

# Preface and Acknowledgements

To date, many studies have been published that deal with the topic of leadership in crisis situations, but only few works exist in the field of leadership in extreme situations. Since a distinction between crisis and extreme contexts, however, is crucial, further research in this area is needed. An understanding of the nature of leadership in an extreme setting can provide further insights for military and civil leaders in a regular context within their profession. Furthermore, the growing number of leadership scholars around the world who work and do research on this subject shows the importance and global recognition of this topic.

Armed forces personnel are frequently exposed to intense combat and potential mitigating effects which can affect the military performance in terms of cohesion, morale, and leadership. Issues such as why people act as they do in stressful and extreme situations or what constitutes the nexus between leadership/followership, organizations, and culture are addressed in this book. It covers general observations about leadership in extreme situations and specific case studies while also providing “lessons learned” approaches to be used for teaching military leadership in classes.

The idea for this book arose in 2015 when the Military Academy at ETH Zurich organized a congress on leadership in extreme situations which was attended by leadership scholars and high-ranking representatives of military, economic, and civil organizations in Switzerland. The idea of publishing a volume with international contributions was then further developed by the working group “Morale, Cohesion and Leadership”—chaired and coordinated by the Department of Leadership and Communication Studies, MILAK at ETH Zurich—at the ERGOMAS (European Research Group on Military and Society) Conference in Ra’anana, Israel (2015). For this book project, a number of international authors were won at this conference.

The aim of this book is to address key issues of leadership, morale, and cohesion and to conduct cross-national studies of social and organizational aspects of leadership in a military context. A variety of issues is included and the book chapters approach these topics from theoretical, doctrinal, or practical points of view.

While the majority of the chapters and their authors have a military background, the book is aimed at a wider target audience. The conclusions that can be drawn

from leadership in a military context can also be applied to other fields and are therefore useful for political, civil, and economic leaders. The intention of the editors is to provide a diverse framework of leadership that can be used by leaders in various professional fields. Furthermore, this book can be used as teaching material for students of leadership.

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Birmensdorf, Zurich, Switzerland  
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On behalf of the editors,  
Michael Karl Jager

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