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On the Development of a Military and Leadership Science Tandem*

Abstract

Currently, there is a manifest general strategic deficiency in the fields of security policy, the identification of national objectives, as well as corporate governance in private industry. This also impacts on the requirements regarding a skills profile for future command and management personnel. Against this backdrop, an attempt is made at finding an answer by accentuating, horizontally expanding or abstracting the contents of military science with a view to fostering a general leadership science. By means of this, and by employing available capabilities and structures, the greatest national benefit is to be achieved regarding scientifically sound command/leadership training schemes for military and civilian clients which is geared towards the long-term accomplishment of strategic objectives.

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1. Summary

Currently, there is a manifest general strategic deficiency in the fields of security policy, the identification of national objectives, as well as corporate governance in private industry. This also impacts on the requirements regarding a skills profile for future command and management personnel. Against this backdrop, an attempt is made at finding an answer by accentuating, horizontally expanding or abstracting the contents of military science with a view to fostering a general leadership science. By means of this, and by employing available capabilities and structures, the greatest national benefit is to be achieved regarding scientifically sound command/leadership training schemes for military and civilian clients which is geared towards the long-term accomplishment of strategic objectives.

Especially a small state such as Austria with its focus on a humanities-oriented education and its progressive and systematically updated command/leadership philosophy is well placed to assume a leading role in Europe by further developing military science and by establishing a general leadership science underpinned by the former. This would constitute a contribution, rooted in solidarity, to Europe's security-related development, which – given the pressing demand for strategic command/leadership expertise – would be eagerly embraced by command/leadership and management personnel from the fields of politics, the military, and private enterprise.

2. The leadership's want of strategy

Daniel Möckli¹ is of the opinion that the EU does not pay enough attention to developments in China and that member states enter individual strategic partnerships with global players at their own initiative without waiting for European proposals. Gunther Hauser² states that the EU may well have realised the necessity of deepening its strategic partnership with NATO, but has not developed any concrete approaches to solving the contradiction between soft power prevention and pre-emptive engagement. The ESS, furthermore, may clearly state its intention to intervene militarily also outside of the EU, but in reality it only possesses the character of a carefully worded, supranational declaration of intent.

In his strategic situational assessment at the turn of the year 2012/2013 Lothar Rühl³ claims that the EU lacks a coherent strategy. In the spirit of a new kind of enlightenment, Lennart Souchon⁴ calls for a focus on strategic thought and action, through which postmodern nations could both free themselves from assessment methods rooted in classic war scenarios between nation states and extricate themselves from the grip of everyday political ruckus. Klaus Naumann⁵ demands clearer strategic goals governing the deployment of armed forces and raises the question of the interdependence of military and political issues. Andrea Riemer⁶ addresses the question of why research has not developed any

strategic concepts that meet the needs for order, thereby surrendering the playing field to short-term politics. Martin Wagener⁷ points out that a recognised academic discipline called strategic studies has yet to be developed and that treatises on strategy are, for the most part, characterised by a dearth of theory.

The list of quotes from literature documenting a paucity of strategic command/leadership culture could be continued ad infinitum - this selection, however, gives some idea of how clear the need for scientifically underpinned science-based strategic command/leadership expertise has become. People concerned with (security) policy, (military) strategy, and management of industry and private enterprise have increasingly come to realise that miscalculations of the strategic objective no longer become apparent only shortly before the planning horizon is reached, but already come to haunt those responsible for long-term orientation during their terms of office.

The implications of the paradigmatic change which currently contributes to the call for quality strategic leadership may - in the field of security policy – manifest themselves in a repudiation of the paradigm of classic war scenarios between nation states or in reaching the limits of peace building through the transfer of democracy. In the military-strategic context, hybrid conflicts or cyber threats could be viewed as pointing in the direction of such a change; in the economic or entrepreneurial fields it would be the growing doubts concerning the potential of a fully liberalised and completely deregulated economic and financial system no longer built on values.

3. What might be the contribution of the nascent military science?

3.1. Military science in statu nascendi

Before the question can be answered, an explanation must be found as to why military science is regarded as being in statu nascendi. Although they exist nominally, they do not meet the criteria outlined here: creating the foundations to meet the urgent demand for strategy described above, and, at the same time, offering a consolidated course of studies organisationally integrated into the civilian academic environment, culminating in a PhD, thereby granting the license to teach this discipline, as well as making it possible for the faculty staff to self-regenerate (the only example in Austria's close vicinity appears to be the Zrínyi Miklós University of National Defence).

3.2. The core task of military science as viewed from a new angle

It is imperative to reiterate that the prefix military does not mean that research and tuition in the military sciences are to be carried out solely by military command personnel or by lecturers at civilian universities solely for the benefit of military personnel earmarked for command positions in the armed forces. Rather, the prefix shows that the issue is research and tuition content that is nationally relevant,

as well as relevant to security. This can be carried out most efficaciously and thoroughly under the aegis of the armed forces' (and MoDs') tertiary educational institutions, due to their specific orientation and qualification. This academic discipline should be of special interest to other European states which have not yet progressed towards the new perception of military science and would send students to an academic institution which offers such a course of studies. This would allow states with a head start in military science to raise their standing visibly, especially as regards smart defence.

The fuel cell for military science

If neither purely military command experience, nor a position as lecturer at a civilian university is the criterion required to hold a chair in military science, what is the necessary qualification? The question can be answered with the help of the metaphor of a fuel cell for the military science: candidates for command positions in the armed forces or the MoD should first be trained until they attain the highest echelons covered by military command curricula and then, depending on their suitability/capability and the military-scientific requirements, be sent to a civilian university. Following their graduation, the alumni will review the subjects covered from a military point of view, adapt the academic content to military requirements and use the research methodology now available to them to develop a genuinely military-scientific subject – only this would establish a university chair in military science which would offer additional benefit compared with existing academic disciplines and thus be deserving of its name.

Why should military science be the responsibility of the MoD?

What are the special qualifications of military educational establishments to serve as a home to a science relevant on a national scale and with regard to security issues? The primary competence armed forces have to produce in peacetime is the ability, when necessary, to display command superiority and to be operationally effective. This is why - compared with other areas in which the success of concepts has to be corroborated immediately - they have more time systematically to explore command and control techniques as well as assessment procedures, to underpin them scientifically, to optimise them, keep them up to date, and target them towards potential future challenges.

These procedures deal with events relevant to national security, the creation of command expertise when faced with complex tasks and time-critical situations, the preservation of command performance despite personal exposure to physical danger and psychological pressure, planning processes with time lines of different lengths which have to be dealt with simultaneously, joint network-centric command ('joint' being related to services, branches and weapons systems, as well as to the cooperation between civilian and military units involved in an operation), and - in order to help prepare decisions – with political advice at the intersection between operational-level and military-strategic/strategic command.

Tertiary-level military educational institutions have a broad foundation on which they can erect the command procedures that need to be developed. This foundation is made up of, inter alia, the study of the cultural and intellectual foundations of command, the findings of polemological research focused on the avoidance of war, the scientific derivation of command principles and philosophies, research into cultural specificities and the implications of intercultural competence for command, an ethico-moral understanding of leadership, the optimisation of organisational theories in order to meet time-sensitive situations, and a system made up of operations research methods and computer-assisted command simulations.

This wide spectrum of specific capabilities and inputs, their – with regard to national security provision – organically evolved and complex network, as well as their permanent integration into applied armed forces command, which exclusively enables not only the further development of training contents (e.g. by means of a systematic lessons-learned process), but also their verification under real-life conditions, produce a USP which suggests that the military science (as it is defined here) should fall within the purview of the tertiary-level military educational institutions. It needs to be stressed that the military science, despite its primary orientation towards fostering military command functions, can, already in this subject and content configuration, provide a tangible benefit to non-military leadership functions tasked with security.

An attempt at defining the term “military science”

Any attempt at a definition should begin by disconnecting from the previous, fuzzy view which frequently associated the task of military science with providing a basis for waging wars or controlling military conflicts effectively. The military science, as it is currently developing in Europe, however, integrates the entirety of academic research and education concerning the contribution of armed forces to national security provision (comprehensive approach) within the framework of security-political strategy formation and decision-making, as well as the planning, structuring, provision, preservation, command, and employment of armed forces.

To clarify the definition, a two-dimensional diagram is used. Each column displays which educational institution is responsible for the research and education pertinent to security, and the lines represent the content categories of this field of research and education.

The first content category includes academic research and tuition pertaining to general, trans-sectoral, security-related command/leadership in complex environments, for commanders/leaders/managers of the armed forces, the emergency services, in politics, public administration, and private enterprise (characterised by a national orientation; currently comparable to defence science in the wider sense).

Tertiary-level educational institutions aspiring to expertise in security-related political consulting require well-founded coordination competence and opinion leadership in this field, geared towards pooling all national resources for the purpose of comprehensive security (comprehensiveness).

The second content category is characterised by a thematic orientation towards the armed forces and could be illustrated by employing the term defence sciences in the narrower sense.

The military science in the modern understanding therefore comprises those parts of the two content categories given over to tertiary military education institutions, including those segments of civilian university disciplines which deal with the subjects mentioned.

Those parts of research and tuition relevant to security and consigned to tertiary military education institutions can be subdivided into two distinct types of subjects, each of which covers both content categories described above – albeit in different ratios. On the one hand, these are the military-scientific core subjects, whose research and tuition goals are not covered by civilian education institutions and which military education institutions have to cover autonomously (this is why they are also referred to as original subjects). On the other hand, there are the supplementary subjects, which make it possible to analyse the contents relevant to military science from the perspective of professional, military requirements. These should, moreover, be the remit of a specific university chair.

Irrespective of a possible tertiary military educational institution, civilian disciplines very often cover topics concerning security. These topics taken from various disciplines, however, are not integrated into a common, institutional/organisational structure. Though their sum may nominally form a significant share of the first content category (described above), it is not more than the sum of its parts. In the model outlined, all forms of military-scientific cooperation with civilian educational institutions (which are the ‘mother disciplines’ of the military-scientific supplementary subjects) would be pooled in the hub of the tertiary military educational institution. For the latter, this would produce a tentative cooperation/coordination competence, which, however, must not be in competition with civilian disciplines.

Core and supplementary subjects must enjoy equal ranking (there is no hierarchical status whatsoever). The only difference is that the supplementary subjects are derived from a ‘mother discipline’ at a civilian tertiary educational institution (which means that the academic qualification/authorisation to teach at a university can be achieved through this mother discipline) – but the core subjects do not (in the long run, the authorisation to teach has to be safeguarded by the faculty staff’s ability to self-regenerate).

3.3. The military science subject area

Prior to an overview of structures, of the research and instructional contents making up the core subjects derived from the suggested model of military science, two principles need to be looked at, which are essential for an underlying view.

Organic command

The core topic of military science as presented here, from which all other subjects are derived, is command - in the sense of organic command (command in the broader sense). It is a systemic network of effects developed from a cluster of different command qualities that ranges from identification of strategic objectives/analysis of the situation and operational-level planning/analysis of the situation, via command and control (command in the narrower sense), as well as management and leadership, to controlling or concurrent recalibration. This view of command, with the emphasis put on a synergy of command qualities (similar to the interaction of a body's organs) is new, at any rate in terms of an institutionalised academic discipline. Focussing on the topic organic command would substantially contribute to the creation of a USP or the establishment of opinion leadership concerning military science in the field of a security-relevant and comprehensive leadership doctrine.

Strategy and leadership

Strategy as the guiding quality of organic command is primarily seen as a category of thought striving for long-term security, manifesting itself in the determination and definition of targets, and therefore consciously detaching itself from any operational-level implementation, thereby developing a maximum of creative force.⁸ The principle of leadership should help bridge the gap between the identification of strategic objectives and their operational-level implementation⁹. To achieve this, honest empathy with subordinates/employees is to be brought to bear, to create dedication in the face of constraints that may be necessary with a view to long-term security, but may also go beyond the professional judgment and insight of those being led. In this, short-term successes should only be regarded as - at best – a collateral advantage.

Core subjects

To complete this presentation of the core tasks of a re-considered military science, here is an overview of possible core subjects designed to facilitate its implementation.

The military-scientific core subjects would include general command/leadership science, strategy, operational-level command/leadership science, applied command/leadership science, and military logistics.

The list of military-scientific supplementary subjects would include the following: research coordination; network, knowledge, and quality management; military security policy (including peacekeeping and conflict management); the field of military humanities and social sciences (ethnology/cultural sciences, military philosophy, polemology, philosophy of science, cognitive science, military pedagogics); military linguistics; and military publications.

Military philosophy would have to deal with the intellectual history of, especially, operational-level command. The importance of military ethics and the cognitive sciences means that they have to be regarded as self-contained subjects, although they are integral parts of research in military philosophy. Polemology would have to focus on research into the causes of war, the goal being the avoidance of same. Ethnology and military linguistics would have to make a major contribution to the creation of inter-cultural competence.

4. General leadership science as abstracted, accentuated, and horizontally expanded military science

4.1. The character of general leadership science

While the material contents, as well as the tuition and research structures required by military science in the modern understanding are being created, a new, wider thematic demand has developed, which could best be met by the armed forces' tertiary educational institutions. This paper attempts inter alia an analysis of this demand and a definition of it as a possible, visionary guideline for the current military-scientific realignment of armed forces' tertiary educational institutions.

Changes in the threat scenarios and increasing economic competition have necessitated a new requirements profile for command/leadership personnel. In its general dimensions and at a certain level of abstraction, this profile applies in equal measure to command/leadership personnel in military and political organisations, as well as to managers in private companies.

General leadership science dealing with command/leadership in complex and security-sensitive environments could make an essential contribution to this current demand for identifying strategic objectives, as well as for organic command if they

- further develop the groundwork done by reappraised military science,
- accentuate, horizontally expand and abstract the latter, and

- shift the balance between military (command/leadership personnel in the armed forces) and non-military students (command/management personnel in the emergency services, in politics, the civil service, and private companies) strongly in favour of the latter.

The general leadership science (as opposed to the military science) therefore no longer defines itself simply as the basis of trans-sectoral leadership to meet complex tasks, but as its academic research and doctrine proper.

The accentuation spoken of in the earlier attempt at a definition means that it restricts itself to the content category of national and armed forces-related military-scientific research and tuition dealing with general command/leadership principles and processes condensed from the military command sciences (see illustration). It also refers to a stronger emphasis on the identification of strategic objectives, joint national command, long-term and sustainable planning, and an expansion to command/leadership tasks which may no longer be exclusively relevant to security, but can also be accomplished with the aid of the general leadership principles/processes derived.

Horizontal expansion refers to a broadening of the spectrum of civilian, university-related ‘mother disciplines’ as the mentors of the new supplementary subjects, especially at the level of the national content category pertaining to military science.

Abstraction means rejecting the purely armed forces command angle, and, instead, focusing on general principles, applicable both to civilian and military command/leadership practice. This creates a basis which is accessible to and intelligible for civilian students without any substantial previous military knowledge, and therefore proves to be more useful for the respective subsequent command/management tasks. Starting from this, subject specialisation can prepare for the subsequent civilian and military assignments.

Military command functions should furthermore cover the transition from military to general leadership science (especially the concrete and applied operations command angle of the content category pertaining to the armed forces) through postgraduate training courses (General Staff Course) – the licence to teach military-scientific core subjects could be attained by following the General Staff Course with a PhD in military science.

The creation of a PhD in general leadership science subsequent to subject specialisation would be important, especially for non-military students.

4.2. The general leadership science subject area

Core contents of the general leadership science comprise organic command and the identification of strategic objectives, as laid out in the model of military sciences in the modern understanding described above. This, however, requires a level of abstraction which meets civilian management requirements.

Organic command would have to be further developed with regard to the interaction between command/leadership qualities (from identifying strategic goals to concurrent recalibration), their process stages (including the synchronisation/chronological distribution of several, concurrent planning horizons), and their necessary overlap.

Strategy as a subject would have to be raised above individual, vested military/military-strategic, geostrategic, political or commercial interests, and further developed so as to serve as the basis for a long-term goal, holistically embracing all areas. Beyond its bridging function between the identification of strategic goals and their operational implementation, leadership should be researched and perceived as a link between command (in the narrower sense) and management.

The general leadership science would have to deal with the synergetic relationship (especially prevalent in the German-speaking countries) between the theoretic-rational and the empirically guided science paradigms.

Further topics which are systemically and mutually dependent on each other are to:

- reestablish the command/leadership philosophy which underlies one's own operational procedures, and illustrate its transferability also to non-military leadership tasks,
- create an understanding of the phenomena charisma, martial genius, and born leader, and develop them in the direction of selective talent - systematic training - internalisation,
- explain the character and use of breaking down and allocating command tasks to different command echelons (including their interaction),
- investigate iterative planning processes with reference to their precursors in the theory of war (inter alia, Clausewitz's Hermeneutic Circle),
- represent the joint command principle (e.g. jointness, comprehensiveness) as the expression of a procedurally structured, as opposed to a divisional, organisational structure,
- apply mission-type command and staff concepts as well as the decision-making process to the non-military ambit,
- further develop polemology in the direction of a positive definition of peace,

- include up-to-date scenario management and operations research/command simulation procedures, as well as the findings regarding networks and cyber technologies,
- appreciate the use of military operations logistics for civilian leadership procedures,
- develop modes of rhetoric, as well as argumentative techniques and presentation skills relevant to command/leadership, and
- re-assess publications as central tools of strategic communication.

This text reflects the author's personal opinion and hence does not necessarily correspond with the views of the MoDS.

¹ cf. Möckli, Daniel (ed.), *Strategic Trends 2012 – Key Developments in Global Affairs*, Center for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zurich, 2012. ISBN 978-3-905696-36-3, p. 8f.

² cf. Hauser, Gunther, 'Die Europäische Sicherheitsstrategie (ESS)', in, *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift* 3/2010, p. 372ff.

³ cf. Rühl, Lothar, 'Die strategische Lage zum Jahreswechsel', in, *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift*, 1/2013, p. 4.

⁴ cf. Souchon, Lennart, *Carl von Clausewitz - Strategie im 21. Jahrhundert*, E.S. Mittler & Sohn GmbH, Hamburg, 2012, ISBN 978-3-8132-0939-6 , p. 10.

⁵ cf. Naumann, Klaus, *Einsatz ohne Ziel? Die Politikbedürftigkeit des Militärischen*, Hamburger Edition HIS Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Hamburg, first edition, 2008, ISBN 978-3-936096-98-9 .

⁶ cf. Riemer, Andrea, 'Strategische Theorien und Politikgestaltung im 21. Jahrhundert', in, *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift*, 1/2010, p. 24.

⁷ cf. Wagener, Martin, 'Über das Wesen der Strategie', in, *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift*, 4/2010, p. 443.

⁸ cf. Peischel, Wolfgang, 2010, 'Zum Nutzen der Definition des Strategiebegriffes – eine perspektivische Betrachtung', in, Birk, Eberhard (ed.), *GNEISENAU-BLÄTTER*, volume 9, Fürstenfeldbruck, 2010. <http://www.gneisenau-gesellschaft.de>

⁹ cf. Peischel, Wolfgang and Franz Hollerer, 'Leadership - Ein Führungsprinzip zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit', in, *SIAC Journal*, 2/2011, BMI, pp18 – 28.

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