# Preparing the Digger's Soul for Moral Injury:

## A Chaplain's role in developing Spiritual Resilience for Future Ready Australian Soldiers


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**Submitted in partial requirement for the degree of Masters of Theological Studies**

**Adelaide College of Divinity**

**15 October 2019**

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**Summary**

Maybe there is an inevitability to moral injury within soldiers due to the horrific reality they must be prepared to face while trying to maintain the standards of values and behaviour required by their country. The digger's character has been developed from sacred stories out of the trenches of history.

The identity of the digger is planted at recruit training and is fostered by the deep bonds formed with fellow soldiers, understood as mateship within the Australian Army. The soldier family, more critical and unlike any other family, fosters the digger identity that is interwoven within a larger identity. Drawing from works across disciplines an understanding and articulation of this mateship can be understood in terms of a spirituality for the digger.

The definition of spirituality, endorsed in the Australian Defence Force, identifies a deep concern from which purpose and meaning is drawn. In the West as we have become more comfortable materially, the position of spirituality has declined resulting in a restlessness of the heart. Within Australia we have adopted an idealistic notion of common sense in regards to spirituality. This in turn suggests an element of self-transparency that in modern society we generally lack, and even fear.

Modern scientific thought has accentuated the segregation of the heart and mind, resulting in a morally hollow language providing only a 'how' without a 'why' to the moral ambiguity of life. The moral component of fighting power is identified, by the Australian Army, as the most crucial component for mission success. Yet its development is prioritised below the physical and intellectual components, due in part to a lack of language; a result of forgetting sacred stories. This prioritisation has a negative impact upon diggers to deal healthily with morally ambiguous events. Much can be learnt from the significant research and treatment advancement around Moral Injury that can be bought to the left of bang. This thesis doesn't look to unpack moral injury or its cause but to begin wondering, by drawing from many disciplines, how Chaplains may contribute to preparing the soul of the digger for the moral dissonance they will encounter.

The Christian chaplain has a vocabulary that enables them to journey with the digger in their story. They offer a gift of discernment to the digger struggling for a better understanding of what is happening to their heart and soul. The Christian chaplain helps the organisation in remembering their own sacred stories in the face of the growing trend to draw vocabulary from fictitious and romanticised stories from foreign contexts.

Rather than the digger being seen as lacking faith, theirs is a spirituality that has awkwardly never fitted into the traditional paradigms of the Christian church. The reality for the chaplain is that their role carries the responsibility of being the voice of memory; reminding the organisation of its core identity. The chaplain must have the courage to name and, if necessary, confront the occasions

where the sacred has been segregated from the mission at the cost of the spirit of the digger. The Christian chaplain is placed within the units of the Australian Army to help prepare the men and women in uniform to face the morally challenging requirements of their service. There may be no preventing the spiritual wounds of military service, though the Christian chaplain can help the digger develop their spiritual language so they may maintain their grasp of the hope that is essential to resilience.

## Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

**Acknowledgements**

I give thanks for the Word of God that has shaped my own spirituality and for the people who have blessed my life with challenge and encouragement.

I am incredibly grateful to the supervision of Rev Dr Duane Larson who has been geographically distant yet has provided a constant, objective and encouraging voice. I am indebted to Dr Tanya Wittwer for her patience and determination in connecting myself with Larson and keeping me on track to completion.

I am particularly thankful for and indebted to Elferaan Williams who, while caring for a new born, agreed to take on the arduous task of proofreading this work.

A heartfelt appreciation for my colleagues in Australian Defence Force chaplaincy who have been influential in their willingness to engage in conversations. As well a huge thanks to the soldiers and officers of the Australian Army I have served alongside who have encouraged me with their deep conversations and authentic spirituality.

# Introduction

During the often referred to "great time of peace" (approximately 1970-1990; which could be stretched out to 1999 if you removed Australia's single year involvement in the Gulf War) there were limited resources available for the preparation of soldiers to deal with the moral ambiguity of the battlefield. The result of this is heard in the broken war narratives of our soldiers who found themselves struggling with the destructive outcomes from the experiences of betrayal, shame, and guilt; now named as moral injury.

Support chaplains during the great time of peace provided pastoral care and welfare support within units. During Australia's most recent involvement in operations some chaplains proved the incredible mission enhancement that chaplaincy can be with deployed forces. In all of this, chaplains encountered and cared for, with little formal training, those deployed members who were struggling with the unseen wounds of moral injury. Developing the soldiers' spiritual and moral resilience is critical in their preparation for facing potentially morally injurious events. Christian chaplains learning from the wide range of research into the identification and treatment of moral injury can assist diggers to understand and develop their spiritual language to ready themselves for potential unseen wounds.

The "moral" component of fighting power is identified as "the most important" next to the physical and intellectual.[1] Australian Defence Force (ADF) publications state that spirituality has a key role to play in the morale and welfare of uniformed members. With a growing number of members of the ADF recognising themselves as "no religion", or holding religious views other than Christianity, there has been little written to assist military commanders in understanding the connection of the "spiritual" with character and morality in relationship to military capability.

**Methodology**

There is a huge amount of research delving into the unseen wounds of veterans from around the world. In the last decade there has been some amazing work done and continuing in Australia with diggers and the wounds they carry on their souls as a result of their service. Unfortunately at the point of writing this paper there is no easily accessible work looking to draw lessons learnt from the research and introducing it into the preparation of the soldier.

This paper is an initial attempt of a serving Christian Chaplain to put together a framework within the current polity of the Australian Army. As such particular elements will not be explored as the

[1] Department of Defence, Executive Series: ADDP 00.6 Leadership (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2018), 2-4.

approved definitions will be used. This will create some limitations and unavoidable gaps within the paper as the attempt is to work within the constraints of the context of the Australian Army.

**From the Broken, Discerning Moral Emotions**

A contentious issue is how closely related some of the behavioural symptoms are between PTSD and moral injury: recurring nightmares or memories, isolating one's self from others, bouts of anger with no apparent reason, lapses in memory of the event, loss of interest in activities and events, trouble sleeping, engaging in reckless or self-destructive behaviour. Though there are these similarities, the distinction between discernment and diagnosis becomes clearer when one considers the differing feelings and emotions associated with unseen wounds.

> Moral injury is the complex "soul" wound that results from a person's inability to resolve the moral dissonance between their idealized values and their perceived experiences. This wound produces a chain of emotions and maladaptive behaviors that corrode character and damage an individual's capacity for living.[2]

Hodgson and Carey published an article in 2017 that gives an extensive overview of seventeen different definitions of moral injury. They emphasise this is not a comprehensive list, though it spans a fourteen year period from Shay in 2002 to Jinkersin in 2016.[3] There is no argument that something changes internally within soldiers; be that change a result of a morally injurious event they had witnessed or were a participant in, having a difficult reintegration back home, or there may have been an incident during domestic training. Tom Frame suggests that moral injury "as one form of unseen wound to the inner person. This injury is hard to describe - it cannot be seen..."[4]

Hodgson and Carey noted that though one could argue moral injury is an ancient phenomenon, it is a relatively new construct, having gone through significant transitional development in its definition.[5] My experience as an Australian Army Chaplain suggests that moral injury is a rather abstract concept that people within the military, church, and broader society struggle to grasp, but stirs something deep within them when they hear about it.

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[2] Duane Larson and Jeff Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul: Healing Moral Injuries from Military Service and Implications for the Rest of Us, (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2017), 5.

[3] Tim Hodgson and Lindsay Carey, "Moral Injury and Definitional Clarity: Betrayal, Spiritual and the Role of Chaplains," J Relig Health 56 (2017) 1212-1228.

[4] Tom Frame, Moral Injury: Theory to Practice, (Canberra: Australian Centre for the Study of Armed Conflict and Society, 2016), 15.

[5] Hodgson and Carey, "Moral Injury and Definitional Clarity," 1219.

# Introduction

There is recognition in the definitions that moral injury develops more from how the individual processes the perception of their experience than as a result of the facts of the incident. Some have suggested that there need not be a specific or even perceived traumatic event.[6] Through this lens, development of moral injury is therefore less about specific acts than about a generalised falling short, or perceived falling short, of moral and normative standards. In light of this, Frame suggested that to try and assess "the severity of moral injury is highly subjective" since it is based upon the opinion and judgement of the individual.[7] It is for this reason many commanders find it hard to understand and appreciate how an individual under their command came to be "injured". A classic example of this is seen in the response to a soldier who never "experienced" combat; being code for not killing someone or being shot at, receiving a diagnosis of an unseen wound.[8]

Brock and Lettini, among others, point out that many veterans do not view their moral injury as a psychological disorder but "have souls in anguish."[9] If this moral struggle is not addressed, it compounds. As Larson and Zust show in their model, the moral dissonance can become moral injury; dents in the soul.[10]**From Here or Before Here**

In explaining the necessity to deal with moral dissonance and the negative impact of compounding moral and spiritual wounds I use a story called the "Dying Garden":

> There was a garden; it was beautiful. The gardener woke each morning and spent the day tending to each of the beautiful plants. Throughout the day many people would stop to look at the beautiful garden and speak with the gardener. Each day the gardener would wake and tend to each of the plants in the garden. The gardener would talk with each person who stopped to admire the beautiful garden.
>
> One morning the gardener woke to find a plant dying. The gardener spent the day trying to ensure that the plant would recover. The next morning the gardener woke only to find no

[6] Tom Frame, Moral Injury, 21.

[7] Ibid., 17.

[8] In 2015 I attended a meeting with a Commander about a soldier who had, on the advice of the Medical Officer, been admitted to a veteran's mental health ward due to issues raised as a result of his deployment three years earlier. The Commander expressed his frustration in the following: "I don't get it Padre, he spent his deployment in a fortified bunker within a base within a coalition base. He never went on a patrol, he never even once fired his weapon or was fired at. How the hell could he be as fucked in the head as the Medical Officer is saying?" The Sergeant Major followed this with: "He's got a soft fucking heart, sir. Let's be honest that's all it really is."

[9] Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War, (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2012), 51.

[10] Rob Sutherland, "Moral Injury, Spiritual Wounds and Dents in the Soul: If Jesus is the Answer What is the Church's Role in Healing?" Military Christian Fellowship of Australia, accessed August 12 2019, http://mcf-a.org.au/articles/moral-injury-spiritual-wounds/.

> change to the dying plant. Again the gardener spent the day trying to fix the plant. Each morning the gardener rose to find no change to the dying plant and again spent the day trying everything they could to fix the dying plant. Each day less people stopped coming to look at the beautiful garden. The gardener tried harder to fix the dying plant.
>
> One day the gardener rose and decided that it was time to remove the dying plant. The gardener stepped into the garden to find that all the other plants in the garden had died.

Moral dissonance in itself is not a bad thing. Left unattended, outside a faith community, destructive behaviours can compound a negative narrative advancing the dissonance to wound and the wound to an injury. Any analytical model for moral injury needs to account for three interactive processes that combine to form the inner person: moral development, moral judgement, and moral reconciliation.[11]

One potential barrier to developing morally resilient soldiers is the analogies of "toughness" and "moral compass". Pauline Shanks Kaurin raises interesting arguments against these two old and widely used analogies. In regards to "toughness" she talks about the pervasive idea that character is formed by a certain age, not able to be changed, but somehow strengthened.[12] A significant issue with this analogy is that within the military, character can be simplified to "having enough fortitude to resist and not succumb to immorality"; stressing that moral failure is because you simply failed to do the right thing and therefore are weak.[13] This has significant impact upon moral injury and the emphasis, or lack of, which a commander will place upon the character development of their subordinates. The second analogy; that of the "moral compass", suggests that there is one direction or way that is moral, which disregards the context or environment.[14] Shanks Kaurin raises an interesting argument in regards to calibration. As a compass needs to be calibrated to be effective, Shanks Kaurin asks how does one morally calibrate to "true north" and what are indicators so that you know you have calibrated it correctly.[15] She goes on to suggest that if military commanders

[11] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 72.

[12] Pauline Shanks Kaurin, "Rethinking Character (Part I of III)", Practicing Philosophy in Real Time, accessed June 18 2019, https://shankskaurin.wordpress.com.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Pauline Shanks Kaurin, "Why your Moral Compass is Off..", Practicing Philosophy in Real Time, accessed June 18 2019, https://shankskaurin.wordpress.com.

[15] Ibid.

continue to hold these analogies as the way they think about character and moral identity, then soldiers are being set up for moral injury.[16]

**You Only Know What You Know**

> The Australian Army is a national institution; a professional fighting force, a force for good, earning and sustaining the trust of the society we serve. Army understands the unique responsibility to apply lethal force when required to do so. This demands physical, moral and intellectual standards of the highest order and continuous professional development.[17]

Most commanders would be upset, and quite offended, to be accused of setting their soldiers up for moral injury. In today's information drenched society it is not accepted within the military to simply say "I didn't know."

I argue instead that the modern focus on the "professional" offers a hollow language for the modern soldier in the face of the morally complex and ambiguous future conflicts they will face. And so, in the following pages I explore a notion of the soldier's identity as one intertwined with a diversity of identities, almost like a plant among the garden or a thread within a web. The language of soldiers' narratives, developed through their primary group, is crucial in preparing them for moral dilemmas on the battlefield. Within the Australian Army the values embedded in the concept of the digger becomes the individual's source of meaning and expression of purpose; their faith. Over the decades the Australian Army has forgotten its stories that displayed the great depth of spirituality that sustained the diggers on the shores of Gallipoli and in the mountains of Kokoda, even in the gaols of Changi and the rocks of Hellfire Pass. Some more recently have recognised the glimpses of this faith in the dusty actions in Iraq to the disastrous clean up in Banda Arceh.

There is a critical role for Christian chaplains in relation to the organisation's and soldiers' retelling of historical sacred stories that is important to consider here. There is a rising question of the legitimacy of religious chaplains within the secular organisation of the Australian Defence Force. Quite relevant to the need to recapture an "Australian" narrative identity, one aspect of the Christian chaplain's role has long been that of "story keeper". Reverend Sally Douglas, in a blog on the Richmond Uniting Church website, writes about the integral nature of story to Christianity: "What is more, gospel accounts tell us that this Word, Jesus Christ, tells story after story and calls us into

[16] Pauline Shanks Kaurin, "Moral Injury in War: Is Prevention Possible?" Practicing Philosophy in Real Time, accessed May 29 2019, https://shankskaurin.wordpress.com.

[17] Australian Army, Army in Motion: Chief of Army's Strategic Guidance, 2019, (Commonwealth of Australia: Australian Army, 2019), 11.

the fabric, the warp and weft, of this Divine story in our own lives, as a community, and as individuals."[18] Alongside telling the story is also the listening - "without judgement or agenda and in confidence."[19] The role of the religious chaplain, in being formed by the sacred stories of their communities, can be of integral help for diggers to identify the stories from which they can draw to develop their own spiritual and moral resilience so to be ready always to serve at their nation's request wherever needed. This role extends to assisting commanders to incorporate and take account this spirituality in planning and dealing with soldiers under their command in the battlefield.

[18] Sally Douglas, "What do you do?" Richmond Uniting Church (blog), August 23 2018, https://richmond.unitingchurch.org.au/2018/08/what-do-you-do/.

[19] Ibid.

# Part 1
# More Than a Soldier

> *I heard a story, how much is fact and myth I don't really know, however I do know that it is based on an actual event. There was a green on blue incident that resulted in the death of an Australian soldier, and the 'local' responsible had gotten away in the resulting confusion.*[20] *The platoon commander, a young lieutenant, knew that the platoon returning from a 72 hour patrol would be tired and when they heard the news would be rightly angry. Rage consumed the soldiers of the platoon upon hearing the news; they wanted to turn around and storm into the local village to find the culprit and kill him. The platoon commander stood between the fully equipped soldiers and the gate to the FOB (Forward Operating Base), for they hadn't unloaded their weapons and rage was driving their actions. The young lieutenant, freshly graduated from The Royal Military College - Duntroon, looking at each of the soldiers said: "The only way you are leaving this base is over my dead body." As raised voices expressed anger, disappointment, and desire for revenge, the platoon sergeant, who had been on the patrol and had also only just heard the news, moved and stood with the platoon commander.*

In the growing complexity of the modern battlefield there is more to being a soldier than killing another soldier. Due to growing difficulty to clearly identify "the enemy," soldiers will need to draw upon the elements of their character to make split second decisions and then live with the consequences of those decisions when they return to "ordinary life". Michelle Gratten suggested that "the proper mindset... keeping a strict ethical framework around the use of lethal force may help in preventing some of [the 'moral wounds of war']".[21]

The Australian Army echoes this reductionist account of what it means to be human, as well as what it means to be a soldier. The Army wants soldiers to be ready now and future ready through strong character, understood simply as "an ability to make ethical and moral decisions and remain accountable." This may be a clear idea of character but alone it is restrictive and limited, stripping the spirit of the digger and leaving a dented soul.[22] It is crucial that the Australian Army and its leaders, in developing strong character, have an understanding of identity that delves deeper than good decision making but appreciates the web that is the person.

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[20] "Green on blue" is a phrase that describes when there is a violent action between "friendly forces".

[21] Michelle Grattan, "Banning Soldiers Displaying Death Symbols is About the Right Military Mindset, Not Political Correctness", The Conversation, accessed November 5 2019, http://the conversation.com/banning-soldiers-displaying-death-symbols-is-about-the-right-military-mindset-not-political-correctness-95655.

[22] Matthew Stuart, "The Emptiness of Morale: a Forgotten Aspect of Service Support", Chaplain Matthew, accessed August 12 2019, https://chaplainmatthew.wordpress.com/2019/08/10/the-emptiness-of-morale-a-forgotten-aspect-of-service-support/.

# Part 1
# More Than a Soldier

**Not Just a Character**

In the 1985 TV mini-series, *ANZACs*, Australian actor Paul Hogan plays the character of Pat Cleary. There is a scene where Pat Cleary and another Australian soldier are standing on the side of a street in a French town in World War One. The young soldier directs Pat Cleary's attention to a British captain marching towards them receiving salutes from British soldiers. As the British officer walks past the two Australians, they continue to talk about the young French girl who just walked past them ignoring the British officer. This is the dialogue that takes place:

> British officer: "You two men. Stand fast there."
>
> Pat Cleary, with hands in his pockets turns to look the British Officer up and down.
>
> British officer: "Don't you salute in your army?"
>
> Young Australian Soldier: "Not a lot."
>
> Pat Cleary: "We used to, but we are trying to give it up."
>
> The two Australian soldiers turn their back on a bewildered British officer and wander up the street.[23]

In the book *The Spirit of the Digger* Wally Thompson is quoted saying: "People say Australian soldiers are not well disciplined and that's a myth, especially in the present day. They may be a little bit raucous and play up a little bit on leave, but that's spirit and you want that spirit. But in the field, on operations, they are moulded together as one."[24] Australian soldiers, affectionately nicknamed 'diggers', have always been known for their personality and grit on and off the battlefield. From the slopes of Gallipoli to the valley of Kapyong, diggers have been known to face overwhelming and horrifying situations to emerge with that personality and grit still evident on the surface. When General Stephen Day (Retired) wrote about the dehumanising nature of war, he expressed the importance to be diligent in the face of the hardships that erodes one's inner strength, their humanity and compassion; their spirit.[25]

With the focus in the Australian Army on being future ready, there are some who express a concern about downplaying the importance of character. Richard Thapthimthong, a Major at the time, wrote

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[23] ANZACs, "The Big Push," DVD, Directed by John Dixon, George T Miller and Pino Amenta, Nine Network, 1985.

[24] Patrick Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, Kindle edition, (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2003),loc 540.

[25] Stephen Day, "Thoughts on Generalship: Lessons From Two Wars," Australian Defence Force Journal 198, 45.

about the character of the soldier as the defining element with a killing power previously unknown due to advance weaponry and full digitisation. He even suggests that it is the soldier's character, and not all the technological and physical advancements, that will be the determining contributor to mission success.[26]

Unfortunately, when commanders seek ways to increase combat effectiveness, character is not the first thing considered. Thapthimthong points out the literature on character as a contributor to this due to it being "a twisted mess of convoluted information from which an agreed definition or concept is non-existent."[27]

For the Australian Army, historically character has been defined as: "those inner qualities of a person that are evident in behaviour that is positive and constructive in the development of self, relationships and community."[28] The doctrine goes further to suggest it is not simply an equation of exhibited qualities of a person. It also includes the person's belief system from which comes a person's purpose and meaning of themselves, others, and the world.

Many scholars draw attention to the evolving contextual complexity around the soldier. David W. Lovell writes about the diversity of tasks that soldiers are expected to perform in addition to armed conflicts.[29] The demand for soldiers to operate more independently in making sound judgements with technical proficiency and a strategic understanding can be an overwhelming and intimidating prospect. With the growing complexity that technology brings to the existing and unchanging moral ambiguity of the battlefield it is critical that the appropriate attention be given to the development of the character of these individuals.

The Australian Army recognises that developing character is a lifelong process, though the organisational process they see centralised in formalised instruction through guided experience that alongside is reflection.[30] Reflective thinking is seen as primary if an individual soldier wishes to

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[26] Richard Thapthimthong, "A Journey to Better the Character of Army's Leaders," (Australian Defence Force Academy, School of Business, 2017), 3.

[27] Ibid., 8.

[28] The Australian Army, LWD 0-2-2 Character, (Commonwealth of Australia: Australian Army, 2005), 1-3.

[29] "But soldiers are increasingly asked to do much more than fight in armed conflicts, especially over the last three or four decades. They act as peacekeepers, often in volatile situations. They act as emergency responders in natural disasters. And they act in constabulary roles in a variety of challenging areas, including drug and people smuggling."
David W. Lovell, "Creating Strategic Corporals? Preparing Soldiers for Future Conflict," ADF Journal, no. 1 (2017), 88.

[30] The Australian Army, LWD 0-2-2 Character, 4-7.

develop their character; historically, only truly effective if carried out in regards to the individual's experience.[31] The Ryan Review recommended that soldiers can develop their character, which they called "mastering the moral", through "understanding history."[32] The review expressed the importance of reflection on experience and history, as this further enables the organisation to turn civilians into soldiers by inculcating a sense of belonging that develops esteem and self-actualisation.[33] Thapthimthong suggested a revised definition for the Australian Army: "Character is the pre-dispositions of a person combined with aspects of their personality forged through experience and education personified in their adaptational reactions."[34]

**Once a Warrior Always a Warrior**

As humans we are very complex. We are full of emotions, ideas, and experiences that all collide in our memories and thoughts. They are in turn influenced by the many different external agencies in our lives. As a chaplain I have often heard from families that the person who has returned from deployment is not the same as the one who got on the plane six months earlier. Charles Hoge points this out when he remarks about how often surprise overcomes families at how difficult the transition is after their loved one returns from deployment due to the different person they have become.[35] He also goes on to suggest that this change is part of what it means to be a soldier.

I would suggest that this "change" begins much earlier than on deployment, the seed of this "other person" is planted at ab initio training and even when they begin the process of recruitment.[36] Modern Western thought would have us believe that there is a single "core self." This is a mistake. I propose that our identities are more woven, as though constituted within a web.[37] Pamela Cooper-White suggests the term "braided self"; that who we are as a person is influenced by many elements around us throughout our lives. It becomes hard to separate these influences and as we grow we soon develop the nuanced understanding of how to behave in different social settings and with different groups. I have often explained this with the analogy of wearing masks. Similar to that of

[31] Ibid., 4-8.

[32] The Australian Army, The Ryan Review: A Study of Army's Education, Training and Doctrine Needs for the Future, by Major General Mick Ryan, Commonwealth of Australia: Australian Army, 2016, 89.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Thapthimthong, "A Journey to Better the Character of Army's Leaders," 14.

[35] Charles W. Hoge, Once a Warrior Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home, (USA: Globe Pequot Press, 2010), xiii – xviii.

[36] David Wood, "An Essay on Moral Injury," in Moral Injury: Towards an International Perspective (Arizona: Centre on the Future of War, 2017), 11.

[37] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 87.

the Ancient Greek theatre masks, the actors were able to play multiple roles due to the masks' exaggerated features to make characters distinguishable from the others. Perhaps the most interesting philosophical aspect of these masks was the transformation they provided the actors from their ordinary and real selves; "[in] this disguise he could say and do things that could not be said and done in everyday life, and could present to the audience events, actions and ideas that were horrifying or ridiculous, inspiring or fantastic."[38]

Jonathan Haidt draws on the psychological truth that the mind is in a constant state of conflict between its divided parts.[39] Now, for Christians this has never really been a hard concept to grasp as one could argue it is seen in the words of Paul: "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want to do (Rom 7:18b-19)." [40] Historically in the West we have understood human development on an individualistic level, even to the point of seeing the environmental context as a hindrance to the individual reaching their fully intended potential.[41] This has grown to the point that our rhetoric has become that one must always be striving forward and to look to the past will simply hold you back from where you are heading.

This idea of human development in the West has been highly influenced by stage theories, with a significant focus on the cognitive functions; from X-age to X-age you will think like this, then from X-age to X-age you will think like this, so on and so on. Though there is some general truth in this, the reality is that human development is much more complex. Cooper-White expresses it beautifully this way: "Human development does not occur in a vacuum. To be human is to be in relation from the moment of conception. The development of human consciousness is a process of meeting, an increasingly rich and complex knowing and experiencing oneself in context."[42]

Haidt further suggests that social psychology has demonstrated that the metaphor of following "our inner moral compass" does not account for the strong influence from outside ourselves; "other people exert a powerful force, able to make cruelty seem acceptable and altruism seem

[38] "Teaching History with 100 Objects: A Greek Theatre Mask", The British Museum, accessed November 11 2018, http://www.teachinghistory100.org/objects/about_the_object/greek_theatre_mask.

[39] Johnathan Haidt, The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion, (London: Penguin Books, 2012), 27.

[40] Unless otherwise specified, this dissertation refers to the New Revised Standard Version, as per the recommendation of the Flinders University Theology Faculty.

[41] Haidt, The Righteous Mind, 40.

[42] Pamela Cooper-White, Braided Selves: Collected Essays on Multiplicity, God, and Persons, (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2011), 39.

embarrassing, without giving us any reasons or arguments."[43] To come back to this idea of two parts of us competing against each other, Robert Meagher suggested that this is "human nature"; its drive is about what we ought to do not what we actually do.[44] As we grow up we begin to discover that we are in fact free to choose something other than "the ought". Hence, the Army's desire to shift the weight of influence to the team, to one's mates and their chain of command.

Richard Schweder proposes the triad of "ethics" upon a person's moral decision making; the ethic of autonomy, the ethic of community, and the ethic of divinity.[45] The training that Recruits and Officer Cadets go through in the Army is about shifting the influence from "the ethic of autonomy" to "the ethic of community", in which is included "the ethic of divinity". The Army's way of doing this has significant echoes of Aristotle's understanding of the development of character as a cyclic process; "action shapes character and character shapes action".[46] The Army's basic training is about "the transformation of civilians from all walks of life into trained soldiers and officers" with the specific focus on the instinctive incorporation of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that sees them operating as individuals and in teams.[47] Leaders, at formal training establishments and within units, do this not only through formal instruction but also through informal techniques such as maintaining standards, group activities, and even the conversations in the boozer over a drink.[48] The informal techniques, centralising around iconography[49] and narrative, within the unit is how this "soldierly" identity is impressed and inculcated into the person beyond the training establishment: it is not just "integral to the uniform they must wear with pride" but becomes a part of them every moment of the day.[50]

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[43] Haidt, The Righteous Mind, 47-48

[44] Ibid., 10.

[45] Johnathan Haidt describes Richard Shweder's idea in his book as: "the ethic of autonomy is based on the idea that people are, first and foremost, autonomous individuals with wants, needs, and preferences. ... The ethic of community is based on the idea that people are, first and foremost, members of larger entities such as families, teams, armies, companies, tribes, and nations. ... The ethic of divinity is based on the idea that people are, first and foremost, temporary vessels with which a divine soul has been implanted." Ibid., 99-100.

[46] The Australian Army, LWP 0-2-2 Character, 1-4; Robert Emmet Meagher, Killing from the Inside Out: Moral Injury and Just War, (Eugene: Cascade Books. 2014), 9.

[47] The Australian Army, LWP-G 7-0-1 The Conduct of Training, (The Commonwealth of Australia: The Australian Army, 2015), 2-1

[48] The Australian Army, LWP-G 7-1-2 The Instructor's Handbook, (The Commonwealth of Australia: The Australian Army, 2017)

[49] Tom McDermott, "Avoiding the Descent into Barbarism", in Ethics Under Fire: Challenges for the Australian Army, ed. Tom Frame and Albert Palazzo (Sydney: New South Publishing, 2017), 42.

[50] Frame, Moral Injury, 58.

# Part 1
# More Than a Soldier

The soldierly identity becomes a "thread" prominent within the overall web. Tom McDermott talks about the Army becoming the *primary group* in the formation of identity: "Primary groups are most commonly found in families, and for many soldiers this is exactly how they consider their comrades."[51] David Wood gives words to this relationship from the perspective of those who "go to war" together: "in war you grow to love those with whom you serve."[52] He points out that "the seed" to this begins at recruit training with the narrative of being responsible for your mate, no matter what. The intensity of war forges this seed into a "commitment that can surpass in intensity any relationship that they will ever again experience."[53]

**It Is Not Only Killing in Foxholes**

From initial training the messaging of the Army as family is deep. The Army on its website under "Army life" says "Working for Army is not simply a career option. As a member you become part of our Army family..."[54] There can be no argument that this family is unlike any other, as it is built upon the ultimate premise that each member may one day die in an armed conflict away from home. Throughout history the military has used discipline as the glue to bind those who were once complete strangers into a tight group.

This is amazingly demonstrated in the mini-series *Band of Brothers* in the scene where a German General addresses his troops after the surrender:

> Men, it's been a long war. It's been a tough war. You've fought bravely, proudly for your country. You're a special group. You've found in one another a bond that exists only in combat, among brothers. You've shared foxholes, held each other in dire moments. You've seen death and suffered together. I'm proud to have served with each and every one of you. You all deserve long and happy lives in peace.[55]

There is more here than something that is purely intellectual. It is not enough in preparing soldiers to simply focus on cognitive processes, as some would argue.[56] Historically there has been a recognition of the deep spiritual bonds produced in the horror of war; "We few, we happy few, we

[51] Tom McDermott, Avoiding the Descent into Barbarism, 42.
[52] David Wood, An Essay on Moral Injury, 11.
[53] Ibid., 11.
[54] The Australian Army, "Army Life," accessed May 24 2019, https://www.army.gov.au/army-life.
[55] "Points," Band of Brothers, DVD, created by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg. (Hollywood, CA: HBO, 2002).
[56] Lovell, "Creating Strategic Corporals?" 95.

band of brothers; For he to-day that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother."[57] In the Australian Army, just like that with western society, we have stripped a sense of the sacred from reality, we have stripped the spirit to the point of disbelief.

[57] William Shakespeare, The Life of King Henry the Fifth, Act 4, Scene 3; "The Diggers' mateship extends beyond comradeship. It develops into a mutual respect and acquires an almost spiritual quality that binds men for life. It enables them to either embrace or to overlook their mates' foibles and to draw on seemingly limitless depth of commitment to each other. It helps to form teams with combined strengths far exceeding the sum of those of the members." Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, Loc 463.

# Part 2
# Human and Divine in the Soldier

> *There is a story, I may not get it right word for word, of a young veteran returned from deployment who was receiving therapy to deal with injuries visible and invisible. One day the young soldier broke down and said to the chaplain:"Padre, I'm seeing my psychiatrist and psychologist and doctor, I'm taking all the pills they give me and I'm doing their programs, why do I still want to kill myself?"*

There is a significant vagueness around an interdisciplinary agreed definition of spirituality.[58] For the purposes of the provision of chaplaincy support to the digger[59] within the ADF the Australian Defence Force Chaplains Committee have an endorsed definition:

> Spirituality is that aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to *God*, to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred. [60]

For a starting point in Australia often we draw from the US, particularly the research done with the military community. As a part of the Total Force Fitness program within the US Department of Defence, spiritual fitness is one of the eight domains alongside physical, medical, environmental, social, behavioural, psychological, and nutritional. To build an understanding of the domain of spiritual fitness it was identified that three terms needed to be understood: the human spirit, spirituality, and spiritual fitness. "The *human spirit* is the essence and animating force of the individual. … *Spirituality* refers to the continuous journey people take to discover and develop their human spirit. … *Spiritual fitness* refers to the individual's overall spiritual condition."[61] In relation to the definition of spirituality adopted by the ADF, the *human spirit* combined with *spirituality*,

[58] Lindsay Carey et al., "Moral Injury, Spiritual Care and the Role of Chaplains: An Exploratory Scoping Review of Literature and Resources," Journal of Religious Health 55 no. 4 (2016), 1221.

[59] I use the term "digger" here in the sense, that it is occasionally used, to refer to all members of the Australian Army. There is much disagreement upon when and towards whom it is appropriate to use "digger"; be it private equivalent, other ranks, all non-commissioned, or officers as well.

[60] Australian Defence Force Chaplains Committee, Essential Definitions (for use by ADF Chaplains) 06 March 2018, emailed to RAAChD April 17 2018.

[61] Patrick Sweeney, Jeffrey Rhodes and Bruce Boling, "Spiritual Fitness: A Key Component of Total Force Fitness," Joint Force Quarterly 66 (3rd Quarter 2012), 36.

from the US Total Force Fitness program, is closest in expressing what I have encountered with serving ADF members.[62]

**"I'm Not Religious Padre, But…"**

In the 1930s Carl Jung suggested that Western spirituality was in a precarious situation, and would continue to get worse "the more we blind ourselves" by focusing on material security, general welfare, and humaneness:

> The unexpected result of this spiritual change is that an uglier face is put upon the world. It becomes so ugly that no one can love it any longer - we cannot even love ourselves - and in the end there is nothing in the outer world to draw us away from the reality of the life within. [63]

Jung made the claim that this restlessness of the heart was initiated by the catastrophic results of WWI, in which he suggested there was "the shattering of our faith in ourselves and our own worth."[64] From the time of the Enlightenment science has been concerned with recording what is and what was good and beautiful fell below notice; truth became that which is verified as factual.[65] This was seen as a necessary movement away from "childish minds" yet others like Abraham Maslow and Mircea Eliade disagree and accredit it with the now de-sacralised view of the world.[66]

This has been recorded as a "battle" between the mind and the soul throughout history; not necessarily a recent phenomenon. As early as Saint Paul who writes about it famously in the line: "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Rom 7:15). Haidt points out that one of the truths of social psychology is that there are divided parts of the human mind which pull people in different directions; often we don't have the ability to control our actions.[67] Thomas Jefferson, in more poetic imagery, writes it thus:

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[62] In this sense, the human spirit propels people forward to take on challenges to further growth, serves as a guide to determine what is right and wrong, serves as a source of courage and hope, and provides the strength of will to live with integrity and meet responsibilities. Ibid.

[63] Carl Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1934), 245-246.

[64] Ibid., 234.

[65] Marcus Borg, The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith, (New York: Harper San Francisco, 2003), 29.

[66] Jonathan Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis, (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 206.

[67] Haidt, The Righteous Mind, 27.

# Part 2
# Human and Divine in the Soldier

> When nature assigned us the same habitation, she gave us over it a divided empire. To you [the brain] she allotted the field of science; to me [the heart] that of morals. When the circle is to be squared, or the orbit of a comet to be traced; when the arch of greatest strength, or the solid of least resistance is to be investigated, take us the problem; it is yours; nature has given me no cognisance of it. In like manner, in denying you the feelings of sympathy, of benevolence, or gratitude, of justice, of love, of friendship, she has excluded you from their control. To these she has adapted the mechanism of the heart. Morals were too essential to the happiness of man to be risked on the uncertain combinations of the head. She laid their foundation therefore in sentiment, not in science.[68]

One need not go far to see the confusion still at large within Western culture around this *esoteric* idea; there is even a cultural caution towards faith, spirituality, and belief within Australian society. As a result the Australian Defence Force is a petri dish of people trying to work this *stuff* out; sometimes it comes to a head on the morally ambiguous battlefield.

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, drawing out of a Christian paradigm, suggests that people's desire for "a different sort of life" does not materialise from nothing. The modern western person is caught in a whirlwind of busy, scattered, exhausted, and hurting days; that desire for a different life Calhoun suggests is an indication of "hungry souls".[69] Paul Tillich takes this further when he suggests that there is an awareness deep within humanity of belonging to something outside of themselves, something that is beyond owning like a possession.[70]

The thing that we are blinding ourselves to Peter Rollins calls a "lacking", and we humans think we can overcome it by filling it with something or someone else.[71] Rollins connects this lacking with the "sacred object", what Tillich refers to as "ultimate concern".[72] Rollins goes further to call it a *virtual reality*, "in that it does not actually exist, but makes an impact upon us."[73] Whatever you call it; psychic force, ultimate concern, sacred-object, God, Haidt reminds us that "people simply *do*

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[68] Ibid., 30.

[69] Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 15.

[70] Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 9.

[71] Peter Rollins, The Divine Magician: The Disappearance of Religion and the Discovery of Faith, (New York: Howard Books, 2015), 12-13.

[72] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 9.

[73] Rollins, The Divine Magician, 20.

perceive sacredness, holiness, or some ineffable goodness in others, and in nature."[74] The kicker is though we may experience it each day, if we don't reflect on it, engage with it, question it, or connect with it somehow in our lives, it will wash over us and leave us all the poorer. Tillich articulates this "ultimate concern" as bringing light to something of a person's being; he identifies it as humanity's awareness of that which is outside of itself and for which it is constantly striving for.[75]

**Faith as the Trusting Heart**

Australian writer Murray Davis suggests that across a significant number of spiritual notions around Australia there is the common concept "that the spirit refers to a non-material animating principle of life."[76] He goes on to suggest that this common concept also holds within it those aspects of one's faith as lived each day. He reinforces that regardless if someone refers to themselves as "no religion" there is still an element of the spiritual they hold.[77]

Spiritual is a highly nuanced word, Tillich reflects that it needs to be placed in the pile of terms "which need healing before they can be used for the healing of [people]".[78] Often it is associated with those moments of existence that are fleeting and difficult to pin down, so often appear to be beyond any attempt to categorise or measure. All the same "our desire for it influences our behaviour and drives us to certain actions" and as such we cannot simply say it does not exist even though it does not exist.[79]

Rob Sutherland, when talking with soldiers about the 'spiritual', talks about a person's Personal Belief Structure.[80] His simple definition, in my words, is about that 'thing' or 'things' from which you get meaning and purpose. His way of helping people to discern this is by suggesting that where they spend their money and time gives them an indication of what makes up their "Personal Belief

[74] Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis, 102

[75] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 9.

[76] Murray Davis, "The Dark Night of the Veteran's Soul - Understanding the Impact of Spiritual Wounds for Australian Veterans", Journal of Military and Veterans Health, 26, no. 2 (April 2018), 36.

[77] Unfortunately I find his language lacking; though he may not intentionally mean for it, his article implies that one needs to have an understanding of God or their spiritual beliefs in order for them to suffer a wound. I would hold that we are all spiritual, and as such susceptible to spiritual wounds, even if we do not have a formed 'religious' framework or a developed faith language to explain where we find our meaning and purpose in life.

[78] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, ix.

[79] Rollins, The Divine Magician, 19.

[80] Chaplain Rob Sutherland was my Coordinating Chaplain from 2014 to 2016, during which time I had numerous conversations around Personal Belief Structure with him.

Structure". I have heard Sutherland tell the story that when he takes soldiers through this exercise he lists on the board with them the things that they spend most of their time and money on. He says he always encounters something along the lines of: "Well then Padre, I guess VB is a part of my belief structure. Because I spend a lot of money buying it and a lot of time drinking it." His development and use of the "Personal Belief Structure" is a starting point for soldiers, often for the first time in their lives, to articulate where their sense of meaning and purpose comes from. This he uses as a way of helping them to formulate their language in regards to their moral voice.

In Australia we have adopted the "common-sense" mode in regards to what we believe. Rollins explains this idea as being the notion that "we are self transparent, we know what we believe … of course you know what you believe because you are you. You may not know what other people think but you can know what you think about a given situation, political or religious idea."[81] He goes on to point out that in reality we do not know what we believe because we are not truly transparent with ourselves. Haidt's idea of the WEIRDer (western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic) can be seen as a contributor to this, for this idea comes out of a notion that today we try and see the world not as connected but as separated objects.[82] We even become separated from ourselves.

Rollins goes further and suggests we actively hide from ourselves; as a protection mechanism so that we do not have to confront what we believe. Jung suggested that it was science that actually destroyed the reality of our inner lives as a refuge: "what was once a sheltering haven has become a place of terror."[83] Rollins uses the analogy that most people do not believe in ghosts but a lot of people will say they are scared of them, most people do not believe that a blanket will protect them from a knife attack but when home alone and hear something we pull the blanket up over our head to protect us.[84]

Believing and knowing are contrasted; "there are those things we know, and other things you're not so sure about."[85] Marcus Borg talks about faith as that which we turn to when belief and knowledge

[81] Peter Rollins, "The Case of the Missing Finger: Belief, Action and the Symptom," YouTube video, 26:57, July 23 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1OxpBh7zZY&feature=youtu.be accessed March 22 2019.

[82] Haidt, The Righteous Mind, 96.

[83] Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, 236.

[84] Rollins, "The Case of the Missing Finger: Belief, Action and the Symptom".

[85] Borg, The Heart of Christianity, 29.

conflict. Faith he unpacks as trust, fidelity, and vision. Trust he presents as like the act of floating in water, if you tense up you will sink but if you relax you float.[86] Fidelity he explains is that commitment of oneself at the deepest level, the heart.[87] Vision highlights that how we see has a profound effect upon our life and our experiences of the world.[88]

It is important for us to unpack this loaded word of *faith*. Borg points out that it has become interwoven with the notion of holding to a correct set of teachings, doctrines or dogmas. Faith historically is not primarily about the beliefs in your head; within the Christian tradition faith was related to matters of the heart. Borg explains that the heart is a metaphor for the deep level of the self. As such faith, he points out, is the way of the heart.[89]

Tillich, in relation to his idea of the "ultimate concern", suggests that through our faith we are able to transcend and view the physical reality differently.[90] He suggests that faith is an act of "total personality", it is at the centre of our life and all its elements.[91] In antiquity the idea was that the heart was at the centre of the body, as the earth was at the centre of all creation; that which we seek in faith is at our centre. Every act of faith, which is directed at that which is our ultimate concern in our centre, requires participation from us. Without our participation "it is not possible to be concerned about it."[92]

**Feeding the Head and the Heart of the Soldier**

Even today the idea that spirituality and humanity as in opposition to one another is still prominent, as St. Paul believed: "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Rom 8:5-6). Within military circles, and in some non-military circles, there is a notion that this contrast is simply about

[86] Ibid., 31.
[87] Ibid., 32.
[88] Ibid., 36.
[89] Ibid., 26.
[90] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 9.
[91] Ibid., 4.
[92] Ibid., 99-100.

deciding to be a sheepdog and not a wolf or a sheep. "Now we aren't raising any sheep in this family, and I will whoop your arse if you turn into a wolf. But we protect our own."[93]

Jung suggested that the reality within is not that simple, as there is the negative side to every good quality: "nothing that is good can come into the world without directly producing a corresponding evil."[94] He suggests that though it is normal for us to get focused on this darkness there is beauty and light. This beauty and light we cannot see until we have accepted the reality of the darkness within us. From darkness light will always emerge.[95] This, as Tillich shares, is the risk of faith; "if it proves to be a failure, the meaning of one's life breaks down."[96] It is a choice that takes place deep within us.

This has been picked up by the recent attention towards the Cherokee parable:

> An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy.
>
> "It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil - he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego." He continued, "The other is good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you - and inside every other person, too."
>
> The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?"
>
> The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."[97]

Haidt reminds us that our lives are a "creation of our mind" that is built upon metaphors, or stories. "With the wrong metaphor we are deluded; with no metaphor we are blind."[98] These metaphors and

[93] American Sniper, DVD, directed by Clint Eastwood (Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2014).
[94] Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, 229-230.
[95] Ibid., 234.
[96] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 17.
[97] "Two Wolves: A Cherokee Legend," First People, accessed April 4 2019, https://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Legends/TwoWolves-Cherokee.html.
[98] Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis, 181.

stories give us a language that for Jung, is necessary for that which is deeply within us to find expression.[99]

Just as our identity is braided like a web, impacted by multiple influences, so too are our narratives trying to make sense and give meaning to our relationships with the world and those who also live in it.[100] At the beginning of each day there are principles we believe in and there are truths we trust, for the negative and the positive. They can be in the people around us, with whom we are in relationship, the possessions we own or desire to own, the institutions, organisations or teams we are a part of; even in ourselves and how we hope to live and act throughout the day. When trying to understand why we feel, act and think the way we do it is important to try and discern the meaning we attach to the everyday moral dissonance in our lives. This we regularly do in and through the stories in our lives; those we have inherited from our families and from the groups who have contributed to our identity.

[99] Jung, Modern Man in Search for a Soul, 234.
[100] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 89.

# Part 3
# Story of the Sacred and the Gun

In April 2018 the then Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Angus Campbell, released a minute on the use of symbology related to uncontrolled use of violence. It was very quickly posted onto social media sites and then picked up by mainstream media. The ABC News quoted a segment of the minute about the wearing of unauthorised patches or the use of images on shirts by groups: "It is always ill-considered and implicitly encourages the inculcation of an arrogant hubris and general disregard for the most serious responsibility of our profession; the legitimate and discriminate taking of life. As soldiers our purpose is to serve the state, employing violence with humility always and compassion wherever possible. This symbology to which I refer erodes this ethos of service."[101] There was no doubt that this document would cause controversy with many, the most widely quoted was that of an open letter written by Sergeant Justin Huggett, MG.[102] In it he argues that "the Army, in particular the Infantry, are a fighting force designed to kill! We are not and never should be a reflection of society, we are trained and programmed that way."

In producing professional soldiers in the Army three pillars have been named and identified as "mastering battle, mastering moral, and mastering war."[103] These pillars are critical to the concept of professional mastery that is demanded of all who wear the uniform and wish to serve "under the rising sun".[104] Professional mastery has traditionally been about the healthy integration of the three components of fighting power: physical, intellectual, and moral.[105] The moral component of fighting power is expressed as the "will to fight"; in the Army that "will to fight" is focused on the individual and their respective behaviour based in personal choice; their character.[106] There can be no doubt that as technological advancements crash into the changing face of warfare a soldier's character is not only poignant at the tactical level but could be influential at the strategic level.[107] It

[101] David Chen, "Chief of Army Bans Soldiers from Wearing 'Arrogant' Death Symbols," ABC News, accessed November 5 2018, http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-19/army-bans-troops-from-wearing-skulls-death-symbols/9673242.

[102] Justin Huggett, "Open Letter to Chief of Army re Death Symbology Ban," Contact Publishing, accessed November 5 2018, www.contactairlandandsea.com/2018/04/19/an-open-letter-to-lieutenant-general-general-Angus-Campbell/.

[103] The Australian Army, The Ryan Review, 89

[104] The Australian Army, LWD 1 Fundamentals of Land Power, (Commonwealth of Australia: The Australian Army, 2017), 63.

[105] The Australian Army, LWD 0-2-2 Character, 17.

[106] Department of Defence, Executive Series: ADDP 00.6 Leadership, 2-5.

[107] Thapthimthong, A Journey to Better the Character of Army's Leaders, 5-6.

becomes increasingly important we assist our soldiers to refrain from "switching off the psychological and moral safety catch that controls their lethal force."[108]

**"Soldier, Warrior, Pirate" - It's All in the Moral sense**

There was a meta-narrative within the Army, and perpetuated often by the media, that people are able to disregard their "moral code" and kill; and soldiers could also do this guilt-free.[109] Now though, we have many stories published as books or produced as films that tell us a different narrative. Even still this narrative of being "a fighting force designed to kill" is incredibly loud.[110] As David Grossman points out we do in fact, through our training, try and make killing instinctual; he goes on to suggest that drives soldiers to be "eager and willing and trust our commands". The downside is that we often forget to prepare the soldier in dealing with the invisible burden which is the inevitable result of killing.[111]

> A soldier's humanity and compassion for fellow human beings can begin to erode. In this atmosphere, the wall of integrity and discipline that separates an honourable soldier from an armed thug is severely tested. One of the great challenges in war is that you must at once use both extreme violence and extreme humility.[112]

Current ADF doctrine emphasises the strong connection between ethical development, internalised values and self-discipline to regulate individual behaviour.[113] Though the *externally controlled state* of rules and regulations is effective at the recruit level, the "leader" becomes instrumental in encouraging members and teams to progress to an *internally controlled state*.[114] ADF doctrine is clear that this responsibility for moral development is not simply about modelling behaviours; it is also about the encouraging of discussion and reflection for the development of the individual's language.

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[108] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 149.

[109] David Grossman, On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society, Revised ed., (New York: Open Road Media, 2014), 86.

[110] Huggett, "Open Letter to Chief of Army re Death Symbology Ban."

[111] Grossman, On Killing, 295.

[112] Stephen Day, "Thoughts on Generalship: Lessons from Two Wars," 45

[113] The Australian Army, LWP-G 7-1-2

[114] Ibid.

# Part 3
# Story of the Sacred and the Gun

There is evidence that language has a positive corresponding effect upon a potentially traumatic experience as well as the mechanisms of survival, recovery, and resilience.[115] This is very much true for moral dissonance; the organisation of language into a narrative enables some sense to be brought to the rational, irrational, and non-rational. Though the opposite is also true. As was pointed out in the report from Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART):

> The Defence culture described in many of the complaints was that you do not jack (or dob) on your mates, even if those so called mates sexually or physically abused you. This flawed and dysfunctional culture discouraged some complainants from reporting abuse and, in other cases, complainants who did not report their abuse were further abused and mistreated.[116]

The use of language, in our narrative, is incredibly important in shaping our understanding of the things we experience. A moral dilemma takes place when the messaging of 'anything goes as long as it doesn't hurt anyone' clashes with the professional space that demands increasingly stringent standards of behaviour.[117] Larson and Zust point out that character must direct competence. They make the distinction in their three tiered analogy of "soldier" (character with competence), a "warrior" (competence alone), and a pirate (warrior competence without character).[118] They explain this as "the professional character of a 'soldier' controls the lethal competence of a 'warrior', and this separates both from the immoral character and lethal conduct of a 'pirate'".[119]

Larson and Zust talk about how sometimes you can find all three within a unit. As such competence alone cannot be the boundaries of military character nor of an individual's identity. They go on to argue that moral injury is the result of removing character from combat and simply relying upon competency as the service standard for the military.[120] I once had an occasion where I was called in to see the Commanding Officer, an officer had been transferred to the unit for the duration of their discipline hearing. The officer had been charged with a number of significant "unacceptable behaviour" offences. When I arrived in the Commanding Officer's office and closed the door he said, "Padre, in 21 years I have never read anything like this. This is shocking stuff, you've got to

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[115] Elizabeth Boase & Christopher G. Frechette, Bible Through the Lens of Trauma, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 13.

[116] Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART), Final Report, (Commonwealth of Australia: Australian Government, 2016), 6.

[117] Gary Pope, "Contribution of Christian Sexual Ethics to the Australian Army," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal (2017), 23.

[118] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 35.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid., 36.

read it." He handed me the file, I could barely read two pages when he said, "The worst thing is that this guy is going to be a loss to the Army because he is a bloody good operator, several tours and a bucket load of experience. He is going to be a loss to Army."

This encounter, I realised several years after and upon reading Larson and Zust's work, was a perfect example of the soldier, warrior and pirate analogy. The Army at the moment has begun addressing the "character of soldiering", and the focus has been heavily upon the intellectual. Major General Ryan led a team that looked at the education, training and doctrine needs of the Army of the future and released their report in 2016. Since then there has been the focus on the way to "generate its human capacity" through educating soldiers with "the ability to analyse, reflect, select and adapt within ethical boundaries."[121] The significant downside to this report was its complete bias towards the psychological/intellectual development of "professional mastery". Its underlying premise was that educated soldiers would have the knowledge, ability, and skills to react to unforeseen events "thereby enhancing Army's capability."[122] This report only addresses part of "character", and disappointingly it diminishes the "moral" component to nothing more than a part of the cognitive process that is developed through studying history. The report dismisses what Robert Meagher expresses as "the heart, the inner disposition of the soul, that determines the character of anything we do."[123]

**Developing the New Normal**

Moral emotions play an important role in ensuring that we act in an ethical way. This is particularly so for soldiers who regularly find themselves in morally ambiguous situations. Historically, moral emotions (such as guilt, contrition, disgust, contempt, even shame) were regarded as a normal aspect of an ethical individual.[124] Larson and Zust go as far to suggest that a degree of moral dissonance acts as the left and right of lane for soldiers and their actions.[125] Shame and guilt can have a healthy expression in our lives and in our worldviews; they remind us that we are human, and that as humans we are limited. They keep us grounded, being aware that we will make mistakes and that we do need help: "Healthy shame gives us permission to be human."[126] Bradshaw makes

[121] The Australian Army, The Ryan Review, 47.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Robert Meagher, Killing from the Inside Out: Moral Injury and Just War, (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014), 74.
[124] Nakashima Brock and Lettini, Soul repair, 50.
[125] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 21.
[126] John Bradshaw, Healing the Shame that Binds You, (Florida: Health Communication, Inc, 1988), 8.

the statement "you cannot offer yourself to another person if you do not know who you really are."[127] When we are able to accept this we are able to begin to accept ourselves and to begin to take responsibility for our responses to reality; this is often difficult and painful.

As is seen in the assumptions of Litz's work:

> 1) Pain means hope. Anguish, guilt and shame are signs of an intact conscience and self-and-other expectations about goodness, humanity and justice; 2) goodness is reclaimable over the long haul; and 3) forgiveness (of self and others) and repair are possible regardless of the transgression.[128]

This is supported within the Christian paradigm, "And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us…" (Romans 5:3-45a, NRSV) Camilo "Mac" Bica echoes this point. He talks about his moral injury as "a war waged within myself, one where my fears and doubts would come face to face with my conscience, a war to reclaim my humanity and my spiritual freedom."[129] Brock and Lettini talk about what I hear in the exasperated voices of many individuals' stories of the secular tendencies of psychology to view moral dissonance as a disorder.[130] This, from the perspective of many members in uniform, is experienced alongside "relying primarily on pharmaceutical medication and counselling in treating illness, but not addressing the 'soul issues' of hope, identity and future purpose."[131]

I believe there are three main elements to the healing process for moral injury, I base my summary on the three main stages of recovery from trauma as outlined by Judith Herman[132]

> Feeling safe in establishing and developing their narrative with someone they trust.
>
> Lamenting and grieving their memories and the complex loss they have suffered.

[127] Ibid., 16.
[128] Frame, Moral Injury, 21.
[129] Nakashima Brock and Lettini, Soul Repair, 63.
[130] Ibid., 50.
[131] Submission by Veteran Care Association to Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee inquiry "Mental health of Australian Defence Force members and veterans", 2015
[132] Tim Hein, Understanding Sexual Abuse, (Edinburgh, Scotland: Muddy Pearl, 2018), 60-61.

# Part 3
# Story of the Sacred and the Gun

Finding that new normal in reconstructing their belief and learning to be loved rooted in a faith community.

Chaplain Rob Sutherland, one of the founders of Warrior Welcome Home, talks about veterans coming to terms with their "broken identity". This is seen, Chaplain Sutherland suggests, when people talk about trying to get back to "normal". Recently I had dinner with a couple, whose wedding I officiated at only two years before his first deployment. He asked me in a quiet voice for only those at the table: "When will we get back to normal?" The imperfect narratives that soldiers develop "become the means of deconstructing their identity."[133] This imperfect, or destructive, narrative must be replaced by a new, still relevant, but positively meaningful narrative; what I refer to as the new normal.

Reverend Tim Hein, in talking about recovery from child abuse, speaks to a truth that is the experience of many who suffer from trauma, including veterans with unseen wounds: "Telling your story can be incredibly difficult, but it goes right to the heart of how trauma is relieved. The very act of speaking reclaims control, as we put into words what has only been shrouded amid swirling images and feelings."[134] He continues suggesting that the biggest constraint stopping us from delving into unpacking and framing the story is fear. For veterans, and in my pastoral experience with individuals in general, there is deep desire for them to be heard. Early in my chaplaincy a self-proclaimed "crusty old warrant officer" who had been deployed multiple times said to me in the car park: "Padre, you religious lot are alright though you're not for me. You won't get me in your office but I definitely will send the young diggers your way when they're struggling." Several months later, before the rest of the unit had arrived, the warrant officer was in my office in tears. I don't remember much of the time, except I didn't do much talking, yet at the end of almost an hour he look at me and said, "Thanks Padre, that really makes sense now. I really appreciated your time and what you said." As I shook his hand and thanked him I struggled to recall exactly what it was I had said, yet I could recall clearly his narrative.

Hoge emphasises the hard struggle it is for us to "come up with the right words to express our feelings".[135] He goes on to suggest that it shouldn not be done alone: "In order to even acknowledge

[133] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 74.

[134] Hein, Understanding Sexual Abuse, 65.

[135] Charles W. Hoge, Once a Warrior Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home, (USA: Globe Pequot Press, 2010), 117.

our deepest feelings, we need to know that there is someone who cares and who's willing to listen without judgement as we struggle to express ourselves." Daniel Rothenburg tells of listening to veterans' narratives that are spoken in ways that makes sense to the one telling the story; just as moral injury is diverse and subjective, as too are the narratives told by veterans.[136] In the narrative being shared the listener must be able to hear without judgement but also without excusing what happens.[137]

To move through the reconciliation of their moral dissonance, to find healing for their moral injury, the soldier must find within themselves, and with others, the strength to have the necessary profound and genuine conversations.[138] There is a growing recognition of the role of chaplains in relation to supporting veterans with moral injury, particularly as military chaplains have "the longest institutional memory related to moral injury issues and have been dealing with the associated psychological morbidity since the beginning of armed warfare."[139] Carey and Hodgson, along with other researchers, emphasise the importance of the confidentiality that for chaplains is their fundamental principle.[140] Further to this could be to suggest that the chaplain's vocabulary of healing, comfort, and absolution, in being an extension of the church in community, give permission for the transition into the new normal. In the historical Australian text *Captains of the Soul*, Galdwin shows the additional role of the chaplain, through education, "helping to calibrate the moral compass of soldiers, who have been authorised to use lethal force in increasingly complex situations."[141]

Herman Keizer Jr. talks about the trust that soldiers have in chaplains, in sharing their pain and pride, the wonderful and terrible stories, the vulnerability and resilience of the spirit. In sharing their stories with chaplains they invite that chaplain to journey with them in interpreting the story.[142] The gift of discernment is an essential part of narrative and faith, with this gift the chaplain

[136] Some stories follow a crisp narrative timeline, others jump from one event to another. Some people speak quickly and clearly, while others take breaks or need lengthy periods of silence. Daniel Rothenburg, "Moral Injury: Learning from the Transitional Justice Experience" in Moral Injury: Towards an International Perspective, (Arizona: The Centre for the Future of War, 2017), 46.

[137] Wood, An Essay on Moral Injury, 16.

[138] Larson and Zust, Care for the Sorrowing Soul, 56.

[139] Carey et al., "Moral Injury, Spiritual Care and the Role of Chaplains," 1222.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Michael Gladwin, Captains of the Soul: A History of Australian Army Chaplains, (NewPort, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2013), 32.

[142] Nakashima Brock and Lettini, Soul Repair, 79-80.

walks with the soldier in exploring and developing a better understanding of what is happening to the heart and soul while identifying pastoral care needs being expressed in their narrative.[143] Aboriginal elder and Uniting Church minister, Reverend Maratja Dhamarrandji, once said "When you are listening your duty is to listen, to discern: to listen with the head, to listen with the ear, and to listen with the deep heart. To listen to try to understand."[144]

**Future Narratives Out of Ancient Stories**

Gordan W. Lathrop talks about the importance of ritual as a primary means of communicating communities' understandings of themselves, others, and the world.[145] He points out that this "language" is reinforced through "words, gestures, and ceremonies - its hymns, preaching, sacraments, prayers, communally recited creeds." The community's ritual passes on an ancient language that influences how we tell our future narratives. Stephen Mansfield suggests that the profession of arms needs this connection to the past: "the history of men and women in arms … frames [their] sense of professionalism, and moves [them] to serve a dream greater than any one [government] or war as [they] puts [themselves] willingly in danger."[146]

These historical stories are taken further by Mansfield when he suggests that soldiers fight for words, that "words describe purpose and values for a warrior."[147] The importance of words is in the idea that soldiers need to be inspired to continue their struggle; in the face of hardships and the boredom that is interspersed by conflict, their drive must be maintained. Words, or stories, become that fire.[148] This is particularly from an Australian Army perspective when historically someone has found the words to express the spirit of the digger.

> In many ways the Digger is a study in contradictions: he doesn't crave war yet he will fight with unequalled ferocity; he hates spit and polish but will hold his discipline under the most trying conditions; he is tough yet compassionate; he hates his enemy until he surrenders then he is generous in victory; he despises histrionics but will cry unashamedly at the loss

[143] Scott Landes, "Practicing Discernment: Pastoral Care in Crisis Situations," Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling 64 no. 4 (Spring 2010), page 4.

[144] Maratja Dhamarrandji, 42nd Annual Meeting of the Northern Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia (Darwin, October 6 2018).

[145] Gordan W. Lathrop, Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology, Kindle ed., (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), loc 2064.

[146] Stephen Mansfield, The Faith of the American Soldier, Kindle ed., (Florida: FrontLine, 2005), loc 1035.

[147] Ibid., loc 1047.

[148] Ibid.

> of a mate; he believes he's invincible but he's not afraid of death; he will refuse promotion but unhesitatingly take command in a crisis; he will poke fun at his leaders but defend them with his life; he represents an arm of the nation's authority, yet he hates authority.[149]

There is a complexity to the identity of the digger that often rolls into viewing a sense of the spiritual. That spirituality, faith, is centred on mateship and articulated by the Australian Army in its values of respect, courage, initiative and teamwork: "mateship has a spiritual element that is set apart from the spirit de corps experienced by many other soldiers … for the Anzacs - and for the diggers who followed them - mateship centres on the soldiers themselves and it extends outwards from there."[150] I believe this echoes the moral resilience that has been spoken of throughout history and was first witnessed on the shores of Gallipoli and since, it is the digger's ultimate concern. Mateship is also the ultimate concern for their community, serving and veterans, which has also constructed a range of rituals whose language contributes significantly to the individual's narrative.

There is a growing element of wanting to draw examples of professional soldiering not from history but from fiction, especially more recently from Marvel and DC movies, even that of Suicide Squad.[151] This is quite alarming as I would argue that drawing from such stories, that are based in unrealistic worlds with little regard for morality or ethics and whose actions would not be seen as acceptable for the Australian Defence Force, does not prepare soldiers for the real moral dissonance of the battlefield. The result would be soldiers having an unrealistic expectation of operational service which would attribute to an inability to deal with the consequences of moral ambiguity with healthy strategies. I would suggest that there are numerous and significant historical stories that over time have taken on a sacredness, that can help modern diggers to begin to morally prepare for operations now and into the future. Stories that can help them develop their moral language now so to be equipped to deal with the inevitable moral dissonance they will combat in the future.

Sharon Mascall-Dare, a renowned journalist and part-time Army Reserve Public Affairs Officer, stood before the small group of veterans who were participating in the program she co-founded after her deployment to Iraq called StoryRight. "One of the greatest difficulties for ADF members transitioning to civilian life," I remember her telling the participants, "is changing your language

[149] Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, 746.
[150] Ibid., 1263.
[151] Elizabeth Boulton, "Teaming: Get Ready", Army.gov.au, accessed June 26 2019, https://www.army.gov.au/our-future/blog/situational-awareness/teaming-get-ready.

from 'we' to 'I'."[152] From the beginning of training and all through their service the language of mateship is deeply engrained into the heart of soldiers and officers. It is at such a deep level that due to the lack of maturity, in regards to spirituality, it is widely misunderstood. There has been some shocking betrayals conducted and abuses perpetrated yet not reported due to an unhealthy sense of mateship. There is no doubt that at the heart of the spirituality of diggers is mateship.

[152] Sharon Mascall-Dare, StoryRite Workshop, (Darwin, March 2019).

# Part 4
# Remembering the Faith of the Diggers

> *This story, a bit foggy now over the years, took place beside the fire in an Officer's Mess while drinking scotch with a group of young subalterns. A young faced lieutenant, fit and intelligent, looked at me with frustration: "I feel like the boss just doesn't get it Padre, these diggers are capable. Their just tired of being fucked around; they crave structure and leadership."*
>
> *As we spoke I finally said to the eager Troop Commander, you remind me of LTCOL Ralph Honner and his struggles with dealing with command while on the Kokoda. He took a tired group of volunteers and managed to hold off the Japanese Army for the first time in WW2, all because he saw the strength that they had together and he developed that.*
>
> *"I've never heard of him Padre," was the response. "Maybe I'll look him up."*

Drawing from historic stories can attribute to the development of spiritual maturity and hence moral resilience within modern Diggers to be future ready. The Ryan Review suggested that the moral pillar is developed through studying history.[153] It did not actually give an example of what this might look like, it was more addressing Professional Military Education rather than personal development in regards to morally resilient Diggers. If we view the shared idea of mateship in a spiritual sense - the sacred to which Diggers refer in seeking and expressing meaning and purpose, and how they understand their connectedness to each other - then we can see how Major General Ryan's recommendation of the studying history is important to not just competence but also vital to the spirit of diggers.

The stories from the war are a set of sacred stories about the origin and character of the digger, held is such regard that "anthropologists might call a creation myth." Our digger's sense of spirituality was forged at war not just in victory but as much by their actions in defeat.[154]

**Moral Resilience Refined in Suffering - Changi: Prisoners of War, 8th Division AIF**

The great heroic stories of almost superhero feats of bravery capture the attention and spark the flame of inspiration; the invaluable depth of spiritual resilience is seen at its full potential historically in the sombre sacred stories of Australia's prisoners of war taken by the Japanese. Patrick Lindsay, in *The Spirit of the Digger* quotes Prisoner of War (POW) veteran Stan Arneil who put their survival down to mateship, which was "a spiritual and psychological safety net" giving them the ability to rely upon the resilience of others when they were nearing breaking point and

[153] The Australian Army, The Ryan Review, 89.

[154] Sally Neighbour, "The ANZAC Spirit," The Monthly, accessed June 19 2019, https://www.themonthly.com.au/anzac-spirit-comment-sally-neighbour-3189.

would then gladly return the support when conditions were reversed.[155] It was graphically remembered this way:

> Your mates will literally force feed you your rice today, tomorrow, and the next day, and if you have dysentery they'll also try and make you comfortable by washing the shit off you, your clothes, and the bamboo floor surrounds, over and over again if necessary. When a move to another camp is on they'll help you there and carry your gear. And if a POW succumbs he will rarely die alone - there are those who perform death watches. The phenomenon of mateship played a powerful part in enhancing survival on the Thai-Burma Railway.[156]

Dr. Rowley Richards, a Prisoner of War doctor on the Thai-Burma Railway recalled that "I never saw a sick Australian who did not have a mate or somebody else to look after him."[157] This was something not seen as often by prisoners from other allied nations. The sombre and sacred stories of the Prisoners of War chronicle humanity's unimaginable cruelty to one another and yet that is overshadowed by the faith of mateship.[158]

The surrender of Singapore in 1942 was called "the worst disaster and the greatest capitulation in British history" by the then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill.[159] It created a long historical contention over the reason for the surrender. In the early 1990s a British wartime report surfaced laying blame at the "acts of indiscipline by Australian troops in these chaotic circumstances which undermined the British defence and directly contributed to the surrender."[160] The Australians talked about here were the significantly undermanned 8th Division, under the command of Major General Gordon Bennett.

Dr. Rowley Richards, a medical officer to the prisoners of war on the Thai-Burma Railway, reminds people to remember "first and foremost, they [The 8th Division] were true fighting soldiers

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[155] Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, 3556.

[156] Peter Brune, Descent into Hell: the Fall of Singapore - Pudu and Changi - the Thai-Burma Railway, kindle ed., (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2014), loc 9028.

[157] Ibid., loc 77.

[158] Ibid., loc 127.

[159] Michael Rowland, "Fall of Singapore Anniversary: How a Military Defeat Changed Australia," ABC News, accessed June 27 2019, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-14/fall-of-singapore-75-year-anniversary-commemorated/8267650.

[160] Chris Coulthard-Clark, "Remembering 1942: The Fall of Singapore," Australian War Memorial, accessed June 27 2019, https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/blog/1942-fall-of-singapore.

who upheld the highest tradition of the Anzacs both in action against the Japanese and in captivity."[161] The 8th Division, consisting of two undermanned brigades, achieved the very few allied successes against the vastly superior Japanese Army in the Malay campaign. With the allied forces pushed back into the Singapore Island, the now half-strength 8th Division were tasked with defending the most vulnerable sector of the Straits of Johore. The Australians were assigned an impossible task.[162]

February 15 1942 was the start to a long three years of torture, death and punishment, executions by beheading, constant beatings, malnutrition and untreated diseases.[163] Lieutenant Norm Couch described the experience thusly:

> No man has the command of words needed for conveying, in comprehensible terms, the courage and cowardness; the loyalty and treachery; the dedication and dereliction; the strengths and frailties; the kindness and brutality; the integrity and depravity; the magnificence and enormities of men, as revealed by and to those who fated to pass through the entrails of hell…[164]

Within Australia when people think of the Prisoners of War taken at the fall of Singapore they think of Changi and of the Thai-Burma Railway, particularly of Hellfire Pass. Changi though, in most accounts was seen as like heaven. For many Prisoners of War it had become home, almost like that of Australia. There was a place that held more fear for Prisoners of War, a place where still today no one knows how many prisoners died of malnutrition, diseases or from executions.[165]

Outram Road Gaol was used for those who caused significant trouble, tried to escape from another camp or were seen as requiring solitary confinement. Prisoners were placed in tiny individual cells with boards to sleep on and buckets with no lids to relieve themselves. "Every morning the two or three bed boards you lay on at night were leaned up against the wall, and you sat on the concrete at attention in a pre-ordained position facing the door. Every hour a bell would ring and you could change position."[166] This was the daily state for the prisoners, all day, with the soft hum of electric lights on twentyfour-seven.

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[161] Peter Brune, Descent into Hell, loc 77.
[162] Coulthard-Clark, "Remembering 1942."
[163] Tim Bowden, Stubborn Buggers, (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2014), x.
[164] Brune, Descent into Hell, loc 11068.
[165] Bowden, Stubborn Buggers, x-xi.
[166] Ibid., 17-18.

# Part 4
# Remembering the Faith of the Diggers

In solitary confinement, with nothing more than the luck of their cell door being opened or looking through meal slit window, quick glances would encourage prisoners to find ways of communicating with others to feel a continued sense of being connected. This same determination and innovation


Fig. 1, George Aspinall, "Three "Fit" Workers at Shimo Sonkurai No 1 Camp," Black and White Photograph, c 1943, Australian War Memorial, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P02569.192.

was recognised after the war by General Yamashita when he commented about the Malay Campaign: "In a week long, bloody battle, without heavy tank or air support, [the Australians] held up the whole of my army."[167]

In the face of such continued depravity it is almost impossible to imagine how these walking skeletons of diggers emerged. The Australian diggers' determination to always continue on, not particularly for themselves but their mates around them.[168] Dr. Richard Rowley described, post-war, the depth of the mateship as something that filled a gap from their pre-war friendships and even that from family relationships. Not only was mateship central to their survival but it continued to provide critical support in their reintegration back into Australia.

Their shared history, which though was never really stated, it was definitely understood. They would recount stories and humorous incidents and provide the opportunity for individuals to discuss the traumatising elements without getting stuck on the suffering.[169]

[167] Ibid., 6.

[168] Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, loc 3705.

[169] Richard Rowley, A Doctor's War, (Sydney: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 289-290.

# Part 4
# Remembering the Faith of the Diggers

**Seeing with Faith and Moral Strength is Seen: Kokoda – Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Honner**

I could imagine it was like the closing scene of a war movie; the church at standing room only for the funeral. Dignitaries, heads of state, senior military commanders, veterans from three different battalions long forgotten by others gathered with friends and family in silent solemnity. The hush is broken by a quiet murmur as an uninvited guest slowly makes their way to the coffin at the front. The Japanese veteran stops, bows deeply and remains still for some time. He turns and approaches the family, once again bowing, as he hands over a letter of condolence for the loss of a man who was and continued to be a highly respected warrior.[170]

Lieutenant Colonel Honner was described not simply as a "capable commander" but as "a man of integrity, honour and faith".[171] Some 50 years after Lieutenant Colonel Honner commanded two battalions on the Kokoda Trail the thing that "stood above the warfare and its victors and vanquished" was his faith and moral fortitude.[172]

Born into a devout Catholic family and growing up in Western Australia, Lieutenant Colonel Honner honed his character through boarding school, sports, and classical education. He learned several languages and taught history and literature as well as studying law before joining the militia and later the Australian Imperial Force. He was relatively old, at 32, for a junior officer though his actions at Bardia and Tobruk as well as in Greece and Crete resulted in many speaking of him with admiration and awe.[173] When he arrived in Papua New Guinea to command the 39th Battalion of the Australian Militia Force, they were a far cry away from the 2/11th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force. He himself observed a "ragtag, physically exhausted, and weakened by weeks of fighting without sufficient sleep or food, and by merely existing in appealing conditions."[174] By all accounts the 39th was a demoralised force when he arrived and through his command was forged into an effective unit that significantly contributed to Australia's victory at Gona.[175]

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[170] Peter Brune, We Band of Brothers: A Biography of Ralph Honner, Soldier and Statesman, Kindle ed., (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 2000), loc 176.

[171] Ibid., loc 54.

[172] Ibid., loc 176.

[173] Australian War Memorial, "Lieutenant Ralph Hyacinth (Jump) Honner," Australian War Memorial, accessed June 25 2019, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10676861.

[174] Patrick Fitzsimons, Kokoda, (Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2004), 258.

[175] Australian War Memorial, "Lieutenant Ralph Hyacinth (Jump) Honner."

# Part 4
# Remembering the Faith of the Diggers

Patrick Simmons draws on accounts that described him as "straight of back, clear of eye, fit as a trout… was one of those rare birds who gave out an air of friendly knockabout competence even before he had said a word, while still having a commanding presence."[176] For the diggers of the 39th, who had been engaged in heavy conflict with the Japanese for some time, Lieutenant Colonel Honner was regarded well in arriving with no fanfare simply accompanied with a single aide and a likeable presence.[177]

He always projected "an air of great competence and resolution, mixed with compassion for how his men were fairing."[178] Lieutenant Colonel Honner didn't simply demand his order be obeyed blindly; in the building of defences at Isurava he had the 39th developing their knowledge and their skills, that ultimately saw an increase in their confidence. Along with this he explained his decisions, with his engaging manner the diggers quickly realised that he cared for them and he knew what he was talking about.[179]

Lieutenant Colonel Honner's own words show his modesty in regards to his role in developing the diggers of the 39th. He points to something deeper within themselves:

> In the testing crucible of conflict … they were transformed by some strong catalyst of the spirit into a devoted band wherein every man's failing strength was fortified and magnified by a burning resolve to stick by his mates.[180]

The iconic moment on the Kokoda Track that captured the full and true spirit of Lieutenant Colonel Honner was in the Menari village when the 39th had been relieved after seven straight weeks of intense fighting with the Japanese, infinite trekking, and having lost 125 men. Lieutenant Colonel Honner had the Battalion formed on parade with the modest words to his adjutant; "I haven't met a lot of them, I don't know them, I don't know them by name."[181] Peter Brune wrote that the parade "consisted of only about 50 unregimentally dressed, exhausted young men, waxen-faced and many carrying not rifles but the common Kokoda Trail stick." The account, caught on camera by the famous Australian War Correspondent Damien Parer, shows the exhausted diggers snapping to

[176] Fitzsimons, Kokoda, 257-258.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid., 265.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ralph Honner, 1955 quoted in Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, loc 2769.
[181] Brune, We Band of Brothers, loc 3062.

attention, stock-still and proud as Lieutenant Colonel Honner saluted them with pride having previously just remarked: "I think they're some of the best soldiers that I've had anything to do with and they've got no fears about being able to hold their heads up."[182]

> Men, the first thing I want to say to you is 'congratulations'. Over the last two months you have performed magnificently under very difficult circumstances and have every right to be very proud of what you have achieved. You have done Australia proud, and you have done yourselves proud.
>
> For the rest of your days you will be able to recall these days with the warmth of knowledge that when the heat was on you did not buckle, did not take a backward step. None of us will forget our fallen comrades, but your own efforts has ensured that they will not have died in vain …[183]

Jack Sim, a Sergeant in the 39th at the time, recalled some fifty-five years after the parade: "I can't quote him verbatim, but I'll always remember what he meant and what he implied when he said: 'You're all Australians and some things you've just been through you must forget. Some of the men that were with you feel have let you down [Ralph was referring to the 53rd Battalion]. But they didn't. Given different circumstances they'd be just the same as you. The fact that their leaders may have failed them, and yours didn't, doesn't mean they're any worse than you."[184]

The overarching influence of his deep moral strength on the diggers and officers of the 39th was further demonstrated when on their last day on the battlefield he led the survivors on foot, after their request for transport had been denied. After six months of being shot at, bombed, starved, sleep deprived, wounded, watching their mates die and wondering when they will be next, with untold

[182] Ibid., loc 3074.

[183] Fitzsimons, Kokoda, 362-364.

[184] Neil McDonald and Peter Brune, 200 Shots: Damien Parer George Silk and the Australians at War in New Guinea, (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2004), 57.

number of infections and diseases, they marched forward with heads held high when those watching couldn't believe they were even standing.[185]


Figure 2, Damien Parer, 'The 39th Battalion on Parade at the Village of Menari," September 2 1942, Australian War Memorial, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C37797?image=1.

The very best commanders are the ones who epitomise the values and beliefs of the unit they command. Through their role modelling they are ultimately emulated by their subordinates. Lieutenant Colonel Honner displayed what is achievable when a commander understands the spiritual significance of mateship, and lives to that belief themselves. From the outset his humility allowed him to accept that it was not through blustering orders and other such things that would motivate the diggers. They needed to know that he was not just competent but was a top bloke. He recognised the dogged determination of the 39th under the grime and tattered uniforms and developed that, which saw them even after being relieved returning up the Trail to join the 2/14th Australian Imperial Force to continue fighting.

**Remember the Fallen, Learn From Our Own Returned**

I can understand the appeal of the comic book superhero; always winning against the clearly identifiable bad guy, as well as getting the pretty girl and seeming to wake fresh eyed after sleeping well the night after the great battle - in their own bed. A significant problem to the spiritual

[185] Fitzsimons, Kokoda, 445.

development of diggers at the moment is the trying to draw too much from foreign cultural contexts, fictional as well as from other nations. Particularly in regards to the team.[186] This misses the significance, within the Australian Army context and even within the wider Australian social context, of the importance of the spiritual imperative of mateship and that of the individual feeling connected to it.

A long time ago, the exact year and date are now forgotten, I remember at an end of year parade when I was a digger being presented with a wooden box with a big pewter coin.[187] It was a part of the "I'm an Australian Soldier" initiative. Inside the lid of the box were these printed words: "I'm proud to share traditions built on the foundation of the Anzac legend. [I'm proud to build on the heritage of service, mateship and sacrifice of previous generations." This has developed into the current Australian Army's "Our Contract":

> I'm an Australian soldier who is an expert in close combat
>
> I am physically and mentally tough
>
> compassionate and courageous
>
> I lead by example, I strive to take the initiate
>
> I am committed to learning and working for the team
>
> I believe in trust, loyalty and respect
>
> for my Country, my mates and the Army
>
> the Rising Sun is my badge of honour
>
> I am an Australian Soldier - always[188]

Along with this are the four core values: courage, initiate, respect, and teamwork. From the first initiative until the current values and contract "the team" has never been the focus. Mateship,

[186] Boulton, "Teaming: Get Ready."

[187] I still have this "gift" from the Australian Army; it is kept in the bottom draw of a cupboard in the home study that is home to my medals, awards and honours.

[188] The Australian Army, "Our Contract with Australia," *Australian Army*, accessed June 29 2019, https://www.army.gov.au/our-people/our-contract-with-australia.

trusting in one another, is what "safe guards our legitimacy … - at home, in the barracks, in the field and on operations."[189]

[189] Rick Burr, "Good Soldiering," Australian Army, accessed June 28 2019, https://www.army.gov.au/our-work/good-soldiering.

# Conclusion
# "So What" for Christian Chaplaincy

I sat with the Commanding Officer for a debrief on the final section of my Performance Appraisal Report; the Commanding Officer was coming to the end of his tenure and it had been a trying two years. During our first meeting at the beginning of the posting he had admitted a couple of things; he was an atheist, he had specifically asked for a chaplain, and that he had no idea what I actually did. Over the two years we had had many conversations about the position and role of chaplaincy in a modern Australian Army. At this final meeting he shared that for him the future of chaplaincy was not religious or faith based but was in being the ethical and moral voice for the unit and particularly for commanders. I politely thanked him for his comments and said, "Sir, I am only able to provide such advice because of my faith."

David Grulke commented that within Australia there has been a rise in individualized spirituality that has resulted in collective religion waning in attendance as well as its influence.[190] He suggested that as a result organisations were drawing upon the "religious professional" who was able to bring an "overall understanding of holistic wellbeing on both the collective and individual levels with the end state of enhanced productivity."[191] He went on to suggest that within the ADF the presence of the chaplain is due in part to the fact that the organisation recognizes that the desacralized and segregated aspects of an individual's life are not able to sustain that life's coherence. There is no utility for the ADF in such fractured lives, not to mention how this compromises the human person when under moral stress. The organisation wants individuals whole and functional, rather than torn between competing loyalties, so as to productively contribute to the overall mission success.[192]

When Christian chaplains build their ministry from purely a religious centre, they carry the danger of seeing a need to retreat deeper into their particular faith tradition in order to not become "native." This carries a risk of becoming isolated from those they are ministering to because they feel an overwhelming burden to defend the nature of God as defined by their religious paradigm.[193] For a growing number of people who identify themselves as "no religion" this becomes a potential stumbling block in individuals seeking out the chaplain for support when struggling; adding to the growing argument against the presence of religious professionals in a secular organization.

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[190] David Grulke, "Living in the Shadow: A Theological Discussion on the Place, Purpose, and Meaning of Australian Defence Force Chaplaincy," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal, (Winter 2014), 53.

[191] Ibid., 54.

[192] Ibid.

[193] Ibid., 60.

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Sally May, out of a British Military Chaplaincy context, offers an alternative view. There is a growing language of "a faith that is un-churched" or otherwise put as "a spirituality in a Christian context."[194] She goes on to suggest that rather than a lack of faith theirs is a spirituality that no longer fits into the traditional paradigms of the Christian Church. Here we hear echoes of Tillich's anticipatory idea that human beings are able to remain focused amongst the shifting experiences of life by being connected to their ultimate concern; their faith.[195] Further to this May draws upon Timothy Jenkins' idea that the organisation calls upon the chaplain to discern with them, reminding the organisation of its core identity when external demands are being imposed upon it.[196]

To have this as the starting point for understanding a chaplain's ministry within the Australian Army would mean rather than feeling the need to defend the presence of God in the organisation the Christian chaplain discerns with the soldier the presence of the God already there. As a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church in Australia this is an idea that is echoed in the Preamble of its Constitution as it continues to "seek a renewal of its life as a community of First Peoples and Second Peoples from many lands":

> The First Peoples had already encountered the Creator God before the arrival of the colonisers; the Spirit was already in the land revealing God to the people through law, custom and ceremony. The same love and grace that was finally and fully revealed in Jesus Christ sustained the First Peoples and gave them particular insights into God's ways. [197]

From the Third Section of the Preamble, recognising that God was present before the religious language of Christianity, here is the truth that people are aware of the ultimate concern and that they develop ways of recognising it. This observation can be seen as reinforced by John 1:10: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him." Sallie McFague believes that we already know God as each of us "have some imitation of the invisible face".[198] Richard Rohr picks this up when he points out "the incarnation [reveals] divine immanence

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[194] Sally May, "The Value and Role of Military Chaplains in Contemporary British Society," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal, (2016), 8.

[195] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 9.

[196] Ibid., 13.

[197] Uniting Church in Australia, "Revised Preamble " Uniting Church in Australia Assembly, accessed August 14 2019, https://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/covenanting/item/668-the-revised-preamble.

[198] Sallie McFague, The Body of God: An Ecological Theology, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) cited in Richard Rohr, "Finding God Everywhere," Centre for Action and Contemplation (blog), March 8 2019, https://cac.org/finding-god-everywhere-2019-03-08/.

and transcendence [i.e., the God is both within all things and beyond all things]."[199] Yet to be able to recognise the sacredness that is already present, or as Richard Rohr suggests "to experience the ordinary as extraordinary", requires "participation in the object of one's ultimate concern".[200]

I would like to suggest something of a compromise between these two perspectives that could be a starting point for Christian chaplaincy in the Australian Army and would contribute to developing the spiritual resilience of diggers. This would have a direct and positive impact upon preparing diggers to deal in a healthy manner with the inevitable moral dissonance, give commanders a language to understand and manage unseen wounds, and assist the Australian Army to recognising the spiritual implications in tactical and strategic planning.

It is important for the Australian Army to recognise that we have so reduced and separated objects from each other that we have almost completely removed any recognisable spirituality. This has resulted in a growing trend of placing "mission success" above everything else. Having a direct impact upon the humility and compassion that has been a hallmark of the digger, recognisable throughout all operations that Australia has participated in. This creates significant points of tension when operating with and in countries where the ethic of community and divinity are core to their identity. The Christian chaplain's presence is a reminder for the headquarters staff of the higher reality that can be overlooked amongst the "strategic tasks outlined by the government".[201] Major General Chris Fields advised that the importance of the chaplain is in them asking questions and listening to quietly remind people of the commander's intent.[202] For this he emphasises that the chaplain must draw upon their empathy, emotional intelligence, and pastoral skills to be the independent observer, and when necessary the voice that names ethical and moral concerns that headquarters staff may prefer to ignore.[203]

For the Christian chaplain the imperative for this comes when we remember Jesus' words of retribution against those who had forgotten the importance of the ethic of community and divinity:

> Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers (Mark 11:17).

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[199] Ibid.

[200] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 99-100.

[201] Grulke, Living in the Shadow, 65.

[202] Chris Fields, "The Army Chaplain's Contribution to Mission Command and Fighting Power," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal, (2018), 54.

[203] Ibid., 54-55.

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We see Jesus at this point in his ministry emphasizing the importance of leaders adhering to the divine; people empower their leaders in following them; the best leaders recognize that they must maintain their behaviour and standards so as to epitomise the group's faith. I recall hearing about an incident of a chaplain while deployed in the Middle East having a raised voice argument with a commander. The commander had denied the chaplain permission to travel with the bodies of soldiers killed in action because they were already dead and the mission was still on going. The commander finally relented when the remaining team refused to continue if their mates were not looked after by the padre. The Christian chaplain must have the courage to name, and if necessary confront, the occasions where the sacred has been segregated from the mission at the cost of the spirit of the digger.

John Laffin wrote of an exchange between a British colonel who was appalled at an Australian captain:

> The colonel said that it was not done for officers to discuss battle details with private soldiers. The captain, whose name is unknown, said: 'I don't regard them as private soldiers, sir, they are my mates. Naturally I want them to know why I'm asking them to risk their lives.[204]

The Australian Army is built upon a strong egalitarian attitude; most commissions were earned on merit, evident historically in World War 1 due to the massive casualties suffered. This meant a level of respect was bestowed as the digger knew that their problems were known and had been shared. Patrick Lindsay points out that the history of the Australian Army is filled with feats of superhuman performance as a result of the faith a digger has in his mates; and the digger in turn can cope with whatever they encounter if they know their mates will look after them.[205]

Commanders recognise the Australian Army's four values as being essential to the positive qualities of its culture; generally there is not the language to articulate this spiritually. Courage, initiative, respect, and teamwork, Martin de Pyle argues "are a means of God's common grace" that in the Australian Army restrains sin and promotes "a charitable and just community."[206] He goes on to suggest that Christian chaplains are able to promote this by drawing upon the narratives in the

[204] Lindsay, The Spirit of the Digger, loc 579.

[205] Ibid., loc 601.

[206] Martin de Pyle, "Links and Limits to Values Based Ethical Models in the Modern Defence Force: An Australian Army Chaplain's Perspective," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal, (2018), 29.

Bible. It is here that we see the flexibility of the Christian chaplain to engage areas of military and public life by bringing a faith perspective into dialogue with the spirituality of the digger and their varying faith experiences.[207] The Christian chaplain is able to assist commanders in drawing from the sacred stories of the Australian Army's history, to develop a functional understanding and framework of the spirit and fighting power.

As Christian chaplains we encounter throughout the Book of Acts countless stories of the disciples engaging in the daily lives around the synagogues and marketplaces. The example of Paul in Athens, drawing from the experiences of the community, is an example of Christian chaplaincy today:

> For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you (Acts 17:23).

It was a result of Paul in the streets, marketplace and engaging with the leaders that they were the ones who wanted to know more. Gavin Keating, reflecting on his time as a Commanding Officer in the Australian Army, tells of the pragmatism that is central to the digger relating "to their unit padre on the basis that they were the unit padre and not through a denominational lens."[208]

At the beginning of 2019 the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Rick Burr, wrote:

> Being **ready now** means being prepared, trained, educated, equipped and organised for the range of military tasks required by the Australian Government. Being **future ready** requires continuous modernisation, adaption and transformation when necessary against emerging threats, geopolitical challenges and advances in technology. We are an **Army in Motion**. ... I need all of our people to continue their active engagement in understanding the changing character of future warfare and Army's role in it.[209]

There is a hidden danger within this language, common at the organizational level of the Australian Army, in that it places the physical above the mental and leaves no recognition for the spiritual, moral or even the character of the soldier. The language resonates with many commanders in the

[207] May, "The Value and Role of Military Chaplains in Contemporary British Society," 13.

[208] Gavin Keating, "Army Padres: A Former Commanding Officer's Perspective," Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal, (2018), 104-105.

[209] The Australian Army, Army in Motion, 1.

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Australian Army, as it speaks against the perceived "permissive ethos that emphasizes personal fulfilment, desire and identity" above the mission and the team.[210] Unfortunately this leaves diggers with a hollow language that puts them at a significant disadvantage in dealing with the moral ambiguity of military service.

If diggers today have a significantly lower level of spiritual resilience, then the profession of arms must accept that its current paradigm is lacking. The Australian Army must look to its living communities, the units, and carefully construct "multidisciplinary initiatives that draw from the pillars of positive psychology, moral philosophy and the heritage of religious teaching that define so much of Western civilisation."[211] The Christian chaplain is so placed within the units of the Australian Army to help them be "a community aimed at preparing men and women for the challenges of military life as a special calling and not as a mere 'lifestyle choice'."[212]

We see this echoed in the words of Jeremiah to the exiles of Jerusalem in Babylon:

> Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare (Jer 29:4-7).

Jeremiah warns the exiles from believing the words of the leaders of Babylon as they are deceptive and hollow. The voice of the Christian chaplain must be the same prophetic voice in the unit against the glorification of military service that is currently portrayed in popular media. The Christian chaplain can draw upon narratives like that of the song *I was only 19* by the Australian band Redgum:

> And I can still see Frankie, drinkin' tinnies in the Grand Hotel
>
> On a thirty-six hour rec leave in Vung Tau
>
> And I can still hear Frankie, lying screaming in the jungle

[210] Michael Evans, Understanding Suicide: A Primer for Australian Defence Force Commanders, (Canberra: Australian Army Research Centre, 2018), 27.

[211] Ibid., 30.

[212] Ibid.

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'Til the morphine came and killed the bloody row

And the Anzac legends didn't mention mud and blood and tears

And the stories that my father told me never seemed quite real

I caught some pieces in my back that I didn't even feel

God help me

I was only nineteen

In the words of retired Australian Army Chaplain Hayden Swinbourn on reflection of his multiple deployments: "I am lost for words and bereft of an explanation. There is no sense in it, there is no explanation for it and there is no humanity in it."[213] Swinbourn further records his thoughts in regards to an occasion while he was deployed in 2003 to Iraq of a significant explosion from a suicide bomber:

> The blast killed and injured well over 100 people. The debris (broken buildings, cars and bodies) landed in the nearby schoolyard, and I wonder how many children remain haunted by their memories of that day. In the Babil suburb not far from SECDET [Security Detachment] the diggers had adopted an orphanage school. It was no more than a short foot patrol away and they visited regularly. A decade on, I hope those children remember the strange Australians who sang, 'I'm a little teapot', and other songs to them, rather than the suicide bombers who destroyed families and devastated market places.[214]

Maybe there is an inevitability to moral injury within soldiers due to the horrific reality they must be prepared to face while trying to maintain the standards of values and behaviour required by their country. The digger's character has been developed from sacred stories out of the trenches of history. The deep and strong identity of the digger is planted and woven amongst the diverse identities of the individual soldier; the husband and mother, the betrayer and antagonist, the lover and artist, the perpetrator and victim. The digger is at risk of moral injury if they maintain the current western segregation of these identities and a de-sacralised view of their ultimate concern.

[213] Haydn Swinbourn, "A Chaplain's Experience" in Moral Injury: Unseen Wounds in an Age of Barbarism, Kindle edition, edited by Tom Frame, (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2015) loc 1456.

[214] Ibid., loc 1449.

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The professional and organisational focus on the physical and cognitive components of fighting power, at the neglect of the moral, has left soldiers with a hollow and wanting language. Rather then a weakness the heart of the soldier is the deep well that connects them to that which gives them purpose and meaning; their spirituality. The Australian Army in collaboration with the Christian chaplain can see to a future ready morally healthy digger by ensuring that the moral, along side the physical and cognitive, is developed.

Encouraged by the Christian chaplain the digger can develop a spiritual language that enables them to deal with the invisible burdens that can drain their humanity and compassion. Drawing from the diverse sacred stories the commander, encouraged by the Christian chaplain from their formation within a faith community, can ensure that in the face of moral dissonance hope may be held on to. As shown the Australian Army needs to be looking upon the heroic sacred stories from the frozen trenches, out of the stinging deserts, from within the sweltering jungles and upon the empty oceans. These heroic stories from victories and defeat help forge the spirituality of the modern digger that will better prepare them to healthily and courageously meet the moral dissonance that awaits them on the battlefield.

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