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EXISTENTIAL RESILIENCE OF HUMAN BEING
IN THE WARTIME EVERYDAY LIFE

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the analysis of existential resilience in the everydayness of war. Authors pay attention to the main concepts of everyday life in the philosophy of the 20th century, especially in phenomenology (E. Husserl, A. Schütz and T. Luckmann, B. Waldenfels, H. Lefebvre). Also, the specific features of everydayness in war times are analyzed. Authors state that the everyday life of war has a certain peculiarity, which can be explained using the concepts of “boundary situation” and “state of exception.” In a certain sense, the appeal to these concepts emphasizes the paradoxical nature of the everydayness of war since here there is a kind of departure from everyday life, the assertion of a state of exception, which is full of existential danger and at the same time a more significant concern for one’s existence. “Existential resilience” can manifest itself in many aspects according to different dimensions of human existence. Authors focus on two aspects of “existential resilience” in the conditions of the everydayness of war, which is full of experiences of the state of exception and boundary situation. The first aspect concerns overcoming the horror of war and anxiety about saving a life; the second is related to maintaining moral sensitivity and avoiding the trap of the banality of evil. Moreover, the existential resilience observed during times of war is intricately intertwined with the sacred and religious dimensions.

Key words: existential resilience, everyday life, phenomenology, state of exception, boundary situation, banality of evil, anxiety.

1. Introduction

The 20th and 21st centuries are full of wars. In the 20th century, there were two world wars and many smaller military conflicts. The 21st century was no exception; it did not realize the idea of “eternal peace” and even moved further away from it. The current full-scale war launched by Russia against Ukraine testifies to this. This war has become the largest military conflict in Europe since 1945 and has given rise to many problems for philosophical understanding, which concern politics, society, world-view, values, and principles.

War tears a person out of his usual everyday life. It is something extraordinary, awakening experiences and instincts that do not manifest in peacetime. This aspect of the war was well described by Ernst Jünger, “When the war blazed like a torch on the ruins of the cities, everyone felt abruptly torn from their daily lives. Staggering, distraught, the masses poured into the streets under the crest of the immense wave of blood that piled up before them. Shrinking all those values that tortuous coils of time had made it mandatory to internalize. The fine, the intricate, the ever more sharply honed culture of nuance, the sophisticated fragmentation of pleasure, all this evaporated in the bubbling crater of impulses believed to be lost.” (Jünger 2021: 29). However, the duration of the war gradually turns it into everyday life in martial law conditions. At the same time, the war has a destructive character directed against the human world. The routine of war can destroy values, plunging human existence into total nihilism and moral insensitivity. As Jünger noted, in times of war, “the solid ground of existence begins to shake” (Jünger 2021). To preserve one’s own world, a person must create the position of “existential resilience,” which is integrated into the everyday life of war and, in this way makes it possible to preserve the existential foundation.

Philosophers cannot abstract from the world they live in and from the context of their habitation. Therefore, in the present article, the inner experiences and philosophical reflections of the authors, generated by the experience of the unjust war unleashed by Russia against our country, were reflected.

2. The philosophical understanding of everyday life

At first glance, everydayness is not the subject of philosophy because philosophical reflection deals with metaphysical problems – in other words, it reaches the “meta-“ level of human existence. However, this is

not quite the case, which is particularly characteristic of the philosophy of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Everyday life as an object of understanding is not given in a clear grasp. It establishes a particular rationality that cannot be generalized and formalized. At the same time, everyday life is endowed with meaning, which can become the subject of philosophical reflection and reveal human existence. Everyday life is endowed with internal order, which plays an essential role for a person. When it is destroyed, human existence plunges into a situation of absurdity, presented in the writings of representatives of existentialism.

In the social sciences and humanities, as well as the philosophy of the 20th century, a peculiar turn to the investigation of everyday life took place. As Bernhard Waldenfels writes, recently, two concepts have attracted the special attention of researchers – everyday life (*Alltag*) and everydayness (*Alltäglichkeit*), denoting a particular area and way of life. As a component, everydayness is included in a number of phrases, such as everyday life, everyday knowledge, everyday consciousness, everyday speech, everyday human behavior, and the culture of everyday life. Everyday life is the subject of a whole complex of scientific disciplines: sociology, psychology, psychiatry, linguistics, art theory, literary theory, and, finally, philosophy. This topic often dominates in philosophical treatises and scientific studies, the authors of which address specific aspects of life, history, culture, and politics. (Waldenfels 1998). Representatives of phenomenology – E. Husserl, M. Heidegger, A. Schütz, B. Waldenfels, and H. Lefebvre paid particular attention to the understanding of everyday life. In the writings of representatives of phenomenology, everydayness appears as the basis of the lifeworld; it forms the basis of social existence and its order. In addition, everyday life builds dimensions of common sense, guided by which a person acts, interacts with others, and perceives the world around him or her as self-evident.

Alfred Schütz explores the structures of the lifeworld and pays attention to everydayness. In his concept of the lifeworld, we find reasons to recognize the general reality of everyday life as our reality in the first place. He states that the everydayness of lifeworld should be understood as that realm of reality that a normal adult, guided by common sense, perceives as given. We define everything as a simple given, the experience of which does not raise questions, any state of affairs, which for the time being is unproblematic for us. A person's everyday life determines the social and cultural space, which forms a particular order. Alfred Schütz points out that the everyday reality of the lifeworld includes not only the "nature" that the human being experiences but also the social and cultural world in which the human being is. The lifeworld does not consist only of material objects and events that a person encounters in his environment. They are an integral part of the world of a person's immediate environment. Still, lifeworld also includes all the semantic levels that turn

natural things into cultural objects, human bodies into fellow humans, and the movements of fellow humans into actions, gestures, and messages.

Alfred Schütz and Thomas Luckmann pay special attention to understanding the lifeworld. Attunement to understanding is a prerequisite for a person's connection with his or her everyday life. They write: "[...] in the natural attitude the world is already given to me for my explication. I must understand my life-world to the degree necessary in order to be able to act in it and operate upon it. Likewise, thinking in the attitude of the life-world is also pragmatically motivated" (Schütz&Luckmann 1973: 6). Also, A. Schütz and T. Luckmann state that in practical problems that a person encounters in everyday life, he or she can find a tendency to "theoretical" thinking or at least to a partial integration of inconsistent schemes of interpretation into his/her experience. We want to add that understanding the lifeworld and a tendency to theoretic thinking are the prerequisites for philosophy of everyday life. This attitude to understanding contains a person's desire to grasp the sense, allowing him or her to outline his/her existential orientations.

Bernhard Waldenfels summarizes the philosophical understanding of everyday life. And at the same time, it seeks to continue the investigation of it in the aspect of defining three methodological principles:

1. ordinary life does not exist by itself but arises as a result of the processes of "everydayness," which are opposed by the processes of "overcoming everyday life";

2. everyday life is a differentiating concept that separates one phenomenon from another. The boundaries and meanings of the selected spheres change depending on the place, time, environment, and culture;

3. speech about everyday life does not coincide with everyday life itself and with speech in everyday life. (Waldenfels 1990).

Bernhard Waldenfels defines several ways of philosophical understanding of everyday life: starting from the subject, from the objectively existing world of bodies, from social relations, from the process of language communication, or from actions that have become automatic. In his investigations, he tries to present everyday life, focusing on the specific rationality of it. B. Waldenfels notes that rationality is understood here in a broad sense as something embodied in meaningful, correct relationships that are regularly repeated. At the same time, there is a pluralization of rationality because, in everyday conditions, the multiplicity of forms of irrationality is opposed not by one form of rationality but by specific forms of rationality that change according to the change in the situation.

The French philosopher Henri Lefebvre was also engaged in the philosophical understanding of everyday life. In his works, we find the connection of everyday experience with common sense. In particular, he notes that "the everyday, established and consolidated, remains a sole surviving common sense referent and point of reference" (Lefebvre 1987:

9). He tries to understand the specificity of everyday life and notes its double essence, which is manifested through repetition. Lefebvre writes that the essence of everyday life has constantly been repeated and masked by desires and fear. In the study of everyday life, we discover the serious problem of repetition, one of the most difficult problems we face. The double essence of the everyday is manifested in its specific “topology”: everyday life, according to Lefebvre, is located at the intersection of two types of repetition – cyclic, which dominates in nature, and linear, which prevails in processes known as “rational” (Lefebvre 1987: 10).

In modern philosophical discourse, we can find the statement that the philosophy of everyday life captures a more authentic experience. This is because philosophy seeks to understand man. If it focuses on ideal forms and generalizations, it loses the true dimension of human life, rooted in everyday life. That is why the philosophy of everyday life makes it possible to understand human existence as it is. For example, Finn Janning writes: “A philosophy for everyday life is, in other words, an investigation of the raw reality of life, taking in all of life’s many ingredients. Such a philosophy is necessary because – this is my claim or thesis – we still have not tasted life in all its richness. We tend to cling on to certain norms or ideals in a way that does not honor our own experience and intuition. At worst our life becomes an imitation, image or representation of more authoritative ideals. An image is a copy, that is, a simulation of the real reality. We have lost contact with life because we follow ideas or images of how life should be.” (Janning 2015: 2). The philosophy of everydayness rejects the idea that the meaning of life is somehow transcendent and universal. Instead, this meaning is understood as something that manifests in each specific life situation.

At the same time, in the philosophy of the 20th century, we find the awareness that everyday life does not exist by itself. Instead, it is determined by transcendental structures. These structures form the ideals and values on which a person orients himself in everyday behavior, the ways of behaving and understanding that occur in everyday practice. At the same time, a person’s everyday life is shaped by the social order and the phenomena that determine it.

Existential resilience forms the basis of the structure of everyday life in conditions of war (as well as other extraordinary situations). It not only allows a person to maintain the order of his world but also counteracts absurdity, cynicism, and nihilism, which are generated by the phenomenon of war and interfere with everyday experience, aiming at destroying common sense and rationality. Existential resilience of a person prevents the filling of everyday life by an intolerable state of being, which deprives human existence of any meaning.

3. The everydayness of war as the boundary situation and state of exception

The everyday life of war has a certain peculiarity, which can be explained using the concepts of “boundary situation” and “state of exception.” In a certain sense, the appeal to these concepts emphasizes the paradoxical nature of the everydayness of war since here there is a kind of departure from everyday life, the assertion of a state of exception, which is full of existential danger and at the same time a more significant concern for one’s existence. On the other hand, however, the permanence of the boundary situation and extraordinary state turns them into the everyday life of human beings. In other words, the feeling of a boundary situation and a state of exception becomes an integral part of the everyday war experience.

The concept of “boundary situation” (*Grenzsituation*), the authorship of which belongs to Karl Jaspers (Jaspers 1970; Jaspers 1997), became one of the important concepts in the philosophy of existentialism. Its content reflects the moment of deep shocks of a human being, which he or she experiences in the face of disease, death, struggle, suffering, faults, failures, etc. According to Karl Jaspers, by mentally clarifying boundary situations, a person can make a leap to real existence, where, filled with his tragic experience, he acquires his own self, that is, existence in the strict sense. Karl Jaspers writes, “Situations like the following: that I am always in situations; that I cannot live without struggling and suffering; that I cannot avoid guilt; that I must die – these are what I call boundary situations. They *never change*, except in appearance. There is no way to survey them in existence, no way to see anything behind them. They are like a wall we run into, a wall on which we founder. We cannot modify them; all that we can do is to make them lucid, but without explaining or deducing them from something else. They go with existence itself.” (Jaspers 1970: 178). In other words, the concept of “boundary situation” reflects the moment of profound upheavals experienced by a person. And yet it is precisely because of “boundary situations,” as Karl Jaspers believes, that a person can make a leap to true existence.

A person who has experienced a “boundary situation” discovers his deep connection with the absolute (with God), mentally clarifies his plan for himself and discovers his destiny. The experience of a “boundary situation” is a tragic experience, but it allows a person to meaningfully transform his everyday existence and fill it with spiritual meaning. In the state of exception, a person is freed from the usual conventions, externally learned norms and generally recognized views, which form the sphere of anonymous existence *das Man*. He or she understands himself as existence. It is by passing through a state of exception that a person gets the opportunity to move (make a leap) from an “unreal” existence to a real

one. Everything that was usual and seemed reliably correct loses its status and appears in the hypostasis of appearances and illusoryness. In this situation comes the realization that this world is nothing but a mirage, which separates it from the realities of being transcendent in relation to the empirical world. In this way, there is an encounter of a human being with transcendence and God. Karl Jaspers states: "The boundary thus plays its proper role of something immanent which already points to transcendence." (Jaspers 1970: 179)

For a person in a boundary situation, a genuine, undistorted everyday vision of existence opens up, the main thing which is an individual personal breakthrough to "mental clarification" of the tragic essence of existence. The boundary situation fundamentally changes the entire spectrum of the vision of the previous life, which loses the coordinates of certainty and appears illusory, far from real existence. The world, which until recently seemed so reliable in its sensory givenness, turns out to be a *fata morgana*, which with its illusion, hid the reality of existence, and now only points to something beyond the limits of sensory experience.

In the boundary situation, a person is alone. In this loneliness, he or she goes beyond the boundaries of the objects of everyday existence and discovers the truths of his or her existence. At the same time, questions arise about different types of responsibility. Karl Jaspers analyzes the causes and the entire array of crimes of the Second World War; he is especially interested in the morality of guilt, which is determined by conscience and redeemed by pangs of conscience. All this will find its meaning in the work *The Questions of German Guilty* (Jaspers 2000).

The problem of responsibility and guilt in the conditions of a boundary situation is connected mainly with the experience of the Second World War. Based on Jasper's reflections, we can ask why in the conditions of the everydayness of war did so many Germans not show existential resilience, which resulted in a large number of war crimes? The routine of war creates conditions where it is difficult to resist the temptations of evil. The boundary situation of war sharpens the sense of being. Still, it can dull moral sensitivity, especially when this situation becomes permanent and produces the banality of evil in a state of exception.

The everydayness of war is filled with the state of exception of the human world. First of all, we can talk about the formal declaration of a state of emergency (state of exception) by institutions acting as the Sovereign and having the duty to take care of the order of the social world (Shevchuk 2018). But we can also talk about the way of human existence in special social conditions (like war or catastrophes). It is possible to explain the peculiarities of this state of the human world and the mechanism of embedding the extraordinariness into the structure of everyday life in the conditions of war by turning to the understanding of the state of exception in modern social and political philosophy. The idea of a state of exception appears as an ontological hypothesis of modern social

philosophy, which intends to delineate the situation of the possibility of existence and non-existence of social order. One of the consequences of reflecting on this hypothesis is the observation that a new political rationality is established. This aspect of the state of emergency is considered by Giorgio Agamben, who describes this form of rationality in the following way: it is not pure violence or pure law because it does not distinguish between a state of violence and a normal state; being an anomalous phenomenon of the social world, it maintains a close connection with the space where legal regulations of the political order function; it reveals the adjustment of the order of law, when political phenomena appear as a fiction, with the help of which law tries to cover its absence (Agamben 2005). The interweaving of the logic of the state of emergency with the logic of the legal order determines the permanence of a state of exception.

With the philosophical statements about the permanence of the state of exception in modern social and political conditions, we can understand the mechanism of embedding the extraordinariness into everyday life. The statement about the permanence of the state of exception can be found in the works of Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, and Giorgio Agamben. For example, Walter Benjamin, in the eighth thesis of his work *On the Concept of History* writes about the regularity of the “state of emergency” in which we live: “The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the ‘state of emergency’ in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight.” (Benjamin 1940). In the 20th century, in the face of the threat of an atomic disaster, the state of exception of society manifested as being on the edge of global catastrophe. H. Marcuse notes: “[...] Equally obvious is the need for being prepared, for living on the brink, for facing the challenge. We submit to the peaceful production of the means of destruction, to the perfection of waste, to being educated for a defense which deforms the defenders and that which they defend.” (Marcuse 2007: X)

It is essential to understand how the state of exception turns into normality and is integrated into the structure of everyday life. For this, we should turn to political philosophy, which draws attention to the fact that in the modern conditions of the political world, a kind of reverse logic of the manifestation of extraordinary phenomena can be seen. The extraordinary does not become something unusual but manifests itself as an order of the social world in which human existence feels unprotected. In particular, in the writings of G. Agamben, we find that the acquisition of a permanent state of emergency turns it into a constitutive paradigm of the legal order. The idea of the state of emergency, which performs a constitutive function in relation to the legal order is also found in the works of C. Schmitt. For example, he writes: “The exception is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing; the exception proves everything: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which

derives only from the exception. In the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition.” (Schmitt 2005: 15). Due to the intensity of its manifestation as a constitutive force, the state of exception outlines the contours of itself and the new order of the human world.

A state of exception gives rise to a form of extraordinary, abnormal sociality. Modernity demonstrates the manifestation of the constitutive power of a state of exception and its transformation into the norm. The structure of the state of exception manifests itself as a simultaneous being-beyond and being-in actuality (everyday life). As a result, a person gets used to the extraordinary, which does not oppose itself to normality, but on the contrary, imitates it. The everyday ordinariness built into this structure of extraordinary social life creates a constant feeling of threat and anxiety.

4. Existential resilience in the extraordinary conditions of war-stricken daily life

It is difficult to give a clear definition of “existential resilience.” It can manifest itself in many aspects according to different dimensions of human existence. Therefore, in this part of the article, we will focus on two aspects of “existential resilience” in the conditions of the everydayness of war, which is full of experiences of the state of exception and boundary situation. The first aspect concerns overcoming the horror of war and anxiety about saving a life; the second is related to maintaining moral sensitivity and avoiding the trap of the banality of evil.

Existential resilience is overcoming the horror of war and anxiety about existence. War gives rise to experiences of horror and anxiety, which become a permanent state of everyday experience. As Ernst Jünger points out, horror belongs to the vortex of sensations that have long been dormant in our depths, only to burst forth with eternal force in moments of great upheaval. He connects horror with the experiences caused by war: “[...] the front-line soldier marched through the towns of the hinterland in gray, silent columns, stooped and ragged, the sight of him caused the carefree people to freeze. ‘He looks like he’s just come out of a coffin,’ whispered one to his girlfriend, and anyone who was brushed by those dead eyes trembled. These men were saturated with horror; they would have been lost without the intoxication. [...] Penetrating horror, comprehensible in its fine radiations only to the most sensitive, lay in contrast, crackling, where life and destruction touched and intersected.” (Jünger 2021: 14-15). Anxiety and horror are not just feelings or an experience; they are existential in the sense that Martin Heidegger understands it. Horror and anxiety put a person in front of Nothing. At the

same time, it should be clarified how anxiety is understood in Heidegger's fundamental ontology. He writes, "By this anxiety we do not mean the quite common anxiousness, ultimately reducible to fearfulness, which all too readily comes over us. Anxiety is different from fear. We become afraid in the face of this or that particular being that threatens us in this or that particular respect. Fear in the face of something is also in each case a fear for something in particular. Because fear possesses this trait of being 'fear in the face of' and 'fear for,' he who fears and is afraid is captive to the mood in which he finds himself. Striving to rescue himself from this particular thing, he becomes unsure of everything else and completely 'loses his head.' Anxiety does not let such confusion arise. Much to the contrary, a peculiar calm pervades it." (Heidegger 1929).

Anxiety, built into the structure of the everyday experience of war, has its peculiarity. A person feels the permanence of anxiety, which gives rise to the loss of the existential foundation and the discovery of Nothingness before us. Heidegger points out that anxiety knocks the ground from under our feet, making everything disappear. This is why we ourselves – existing people – feel the failure of the existing and slip away from ourselves. The everyday life of war, steeped in horror and anxiety, creates an alienation from the world and a loss of sensitivity.

Although the experience of anxiety and horror of war, which is based on existential resilience, allows you to overcome the "alienation of the world." Existential resilience, which becomes the core of the everyday experience, helps a person to overcome the "discovery of Nothingness." A human being thereby confirms his or her existence, the essential order of his or her world. It lays the foundation for values, ideals, and principles, the system of which overcomes the situation of nihilism generated by the phenomenon of war.

Existential resilience in war conditions manifests as following moral principles and overcoming the banality of evil and moral blindness. The routine of war provokes moral insensitivity. Hannah Arendt warns us about these dangerous phenomena (Arendt 1994). Evil hides in banality and normality. As is known, Arendt demonstrates this on the example of the Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann, who worked in the Gestapo during the Second World War to solve the Jewish question. At his trial in Jerusalem in 1961, Eichmann ("the man in the glass booth," as Arendt called him) didn't look bloodthirsty. В книзі Ханни Арендт надibuємо такий його опис: "[...] medium-sized, slender, middle-aged, with receding hair, ill-fitting teeth, and nearsighted eyes, who throughout the trial keeps craning his scraggy neck toward the bench (not once does he face the audience), and who desperately and for the most part successfully maintains his self-control despite the nervous tic to which his mouth must have become subject long before this trial started." (Arendt 1994: 15). Eichmann spoke of himself as a vulnerable person, asserting that it was very difficult for him to endure the "excursions" to the concentration camps: "For me, too,

this was monstrous. I am not so tough as to be able to endure something of this sort without any reaction. [...] If today I am shown a gaping wound, I can't possibly look at it. I am that type of person, so that very often I was told that I couldn't have become a doctor. I still remember how I pictured the thing to myself, and then I became physically weak, as though I had lived through some great agitation. Such things happen to everybody, and it left behind a certain inner trembling." (Arendt 1994: 87). At the same time, Eichmann is someone who did not show existential resilience to observe moral principles and universal human values; he succumbed to Nazi ideology and distorted his everyday world with banality.

Existential resilience can be contrasted with such a feature of Eichmann as thoughtlessness. As H. Arendt writes, thoughtlessness fills the void in thought, giving rise to empty chatter. Thoughtlessness distorts the common sense and rationality embedded in the structure of everyday life, as B. Waldenfels (Waldenfels 1990) and H. Lefebvre (Lefebvre 1987) wrote about. At the same time, thoughtlessness does not mean that we are faced with a fool since it is in a certain way synchronized with the normality determined by the social context (in Adolf Eichmann's case, the Nazi regime during the Second World War). Existential resilience, as we understand it, does not allow us to reconcile with the normality of this thoughtlessness. As H. Arendt writes: "He [Eichmann] was not stupid. It was sheer thoughtlessness – something by no means identical with stupidity—that predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of that period. And if this is 'banal' and even funny if with the best will in the world one cannot extract any diabolical or demonic profundity from Eichmann, that is still far from calling it commonplace" (Arendt 1994: 288).

Eichmann is an example of an anthropological type completely absorbed by *das Man*. He was a person who had not shown existential resilience and succumbed to this absorption. By the term *das Man*, Martin Heidegger in *Being and Time* denotes anonymity, the everyday world, which creates a lack of freedom, responsibility, unification, and alienation. One of the modes of *das Man* is precisely empty chatter and thoughtlessness. As we know, Martin Heidegger was Hannah Arendt's teacher, so he influenced her writings. Some critics of Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, for example, Richard Wolin, in the article *The Banality of Evil: The Demise of a Legend*, argue that by adopting Heidegger's concept of "thoughtlessness," Arendt sharply downplays the fanatical beliefs that determined Eichmann's actions (Wolin 2014). It is difficult to agree with this critique because Eichmann's "thoughtlessness" is generally beyond any ideology. Moreover, his stubbornness hindered even the Nazis because people like him took their duties too seriously, and therefore prevented many "dealers" and "swindlers" who were carried to the top of the system by the wave of fascism from earning. It also hindered the court, as it turned out to be about the inability to understand or feel that one is doing evil. It seems that it is beyond any rationality and common sense

because it is difficult to evaluate it from the point of view of moral principles and universal human values. We assume that this is due to the fact that the banality of evil is characterized not by the rejection of the moral law but by its distortion. Banal rejection of responsibility is a cover-up with duty. For example, Eichmann convinced that he was constantly guided by Kant's understanding of duty. However, his interpretation of the moral imperative is also not deprived of banality (Kant's philosophy "for the household use of the little man" (Arendt 1994: 136)) and involves adaptation to conditions in order to silence the conscience. Hannah Arendt observes that Kant's formula of practical reason was, in fact, rejected and replaced by the principle of subjection to the will of the Führer. Such a distortion of the categorical imperative and its usage in everyday actions leads to negative ethical consequences. For example, denial of responsibility is an attempt to justify oneself by claiming to have chosen the "lesser evil." The everyday life of war is full of moral dilemmas that a person can face. Only existential resilience allows the human being to make a morally justified choice and not rely on the "lesser evil."

5. Existential resilience and *the sacred* in times of war

The everyday life of war is full of man's search for the meaning of existence and the truth. These searches are often related to religious experience and the desire to know God and receive His support: "[...] a person experiencing a war situation verifies their points of view and tries to reach the truth by all available means. This truth not only concerns the cause of the war, its course and possible end, or only information about the war's impact on the immediate lives of men and society. Searching for truth is about correctly recognizing one's hierarchy of values and answering the question about the meaning and purpose of one's existence in the world, as well as the existence and role of God in an evil situation." (Wyroskiewicz, Wcisł & Verkhovetska 2022: 4). Thus, existential resilience is often related to *the sacred*, which becomes its support and foundation.

In the everydayness of war, where a person is constantly in a boundary situation, and where turning to a transcendent principle in search of the meaning of being, protection, and help becomes a vital need, the phenomenon of *the sacred*, both in its spiritual and material forms, acquires particular importance. Usually, *the sacred* is perceived as belonging to the semantic field of religion. Still, in addition to this usual meaning, it also has an existential dimension in which the religious and existential acquire particular meaning for understanding the being. Also, *the sacred* can be perceived as a sociocultural phenomenon that presents itself in everyday life - it can encompass individual objects, processes, and

relationships that shape the world of human existence as a whole and the concreteness of life situations in particular.

By its very essence, the sacred is something that arises from the ordinary order of things, but it belongs to another order – to the order of values and ideals, and therefore has to do with the existential connection between human being and the world. Any objective value, as well as the situation in general, can carry a certain sacred meaning. Defining them through sacred significance is a process of sacralization. The function of sacralization consists of giving to everyday things sacred certainties and structuring space and time according to their sacred significance.

The sacred permeates our everyday existence; certain taboos and prescriptions operate in it, the violation of which destroys the existential certainties of various situations, including the structured constancy of “boundary situations” that is very important in wartime conditions when the usual social order is destroyed. As a result, there is a departure from the existing everyday reality to the more fundamental existential foundations.

The sacred represents meaningfully defined objects and situations directly close to the absolute. As a special meaning of the human world, it is deeply rooted in social structures, permeating their functioning and direct relationships between people. Therefore, the sacred plays a unique role in the states of exception and boundary situations where existence is on edge, such as the situation of war, which constantly needs an established foundation both in its material (sacred objects) and in spiritual (faith, hope, etc.) forms of existence. Being on the edge requires a stable system of values and, therefore, a sacred system based on which it is formed.

War as a particular boundary situation, on the one hand, destroys the usual understanding of the sacred as the objectification of the absolute. But, on the other hand, it exacerbates his need for existential forms filled with faith, hope, and love. These virtues justify human existence by becoming the target cause in a situation where the very realization of a person’s existence is called into question. Being filled with existential meanings, the sacred in the extreme situation of war becomes almost the only hope to cross the border of nothingness and grow on the horizon of higher essential values of faith and love.

6. Conclusion

The worst thing about the everydayness of war is that you get used to it. And that’s why we need existential resilience toward getting used to war. Existential resilience must manifest itself as courage. As Ernst Jünger writes, “Courage is the wind that blows towards distant shores, the key to

all treasures, the hammer that has forged great empires, the shield without which no culture would exist. Courage is the commitment of one's person to the utmost consequences, the challenge of the idea against matter, regardless of what may come of it." (Jünger 2021: 44). Courage permeates everyday life in the conditions of war and manifests itself as opposition to the enemy and the threats caused by him.

The everyday life of war is a necessary background that highlights existential problems and allows philosophers to think about them based on unique experiences. On the one hand, the everyday life of war corresponds to the rhythm of everydayness in the conditions of a normal state of the social world; on the other hand, it manifests extraordinary phenomena that are indistinct under normal conditions. A person in a war situation essentially has a choice of two alternatives: either to become a victim, to become a *homo sacer* (as G. Agamben and few other modern philosophers call a person completely endangered in the socio-cultural conditions of the permanent state of emergency of modernity), or to show existential resilience and transform everyday war for the time of opposing the enemy, preservation of values and ideals worth fighting for.

During the current period when this article is being written, Ukraine continues to face challenging circumstances. However, since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, numerous examples have emerged that highlight the remarkable resilience demonstrated by Ukrainians. The most pivotal aspect in Ukraine lies in the realization that preserving freedom and upholding cherished values can only be achieved through the unwavering display of existential resilience.

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