Martial Virtue and Noblesse Oblige.*

The term *noblesse oblige* is not something left over from the novels of Sir Walter Scott and Raphael Sabitini. In general, it means that rank implies—requires, in fact—moral nobility. It also means that rights imply duties. Following David Norton, we are obligated, because of our human-ness, to express our moral natures in morally noble actions,⁵⁷ in both peace and war. Two things must be mentioned. First, following Bruni, the civic-soldier must "Scorn all baseness, as your oath requires."⁵⁸ In other words, the civic-soldier must never debase himself or herself by sordid behavior, contrary to the founding values. But it also means that just doing one's job is not sufficient. One cannot be a "prudent" civic-soldier, doing only what is necessary to fulfill the mission. As Adam Smith said about the prudent man, he is worthy of only a certain "cold esteem."

Noblesse oblige means that one acts always in a morally superior manner. Further, it requires that civic-soldiers can never rest on their laurels: they must be striving constantly for moral improvement. As Xenophon wrote: "Once to have been valiant is not enough; no man

⁵⁷David L. Norton, *Personal Destinies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 319-320 *fn.*

⁵⁸Bayley, p. 335.

can keep his valour unless he watch over it to the end."⁵⁹ Why? In addition to the happiness that *noblesse oblige* brings, it is also the basis of his or her authority.

This is wonderfully illustrated by comparing the military careers of two Civil War officers, men of approximately the same age: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and George Brinton McClellan.⁶⁰ Their stories are familiar but, suffice it to say, Chamberlain remains one of the classic exemplars of *noblesse oblige*—a soldier whose courage and integrity increased as the war progressed—while McClellan, given every advantage, showed himself a moral and physical coward. I've had students read the biographies of the two, and write about the concept of noblesse oblige, and it has proved to be a splendid instructional experience.

Let me add a final note on this subject. Civic-soldiers, and especially the professional civic-soldiers, must never use their military offices or their accomplishments for monetary gain or self-aggrandizement. Bruni was explicit about this, as described by Bayley:

... the citizen who is dedicated to military service ... will not seek his private advantage, and will devote all his exertions to the commonweal. Henceforth, any pursuit of monetary gain is contrary to his oath. For this reason the practice of trade is base and degrading in the warrior, however honourable it may be for others. Anyone who tramples on his sacred obligations ... and seeks to accumulate wealth, is violating his oath and must be considered in a sense a renegade and a deserter.⁶¹

Forrest Pogue, the biographer of General George C. Marshall, had to constantly reassure Marshall that he would make it clear that the general did not benefit from the books, that he

⁵⁹Xenophon, p. 222.

⁶⁰From the American Civil War, a supreme exemplar of martial virtue was Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. See Alice Rains Trulock, *In the Hands of Providence: Joshua L. Chamberlain and the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). An exemplar of the antithesis of martial virtue was George B. McClellan. See Stephen W. Sears, *George B. McClellan: The Young Napoleon* (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1988).

⁶¹Bayley, pp. 332-333.

had not used his military position and reputation for his own benefit.⁶²

In a civic-army, to have served is a matter of the greatest public honor. That honor must never be diminished by the conduct of a civic-soldier.

3. Martial Virtue and Military Service As a School Of Virtue.

The foundation of a civic-army must be the virtue of the individual civic-soldiers. Not only must their moral character must reflect the values of the republic, those values must be reinforced as a result of their military experience, from training to battle. Machiavelli understood that relationship:

But if we consider the institutions of the ancients, we shall find that there is a very close, intimate relation between these two conditions [civic and martial virtue], and that they are not only compatible and consistent with each other, but necessarily connected and interrelated.⁶³

In other words, in war civic-soldiers are bound to the same moral principles as the citizen in peacetime. White quotes Josiah Quincy, Jr.: "No free government was ever founded, or ever preserved its liberty, without uniting the characters of the citizen and soldier in those destined for defence of the state."⁶⁴ Take, for instance, the matter of courage. If an individual shows off by playing Russian roulette, courage is overshadowed by stupidity. Courage is admirable only in relationship to the nobility of the ends it is used in aid of, and the most admirable courage is that exercised in defense of the polity and its civic values.

First and foremost, then, civic-soldiers are, and must be treated as, citizens of the

⁶²See the Prefaces in Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall* (New York: Viking, 1963 to 1987), in four volumes.

⁶³Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁴White, p. 89.

Republic, with all of the rights and privileges of citizenship. As citizens, they are morally obliged to be knowledgeable about, and believe in, the founding values, which must be the foundation for all of their moral beliefs.⁶⁵ Thus, they must enter the service as believers, and their beliefs must be strengthened by their such service. As Robertson notes: "Morally citizens must possess the public spirit or virtue to participate actively in the community's government and defence; only thus can they realize the political liberty which the community's institutions make possible."⁶⁶

This means that military service must be consciously defined to provide a moral education. Bruni notes the ancient authorities "were unanimously of the opinion that the true city state ought to be functionally self-sufficient, *capable of supplying the absolute requisites of communal existence by the efforts of its members*. Thus by implication the performance of military duties was envisaged as a necessary activity of the citizen."⁶⁷ Since the purpose of the republic is the civic values upon which it rests, one aspect of the self-sufficiency must be moral education.

In that vein, Andrew Fletcher argued that there must be constant moral instruction for the civic-soldiers. After discussing their military training, he goes on to argue that service should be a "school of virtue," an education that would last for life:

The youth having been taught to read at schools, should be obliged to read at spare hours some excellent histories, but chiefly those in which military actions are best described; with the books that have been best written concerning the military art. Speeches exhorting to military and virtuous actions should be often composed, and pronounced publicly by such of the youth as were, by education and natural talents qualified for it [and] such of the youth as may be fit to exhort

⁶⁵I will not get into the complex issue of the place of religion. Suffice it to say, it is extremely important.

⁶⁶Robertson, p. 138.

⁶⁷Bayley, pp. 318-319. Emphasis added.

the rest to all Christian and moral duties.⁶⁸

This may seem hopelessly idealistic, especially to any of the older officers who ever tried to teach the troops those sessions on the "Code of Conduct." But not only can it be done, it has precedent: George Washington had Addison's play, "Cato," performed for the troops at Valley Forge.⁶⁹

On a final note, given the realities of war, there will always be moral *exceptions* to the civil rights and responsibilities of the serving citizens. Because fidelity to the values of the Republic is the primary obligation of citizenship, the moral reasoning behind such exceptions must always be made completely clear. Civic-soldiers must understand why some of their peacetime rights must be laid aside for the duration—and that is a function of education. Suffice it to say, such moral exceptions must be held to a minimum, and they must never violate the intent of the civic values.

4. *Martial Virtue, and the Moral Obligation To Serve.*

One of the most consistent and emphatic themes in the civic tradition concerns not only the moral obligation of every citizen to serve in the militia, but also of the enormous value of such service to civic virtue. Pocock, writing about Leonardo Bruni's arguments for the citizen militia, observed that he believed such military service was "an essential attribute of citizenship itself." He adds:

⁶⁸Fletcher, p. 21. This corresponds to Bruni's "eloquent excursus on the vital role of rhetoric in implanting and maintaining a heroic civic spirit compounded of fortitude and self-sacrifice." Bayley, p. 319, with reference to Cicero, *D oratore*, ii, 82,83.

⁶⁹Frederic M. Litto, "Addison's *Cato* in the Colonies," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 23 (July 1966), 431-439. On the matter of whether or not virtue can be taught, see the essays in Barbara Darling-Smith (ed.), *Can Virtue Be Taught?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), and the references therein.

Citizens with arms in their hands . . . can not only be praised as exemplifying Periclean virtue; it can be said that they fight better because they are citizens—from which it is only a step to adding that *the are better citizens because they are willing to give the supreme proof of virtue* . . . it is the possession of arms which makes a man a full citizen, capable of, and required to display, the multiple versatility and self-development which is the crown (and prerequisite) of citizenship.⁷⁰

The ever present possibility of having to put one's life on the line for the values of the republic should cause citizens to constantly consider the importance of those values. The civic humanists believed that one could only appreciate those things that one had to work and to sacrifice to obtain. As Xenophon wrote: "Let him learn the lesson that a man's enjoyment of all good things is in exact proportion to the pains he has undergone to gain them."⁷¹ It was in this spirit that the Founders concluded the Declaration of Independence: "And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

The positive reality of having to go in harm's way in defense of the founding values should cause all citizens to consider deeply the meaning of those values in their lives. The possibility of death or maiming provides a significant incentive for the study of the founding values. Such study will benefit one's civic participation, even if one doesn't go to war.

This is very important because it is a belief lost to democratic modernity; that not only does active citizenship make for better soldiers, but that military service makes one a better citizen. Anyone who defaults on this obligation—either through refusal, evasion, or desertion—should be allowed to immediately return to the community, forfeiting for life their rights to vote and to hold public office.⁷²

⁷⁰Pocock, *Machivellian Moment*, pp. 89 and 90. Emphasis added.

⁷¹Xenophon, p. 223.

⁷²True conscientious objectors are not subject to the penalties connected with non-service.

To amplify on this point, those who have benefited most from the system must be the first to serve, and to volunteer to serve. As White has written: "The emphatic statement that military service was the responsibility of the best members of society is a manifestation of republican ideology rather than colonial precedents."⁷³ Furthermore, such service must be in person: the wealthy and the well-connected must not be allowed to hire substitutes; they cannot be exempted from service.⁷⁴ As Fletcher wrote:

No bodies of military men can be of any force or value, unless many persons of quality or education be among them; and such men should blush to think of excusing themselves from serving their country, at least for some years, in a military capacity.⁷⁵

Much has been written about the trauma of the Vietnamese war, but the greatest moral failure, within the civic tradition, is almost never discussed, and that was the failure of those who had benefited most from the system to be the first to volunteer. The moral degeneration of the Republic was exacerbated by the failure of the winners to serve, and their willingness to let the losers bear the burden for them.

5. Martial Virtue and the Love of One's Comrades In Arms

One of the central tenets of civic humanism is the necessity for citizens to love one another, if the republic is to function as it should. For instance, in commending the admired politics of ancient Greece and Rome, one of Machiavelli's characters states the duty "to oblige

⁷³White, p. 101.

⁷⁴In an otherwise impeccable life, the great moral failure of William James was that he hired a substitute to go to the Civil War for him, while he went off to Europe to study. In the civic humanist tradition, he should have been the first to volunteer. Gerald E. Meyers, *William James: His Life and Thoughts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 31.

⁷⁵Fletcher, p. 19.

citizens to love one another. . . ."76 And, given the interrelationship of civic and martial virtue, the same affectionate relationship must exist among the soldiers of the civic-army. This notion has often been discussed under the rubric of the "fraternity of combat,"77 but it has seldom been considered a topic of major concern in military theory and practice.

Yet the capacity of civic-soldiers to love one another is what makes a civic-army both unique and formidable. There are several aspects of this moral obligation: commanders must love their subordinates; subordinates must love their commanders; and the soldiers must love one another. To begin, one of the founders of the Israeli Army, Yigal Allon, made the following observation about command:

The commander is the father of the unit; that is to say he nurtures the unit as a family of soldiers, small or large.... Only the commander whose attitude towards his men is that of a father to his children has the right to send them into action. The men who know that their commander values their lives as his own and will not lightly expose them to mortal danger will comprehendingly and willingly accept any task he may impose upon them, be it the most difficult and hazardous.⁷⁸

When stating that subordinates must love their leaders, I do not refer to the charismatic leader. Far from it, for the civic tradition stresses the leaders should be drawn from among the able, rather than the charismatic. That practice can lead to the paradox of the troops of the Army of the Potomac venerating a morally inadequate commander like McClellan. Rather, this form of love is best expressed in an observation made by one of the professor-turned-soldier, Joshua Chamberlain's men:

⁷⁶Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, p. 12.

⁷⁷I use "fraternity" in a non-gender sense. We have words for brotherhood (fraternity) and sisterhood (sorority), but none for men and women banded together. "Gentility" is too value-laden to do the job.

⁷⁸Yigal Allon, *The Making of Israel's Army* (New York: Bantam, 1970), pp. 286, 288.

...we have as good a Col as in the Army of the Potomac—he is full of military brass but considerate & treats the men like men not dogs as Ames did. *He don't say go boys, but come.* Why! Would you believe it he had some breastworks to throw up and what does he do but off coat and into it himself . . . every man had the same story to tell of their Col.⁷⁹

This is a love given by soldiers for the right reasons.

Finally, the soldiers must love one another. Most authors that deal with valor stress that it most often stems from the love of the soldiers for each other, rather than for the cause, or for the leadership. With a few exceptions, I believe the greatest valor is always the product of such love. Although stated in terms of honor, this is the idea behind Rahe's observation about the Hoplites of Greece:

For success, the modern army depends on the courage of the minority of men who actually fire their guns; the Greek phalanx depended on the effort of *every* man.... The man who betrayed his fellows, leaving them to die by breaking ranks and opening the way for the foe, would not soon be forgiven and could never be forgotten. In a sense, he had spent his entire life preparing for this one moment of truth.⁸⁰

And that capacity for caring carries over into peacetime. It is harder to obtain and maintain there, but the fact of its existence in battle is the guarantor of the possibility of its existence in peace.

6. *Martial Virtue and Military Competence*

The problem of the appropriate military training for civic-soldiers and service has

⁷⁹Trulock, p. 118.

⁸⁰Rahe, p. 123. Emphasis added. See, also, Stanley Karnow's observations about the formation of the North Vietnamese Army, in his book *Vietnam: A History* (rev.ed.; New York: Viking, 1991), p. 197.

always troubled the civic humanists: how to train a citizen army so that it can triumph over trained professionals. It was the inability to solve the problem of training the militias that defeated so many of the proponents of militias in the founding years.

In the contemporary age, the issue has still not been resolved. But two facts remain: there must be a highly trained, professional civic-army as the core; and there must be a large body of well-trained civic-soldiers in reserve. Such reserve training must include all the areas of military competence, of course: such as military leadership, followership, and administration; military strategy and tactics; and military technology. But military training must also include the "school of virtue," mentioned above.

Beyond that, it becomes the moral obligation of the reserve civic-soldiers to keep themselves mentally, physically, and morally fit for any emergency. It was not only military preparedness that caused the Classical polities to emphasize individual fitness; they understood that such things, as remote as it may seem, actually make individuals better citizens in time of peace.

7. Martial Virtue and Civic Competence

As citizens age, they are less and less necessary for physical service. But they are more and more necessary for the support needed from the state itself. How much of the military wisdom of the older Socrates came from his years as service as a soldier? Granted, the military must be under civilian control, but how much better it is if those civilians have some knowledge of the military facts of life. As Fletcher wrote: "And if we did change our men during a war, we should have more men that would understand something of it."⁸¹

The body politic would be much wiser for the numbers of citizens who had served in the military. It backs up military competence with civic competence.

⁸¹Fletcher, p. 13.

Conclusion

The ideal of a civic-army is much more than just another way to raise an army. In the civic tradition, the citizen militias served much more than a military purpose. It had always been seen as the "traditional guarantee of civic freedom,"⁸² because, in Fletcher's words, it put the sword into the hands of the people. The civic philosophers argued that such military service should be a matter of honor with all citizens, and that those best served by the polity would be the first to volunteer in times of peril. While abhorring war, the conscripted citizens must believe it a privilege to serve—and fight, if necessary—in defense of the republic. Furthermore, as discussed above, military service was seen as a necessary adjunct to good citizenship, for it required "a scheme of military training for all freeholders, which is essentially a means of education in civic virtue."⁸³

In modern America, we have lost almost all vestiges of the concept of martial virtue and, because of that, we have lost a significant aspect of the civic tradition. Nowadays, we seem to believe that money is the necessary condition for a good military; that martial virtue can be purchased; that warfare is something that can be managed; and, finally, technology is the key to success. This diminished notion of martial virtue is destructive of the highest ideals of the Republic. It is long past the time to recover that ideal of civic-soldiers serving freely in a civic-army.

⁸²Robertson, p. 176.

⁸³Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 432.