

The Connection between Heroism and Violence in War Narratives from the Aspect of Rituals

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Abstract : The aim of the study is to help peacebuilding by analyzing the symbolical level of fights in the war. Despite the sufferings, war heroism still represents such a noble value in war narratives (especially in literature and films, whether it is high- or popular culture) which can make warfare attractive for every age-group. The questions of the study will revolve around the events when heroism is not a necessary and unselfish act for a greater good, but when the primary aim is to express strength in order to build self-mythology. Since war is a scene where the mythological level can meet reality, and even modern narratives use the elements of rituals and sacral references in even secular contexts, understanding the connection between rites and modern battles will ground this study, and the analysis will follow the logic of the violent rites. From this aspect, war is not merely the fight for different countries and ideas, but the fight of mankind with superhuman and natural or supernatural phenomena, as well. In this context, enemy symbolizes the threat of the world which is unpredictable for mankind, and the fight becomes a ritual combat; therefore the winner's symbolic reward is to redefine himself or herself not only in the human environment but in the context of the whole world. The analysis of the study reveals that this kind of violence does not represent real heroism and rarely results in recruitment, on the contrary, conserves fear and the feeling of weakness, which is the root cause of this kind of act. The result of this study is a way to reshape the attitude toward so-called heroic war violence which is often a part of war narratives even nowadays. Since stepping out of the war tradition is mainly a cultural question, redefining the connection between society and narratives which has an effect on mentality and emotions, giving a clear guide to making difference between heroism and useless violence is very important in peacebuilding.

Keywords : war, ritual, heroism, violence, narratives, culture

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