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The misconducts of UN peacekeepers as an unintended consequence of the Kantian law-based ethics and moral psychology: an Aristotelian analysis

Anna Woźniak

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Interdisciplinary Centre - University of Pisa*



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The misconducts of UN peacekeepers as an unintended consequence of the Kantian law-based ethics and moral psychology: an Aristotelian analysis

Dr. Anna Woźniak

Abstract

The United Nations continues to raise controversy, also in its capacity as a peacekeeping institution. A number of studies have reported serious abuses committed by peacekeeping personnel in the host countries, abuses that are contrary to the UN peacekeeping mission. This paper seeks to trace back the philosophical origins on which the ethical code of the UN peacekeepers is based. It is argued that the source of moral guidelines and duties for the UN peacekeepers is provided by the human rights as captured by the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights. The rationale of the human rights is in turn founded on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. The latter has emerged as a part of Enlightenment tradition which has rejected Aristotelian view of the human condition, in particular Aristotelian virtue ethics and moral psychology. The consequences of this theoretical omission are considered in relation to the UN peacekeepers training and their misconduct during their service.

Keywords

UN peacekeeping, human rights, law-based ethics, Kant, Aristotle

1. Introduction

Peacekeeping is one of the activities, next to conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement and peacebuilding, undertaken by the United Nations (UN) to maintain international peace and security in areas of conflict (United Nations, 2008). It is designed to preserve the peace where fighting has been halted and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers. In principles, UN peacekeeping operations are deployed as a temporary measure

helping in management of the conflicts and in creating conditions for the negotiation of lasting settlements. The tasks assigned to peacekeeping operations are essentially military in character and may involve observation, monitoring and reporting with the agreement of the parties; supervision of cease-fire and support to verification mechanisms; interposition as a buffer and confidence-building measure. United Nations peacekeeping operations may also use force at the tactical level to defend themselves and their mandate, especially when the State is unable to provide security and maintain public order.

The UN peacekeeping operations began in 1948, but it was not until the end of the Cold War that it has taken the complex and large-scale form we know at present (Ndulo, 2009). As for today there are 14 missions with 121 countries contributing over 84,000 contingent troops, experts, police and staff officers (United Nations, 2019a).

A number of studies have suggested that UN peacekeeping operations have a positive effect on the peace processes after civil conflict (eg. Hultman et al. 2014; Doyle and Sambanis 2000, Gilligan and Sergenti 2008). Some authors argue, however, that the effectiveness of the UN peacekeeping activities is contingent on factors such as degree of the willingness of citizens to cooperate with peacekeepers (Korson, 2015) or on the quality of the militaries involved (Haass & Ansorge, 2018). And it is this quality of the militaries involved and their relationships with the local communities that is the source of certain controversies.

2. UN peacekeepers' misconduct

In seeking to answer the question about UN's actual contribution to the state of peace in countries affected by civil wars, the studies cited above assume the conception of peace which involves reduction or ending of battlefield violence. Smith and Smith (2010) argue that little attention has been paid to the unintended effects of otherwise well-intentioned efforts. In particular, they point to the substantial increases in the human sex trafficking trade into crisis areas. The research gap is broader, as also existing general studies on peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction have almost entirely neglected the nexus of trafficking and peacekeepers (Mendelson, 2005). Meanwhile there is ample evidence indicating the scope of the problem.

In 1990s the world heard about the mass rapes which had occurred in the lands of former Yugoslavia. The official UN estimates varied from 13,000 to 50,000 rape victims in the Bosnian war (Tompkins, 1995). In 2002 the UN authorities have published a report describing practices of sexual exploitation by UN peacekeepers (as well as representatives of other agencies) in exchange for food in many refugee camps in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia (Ni

Chonghaile, 2002). The allegations of sexual exploitation against UN peacekeepers have also come from Congo (Notar, 2006), and Haiti (Vezina, 2012). UN peacekeepers have been accused of immoral behaviors, such as engaging in sex trafficking, soliciting prostitutes, forcing children into prostitution and having sex with minors (Kirkby & d'Estree, 2008; Ndulo, 2009). I will refer to it in the text as the "UN peacekeepers' misconduct."

According to UN official data, between 2007 and 2019 there have been over 1000 formal allegations pointing to the possible occurrence of misconduct on the part of the UN personnel (United Nations, 2019b). Only part of those allegations has been proven through an investigation; others were either disproven or there has been insufficient evidence to prove the allegation. However, according to a report by Associated Press, the numbers of unreported cases significantly exceed the official statistics (Associated Press, 2017).

3. Explanations of reasons for misconduct

In the past, sexual violence has been considered the unavoidable consequence of any war or military action (Tompkins, 1995). However, more recently the problem has received more attention. A number of adjustments designed to eradicate it have been made to the human rights law: the Vienna Declaration of 1993 identified sexual harassment and exploitation as practices against human dignity; resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security adopted by the UN Security Council has called on the member states to implement international humanitarian and human rights law protecting the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts; resolution 1820 on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts passed in 2008 reaffirmed the Security Council's commitment to ending sexual violence as a weapon of war and as a means to terrorize populations and destroy communities (Ndulo, 2009). In 2007 a multi-agency initiative, UN Action against Sexual Violence, has been launched to bring attention to sexual violence in war. One of its goals was to affect individuals of general public and make them pressurize the relevant member states to pass resolutions on sexual violence (Engle, 2014).

Over the past two decades we have witnessed a number of policy shifts and structural changes. Investigations have recognized causes, risk factors, and institutional deficiencies on the part of the UN system. UN member states have affirmed their commitment to reforms. In spite of numerous policies, response protocols, new organizational architectures and responsibilities, UN peacekeepers' misconducts have not been stopped (Whalan, 2017).

These developments let us believe that it is not the lack of legal regulation that causes the problem. Some researchers have associated reasons for its persistency with the cultural factors determining peacekeepers' behaviors. The fact that the topic has been often raised by feminist scholars, made many

accept that the roots of the problem reside in the masculine militaristic culture of the UN troops (Kirby & D'Estree, 2008). However, in many cases, the strong insistence on structuring the problem of sexual exploitation according to the masculinity-femininity divide and posing it as the reason for its occurrences is not only prejudicial but may also be misleading in the sense that it suggests inadequate solutions. It blinds some of the analysts to the fact that also men and boys fall prey to the sexual assaults and that victimizing women, as these accounts tend to do, inhibits the process of recognizing women as agents of change during peacemaking (Engle, 2014).

A more plausible explanation of the problem in question involves a suggestion that it is not so much the masculine culture that is accountable, but rather what Paris (2003) calls "the global culture," conceptualized as "the international normative environment" (2003, 441). The global culture, Paris argues, shapes the character of peacekeeping institutions through agencies' and the member states' inclination to develop and implement strategies which are compatible with the norms of the global culture, while obstructing strategies that deviate from these norms. Paris focuses particularly on two elements constituting it: consistent promotion of the institutional form of the Westphalian state model by the peacekeeping agencies and of liberal democratic institutions and values as the suitable type of domestic governance in the states hosting peacekeeping operations.

Galtung (1981) goes even further, arguing that the global culture is in fact constituted and dominated by the Western "social cosmology" with its universalism attempting "to westernize other countries until they fit a Western model" (Galtung, 1981, 190). "The Western model," according to Galtung, encompasses the Western concept of peace highlighting its external, centrifugal manifestations and absence of violence. He juxtaposes it with the Oriental concept of peace, emphasizing the intra-personal, centripetal dimension of it. Galtung admits that his analysis has some flaws, one of which is not accounting for some exceptions in both social cosmologies.

In what follows I would like to dissect the "Western model" by showing that it is not internally homogeneous and that it has been dominated by one philosophical tradition at the detriment of another. I will be particularly interested in ethics, because of its relevance, as I will show, for understanding the misconduct of the UN peacekeepers. I will argue that the model that has dominated the Western institutional setting, and peacekeeping agencies as part of it, is based on the Kantian deontological conception of ethics, which holds peculiar moral psychology at its foundations. I will contrast it with Aristotelian virtue ethics and its moral psychology.

4. UN peacekeepers training

Faced with the allegations of sexual exploitation by its peacekeeping personnel and an increased level of criticism from the general public, the UN authorities have introduced a number of preventive measures designed to alleviate the problem. At present, all UN peacekeepers are bound by the UN Standards of Conduct, which involve commitment to 1) the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity; 2) zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse; 3) accountability of those in command and/or leadership who fail to enforce the standards of conduct (United Nations, 2019c). The UN peacekeeping personnel is also encouraged to 1) respect local laws, customs and practices; 2) treat host country inhabitants with respect, courtesy and consideration; 3) act with impartiality, integrity and tact (United Nations, 2019d). Preventive measures put in place at UN Headquarters and at field level include training of personnel on the UN Standards of Conduct both before and after deployment and public outreach to the host population through broadcast messages, the dissemination of brochures, poster campaigns and meetings with community groups. The UN also conducts vetting of individuals for records of prior misconduct while in the service of an UN operation and conducts risk assessment and risk management activities in the mission area. Furthermore, peacekeepers are subject to restrictions of movement, curfews, off-limits areas, non-fraternization policies, increased patrols around high risks areas and decentralization of conduct and discipline personnel into locations with a potentially high risk of misconduct; they are also required to wear uniforms outside barracks (United Nations, 2019e).

Underlying these preventive and restrictive measures is a training program, which the peacekeeping personnel undergoes prior and during the missions. It aims at equipping peacekeepers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them “to demonstrate the core values and competencies of the UN” (United Nations, 2019f).

5. Human rights as ethics of UN

The core values that the UN peacekeepers are trained to demonstrate are those inscribed in the international system of human rights, which constitute traditional point of reference and an “artifacts” of various UN declarations (Hope, 2012). The UN General Assembly has adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948

as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive

measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction (United Nations, 1948).

The Standards of Conduct which bound the UN peacekeepers by asserting “zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse” are in fact a re-articulation of the Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the UDHR, stating respectively that ‘everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person’; ‘No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms’; ‘No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’.

6. Kant on peace and morals

Human rights are the expression in international moral discourse of an abstract philosophical idea developed in political and legal thought (Beitz, 2013). There is an overall agreement that the greatest impact on their formula has come from Kantian philosophy (Maliks & Føllesdal, 2014). For Kant a project of establishing stable international society is a project of ethical nature, for only in an organized society regulated by law people may enjoy moral freedom, while the state of war constitutes an obstacle to their moral progress through law (Hurrell, 1990). Progress towards peace is thus intrinsically related to the moral development of people subjected to the peace process.

An essential condition necessary for the development of the morals is a political order: “a good political constitution [...] is not to be expected as a result of progress in morality; but rather, conversely, the good moral condition of a nation is to be looked for, as one of the first fruits of such a constitution” (Kant, 1917, 154-155). The good political constitution capable of instigating moral culture of the subjects can be found in republican government. If well-organized, it constitutes a center around which a federation of states can be built (Hurrell, 1990).

In the Kantian framework moral improvement is also part of a process by which individuals identify themselves with a universal cosmopolitan community, “a global ethical commonwealth” (Williams, 1985, as cited in Hurrell, 1990, 202). People of various nations can enter into a peaceful relation by means of “the public control of law” and contribute to the “realization of a cosmopolitan constitution” (Kant, 1917, 139). Kant expresses a belief that the scope of moral obligation could transcend the borders of the national state by means of which a universal moral community could be brought about.

With all that said, peace for Kant is not only temporary absence of hostility

(Jaede, 2018). Rather, Kant argues, peace is possible if States, as individuals prior to them, accept the principle of universality enclosed in the Categorical Imperative. Thus “perpetual peace,” according to Kant, “is desire[d] not only as a material good, but also as a state of things resulting from our recognition of the precepts of duty” (Kant, 1917, 176), while establishing a peaceful order is a duty of the people of the world.

6.1 Kant and human rights

Together with utilitarianism, Kantianism is historically most closely connected with the human rights tradition (Ashford, 2007). Various authors contribute to Kant its key concepts such as: supreme value of personhood, international society of peoples as protecting rights, the concept of dignity as explaining the legal status of rights, human rights as moral claims on the global institutional order (Maliks & Føllesdal, 2014).

Kantian idea of the moral unity of humanity has been also instrumental in the work of theorists who have had more direct influence on the shape of human rights as a moral discourse in international organizations. Their most prominent representative is Hans Kelsen, whose theoretical vision have had significant impact on international law and the jurisprudence of the United Nations in particular (Pham, 2004). Kelsen maintains that not exclusively states, but also individual persons are lawful subjects of international law as a normative system (Zolo, 1998), which accidentally is also a necessary condition for operations of ethics in its legalistic mode. Kelsen has also proposed to establish a court of justice, as one of the organs in international law, having the power to resolve military disputes between states. This has also reinforced the affinity between the legal system the ethical one, both requiring an organ or a figure of legislator.

7. Distinctiveness of Aristotle

7.1 Internal and external teleology

The distinctiveness of Aristotle’s ethics and psychology is related to the teleology (from Greek *telos* ‘end’ and *logos* ‘reason’) of his outlook. It implies that the meaning and nature of any person, community or thing are derived from the end of their being (Ross, 1923). In case of inanimate things, like e.g. instruments or tools, the end is imposed on them from without. As to people and communities, the end is immanent to their being.

Barker (1906) explains that in order to understand Aristotle’s philosophy in its integrity, especially in relation to an ordered human action, it is crucial to consider teleology in its *internality*, as involving “an immanent end, in working towards which the members of a scheme are united to one another in a

common participation” (Barker, 1906: 227). An alternative approach involves an external teleology, assuming that people subserve an end external and foreign to themselves, which breaks apart the scheme which it postulates. It is worth noting that Aristotle himself was not consistent in using the internal conception of *telos* and stumbled into certain inconsistencies (Barker, 1906). According to the internally teleological outlook, the nature of things is not seen in their origin but in their destiny (Ross, 1923).

Aristotle’s idea of finality is the defining element of his psychology, ethics and community-life. The teleological element has been excluded from Enlightenment philosophies, which had fundamental significance on the way the modern social thinkers, such as Descartes, Hobbes or Kant, have depicted human condition, especially the moral condition in relation to a social, legal and institutional context.

7.2 Aristotle’s moral psychology

According to Aristotle human beings are subjects of psychological faculties, permanent powers characterized by particular kind of operation and having definitive order of worth and reverse order of development in the individual (Ross, 1923). Of those the faculty of will, the “rational desire” (Aristotle, 1908 [Metaphysics], XII.7.1072a28), becomes distinctively Aristotelian development. For Aristotle rational desire is not merely “intellectual preference,” as it was for Plato (Bourke, 1964). It is a rational part of the desiderative faculty. Although it is a desire, it is different from the sensual desire. Sensual appetite is “for present pleasure mistaken for absolute pleasure and good” (Ross, 1923, 145), while rational desire is for future good. The former has as its object an “apparent good,” while the object of the rational desire is “the real good” (Metaphysics XII.7.1072a28). Simultaneously, although will is rational, it is distinct from reason. It is the faculty responsible for referring the person to his/her personal end and as such a necessary element of any discussion of human moral ends.

What guides the rational desire is human reason. However, it is not the reason qua legal or moral rule, but reason instantiated by the practical wisdom or *phronesis*, the kind of knowledge that is not theoretical but knowledge that issues commands about what is to be done in a particular situation (Aristotle, 1980, [Nicomachean Ethics]).

In practical wisdom not an external object but “good action itself is its end” (Nicomachean Ethics VI.4.1140b6). It helps the person to arrange in an orderly way, the means towards an end; it makes the means and ends coherent. It designates the state of being attuned to the requirements of the particular circumstances, deliberating on them in truth and taking actions which not only realize a particular external goal but which in themselves are good. This emphasis on relevance of *phronesis* uniquely to particular situations makes it a

development that is distinct from all kinds of ethics based on law-like regularity.

7.3 Significance of personal choice and voluntariness

Practical wisdom perfects reason to the extent that the latter regulates the sensual appetites and makes them consistent with the rational desire. What is necessary for this act of reason and desire to occur in practical matters are two acts, i.e. an act of *decision* and an act of *choice*. The act of decision is the judgment about what has been deliberated upon. The act of choice is an act of rational desire to take a particular course of action based on prior decision. As such, choice constitutes an origin of external acts and is the necessary act for the execution of one's personal agency.

For Aristotle, practical wisdom and choice is closely related to the question of voluntary acts (NE III.2). Involuntariness, as a certain lack of internal autonomy to choose, is not a matter of wrong goals or lack of theoretical knowledge, but it is a matter of ignorance of particulars, of the circumstances and conditions on which action depends (NE III.1.1110b24). Contrarily, voluntariness is "that of which the moving principle is in the agent himself, he being aware of the particular circumstances of the action" (NE III.1.1111a13). A person who has a capacity to judge about his/her own judgement is subject of Aristotelian voluntariness. Thus, freedom of choice is a function of the way one perceives one's own cognitive and volitional powers.

Thus, conceived psychological ground presupposes development of the virtue ethics in a subject. For Aristotle, choice constitutes an origin of external acts and making the right choice in practical matters requires that one has practical wisdom and moral virtues, "for virtue makes the goal correct, and practical wisdom makes what leads to it correct" (NE VI.12.1144a6-10).

As I will show, Aristotelian speculation on choice and virtue has not been considered by philosophies which had emerged in Enlightenment and shaped the coordinate of the subsequent legal and moral debates (Danziger, 1997; MacIntyre, 2007b).

7.4 Rejection of Aristotle

Aristotelian distinct approach to ethics and psychology has been ruled out from human sciences with the dawn of the Enlightenment project. The primary reason for refutation of Aristotle in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was the inadequacy of his conceptualizations in the area of mechanics (Butterfield, 1959). However, the anti-Aristotelian spirit has also affected other areas of Aristotelian philosophy, including his anthropology, psychology and virtue ethics. However, above all, it was Aristotle's teleology that has been rejected (MacIntyre, 2007b; Taylor, 1989). The most fervent critics of Aristotle were, among others, Rene Descartes and Thomas Hobbes. Descartes has joined the

ranks of the seventeenth century philosophers who have prided themselves on taking on the modern moral outlook, leaving behind the ancient classical moral philosophy. Decartes' moral philosophy consists of rules of 'proto-science,' depending on Cartesian logic, physics and metaphysics (Sorell, 1993, 276). Also, Hobbes combated Aristotelian philosophy on the ground of anthropology, psychology and ethics (Leijenhorst, 2007).

Kant has renounced as unsound Aristotle's theory of personal happiness (Maritain, 1964). He understands human volition as "a faculty of determining oneself to action in accordance with the conception of certain laws" (Kant, 1949, 44). Athanassoulis (2012) explains that Kant and Aristotle agree that we have certain natural tendencies, good and bad, over which we have no control; what they disagree about is how we should react to this fact. According to Kant, we should seek to discard the influence of uncontrollable natural impulses polluting the purity of morality, while Aristotle asserts that we should recognize and embrace the influence of those impulses. As MacIntyre puts it, Aristotelianism "is not concerned with escaping from the snares of the world and of desire, but with transforming desire for moral ends" (MacIntyre, 2007a, 113). In these acts of recognition, of embracing and transforming the natural impulses, the operations of rational desire become of fundamental significance.

Although Kant also refers to the notion of rational desire, it means something different than in Aristotle. For Kant it is a faculty, "where the rational determination of the will comes first and produces in our sensibility a feeling of pleasure accompanying the object we rationally will as an end" (Wood, 2008, 35). Thus, in Kant, reason reveals one's obligations and then produces a feeling of reverence for the moral law and joy at one's willing what reason requires of him/her (Athanassoulis, 2012). On the contrary, in Aristotle, rational desire supports *subject's rational recognition* of the requirements for particular action and determines what he/she should do by indicating it to the rational desire.

8. Discussion: Kant, human rights and human desires

Human rights philosophers reach for Kantian thought in its various aspects in justifying human rights tradition. However, they rarely consider implications of the peculiarity of Kant's moral psychology, which, as I have explained, has been based on radical departure from Aristotelianism and, as I will argue, has decisive influence on the problem of the moral misconduct of some of the UN peacekeepers.

Kant's reliance on the authority of law in moral matters has been conditioned by his intense mistrust towards human intentions. His legal understanding of morality presupposes that the 'ought' in a moral sense becomes equivalent to 'is obliged to' in a legal sense (Athanassoulis, 2012). Anscombe (1958) argues that legal conceptions of ethics make sense in the presence of a legislator,

while losing their grip in the absence of such a figure. The sense of obligation expressed in the moral 'ought' is coherent only when there is a legislator (whether, an imaginary or real one, an external or internalized one) imposing his/her will. For Kant, the legislator is necessary, because of imperfection of human rationality, which in turn is the fault of human subjection to sensual desires, formed and controlled by the social conditioning of human nature. This is where Kant departs from Aristotle, who has postulated human beings to be subjects to rational desire, an in-built human faculty distinct from rationality, but constituting part of human will, predisposing the person to will what is good, even when in absence of any legal authority.

Anscombe's philosophical speculation is confirmed on the ground of the human rights practice by Ashford (2006, 2007), who argues that many of the duties imposed by human rights are in fact imperfect in nature in the absence of just institutions. This may explain why one of the changes undertaken by the UN authorities to alleviate the peacekeepers' misconduct entails intensification of the institutional control over the peacekeepers, taking the form of disciplining measures (increased patrols around high risks areas and decentralization of conduct and discipline personnel into locations with a potentially high risk of misconduct).

This suggests that human rights are not an adequate ethical framework in the context of peacekeeping missions. Rather, its central function consists in evaluating existing social institutions: "a test of whether any institution is minimally just is whether it acknowledges human rights" (Ashford, 2007, 185).

There is yet another problem faced by a person who becomes the subject of Kantian ethics. For Kant the moral agent is free from wants and desires (Williams, 1985, 64). The self of the moral agent, the noumenal self, is outside time and causality and thus it is separate from the empirically determined person. Acting on moral principles, according to Kant, makes one free from being causally determined by the hedonistic drive for pleasure. This is what constitutes one's freedom. Kant's rational agent needs to stand back from his own desires and see them from a standpoint that is not that of his desires, the standpoint of impartiality.

Kant applies thus considered rational freedom to both factual and practical deliberation. The former, which is not essentially first-personal, may indeed be subject to it. However, the practical deliberation, which is radically first-personal, necessarily involves the self of one's desires. Denying it leads to the mistake of equating reflection and detachment (Williams, 1985).

This aspect of Kantian moral psychology explains why it is intrinsically impossible to reduce the cases of the misconduct among the UN peacekeepers merely by means of making them subject to formal rules and obligations, while not accounting for the fact that the practical, concrete deliberation of any

peacekeeper will take a specific form, unique to him/her and the circumstances in which he/she operates. Aristotle has taken this form into account by not eliminating personal desires altogether from the framework of moral conduct but by conceptualizing each single person as capable of “transforming [his/her] desire for moral ends” (MacIntyre, 2007a, 113)”.

9. Conclusions

Philosophical framework, which has led to the conceptualizations of human rights in the form adopted by the UDHR and institutionalized by the UN, has been based on Kant’s ideas of duty, law-based morality and noumenal self, which replaced Aristotelian theory of virtue, internal teleology, and rational desire. The predominance of Kantianism in the Western ethical model of international organizations has led to the development of a universal acceptance for the law-based ethics requiring institutional legislator responsible for designing the moral norms and supervising their implementation by the human subjects. However, the moral psychology, which accompanies this model of ethics does not account for the fact of personal conditioning of the people involved. This is particularly conspicuous in the case of the UN peacekeepers, who come from all regions of the world, from various cultural backgrounds, which makes it very difficult for them, if not impossible, to develop the mind-set of the noumenal self-presupposed by the law-based morality.

Development and acceptance of this framework was possible in the circumstances of forgetting the Aristotelian virtue ethics and its moral psychology. Aristotle has constructed a theory within which morality is subject to individual deliberation dependent on the particularities of a given situation, an aspect which law-based morality does not account for. Virtue ethics is agent-centred rather than act-centred; it seeks to answer the question “What sort of person should I be?” rather than the question “What sort of action should I do?”; it rejects the idea that ethics is codifiable in rules or principles that can provide specific action guidance (Hursthouse, 1999).

However, having said all that, Aristotelian approach does not provide any ready-made, quick fix solutions to the existing problem of the UN peacekeepers misconduct. Rather it may instigate a reflection and a debate in the international community and reveal deep-seated assumptions that have been shaping the moral formula of Western culture and its institutions for the past few centuries. The present analysis shows that the problem of the UN peacekeepers misconduct is a disgraceful unintended consequence of this domination.

Taking Aristotle into consideration represents a rich area for future research in the fields of human rights, peacekeeping missions and their moral-psychological aspects. Its application to peace education and training may also provide significant research potential. Reconsidering Aristotelian virtue ethics and moral

psychology in those fields of study may help to better understand the unintended negative consequences of otherwise well-intentioned and noble causes.

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