

7. Unpacking the Concept of the “Military Profession”: Accounting for Variations in Military Organisations

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The concept of “the military profession” has gained considerable traction within the Swedish military establishment over the past decade – a rapid ascendance after decades of what could be considered a rather conspicuous absence. Indeed, Bengt Abrahamsson’s 1971 PhD thesis *Military Professionalization and Political Power*, is held to be a classic (Snider & Watkins, 2002), comparable to Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960) and Vagts (1959). But although Abrahamsson was Swedish, his thesis on military professionalism was absent from the reading lists of programme-based education of Swedish military officers since its publication.

Abrahamsson (1971) employs the categories *expertise*, *ethics* and *corporateness* to discuss military professionalism. Expertise Abrahamsson understands to be both theoretical and practical in nature, consisting of abstract knowledge and proven methods for its application. But a profession is more than the practical application of abstract knowledge, no matter how advanced: central to any profession are ethics guiding the professional’s use of that expertise, regulating how they relate to the assignment, the client, the general public and to those affected by their actions. The third component, corporateness, arises essentially from a specific community sharing knowledge, practice, and a consensus regarding ethical guidelines.

Abrahamsson's landmark thesis notwithstanding, until the early 2000s, the concept of military profession was scarcely mentioned in Professional Military Education, in any official military documents or in research projects commissioned by the Swedish Armed Forces. In 2016, however, the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) published the text "Our Military Profession," the result of a concentrated effort to produce a coherent description of the topic, signed by the Supreme Commander, General Bydén (see Berndtsson, this volume). A few years earlier, the Swedish National Defence College had started a "military profession" course aimed at mid-level officers and had outlined which personnel categories qualified as members of "the profession".

This chapter discusses the background contributing to the rapid ascendance of the concept of a military profession in Sweden; further, it explores some practical implications for the analysis of armed forces arising from the application of theories of professions and organisation. Aspects of training and development are also briefly discussed from that angle. The development of military professionalism necessitates recognising the considerable variety of contexts and competence needs within a highly complex organisation (Perrow, 1986). It is argued that exaggerating similarities between army, air force and navy officers risks undermining genuine military professionalism in the name of "the military profession."

Without elaborating on the early 1960s Huntington-Janowitz debate, it is necessary to mention the notable influence of the United States on modern Swedish thinking about military professionalism. As a doctoral student, Abrahamsson spent a period of time at Morris Janowitz's Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. A more recent inspiration was the 1990s U.S. Army project "The Future of the Army Profession," which yielded two volumes in quick succession (Snider & Watkins, 2002; Snider & Matthews, 2005). The endeavour was significantly driven, in the post-Cold War years, by the dissolving of a geopolitical context from which Western armed forces had derived their legitimacy and by the consequences of the prevailing neoliberal consensus on the management of government institutions. At the end of the Cold War began a period of multinational, often violent, peace-enforcement missions, often markedly different from the previously envisioned World War III battle scenarios.

In Sweden, too, it was evident that the collapse of the Soviet Union would have major ramifications for future security and defence policy. An external academic expert invited to comment on Swedish post-Cold War defence and security matters wrote rather prophetically:

The pace of change since 1989 has been extraordinary and, despite many calls for a period of stability, as the armed forces of the ad-

vanced societies enter the twenty-first century, one of the few things they can be certain of is further change. (Dandeker, 1999, 3)

This prediction could not have been more correct. Since 1999, the Swedish Armed Forces have undergone a period of constant, even accelerating, transformation. In this period, military objectives have been refocused from territorial defence to international missions and, from 2014, back to territorial defence; there has been a Human Resources reform impacting substantially on the everyday job content of junior officers; the Non-Commissioned Officer category abolished in the early 1980s has been reintroduced; there has been a move from conscription to an all-volunteer force system, and then a resumption of conscription. This time of turbulence also has seen a transformation of the system for junior officer training and education, altered from a branch-specific two-year vocational training bloc to a one-size-fits-most, centralised, three-year academic programme.

The ascendancy of the concept of the military profession in the Swedish defence sector can be attributed to two principal factors. The first is the post-Cold War internationalisation of the Swedish Armed Forces, obliging Swedish military personnel on international missions to interact more closely with militaries from other industrial democracies; simultaneously, a wider shift in Swedish security and defence orientation has occurred as the Cold War-era stance of Swedish exceptionalism gave way to a wish to be more similar to major Western powers – a development made in tandem with Sweden’s 1990s post-neutral foreign policy orientation which aimed at European Community membership. Many equivalent effects could be seen as the Swedish Armed Forces rather quickly adopted various features from other nations, among them a Combat Camera Team and Headquarters policy texts on issues like doctrine and the military profession. These texts were inspired mainly by similar efforts in the defence establishments of the United States and Canada, respectively. The SAF booklet “Our Military Profession” is primarily a broad, inclusive policy statement with little direction regarding detailed organisational decisions (see Berndtsson; Victor Tillberg, this volume).

While this first driver of the concept was largely environmental/external, the second was domestic; the concept of “the military profession” was used by the Swedish National Defence College to market its model of military academisation. Various ways of infusing university-based components into the system for professional military education (PME) had been discussed at the headquarters of the Swedish Armed Forces since the 1980s. The discussion followed a 1977 decision by the Swedish Parliament to transfer almost all advanced vocational training in Sweden from various branch institutes to the university sector, a follow-on from the 1960s enlargement of higher education when “welfare professions” such

as teachers, nurses and social workers all developed three-year undergraduate courses (Agevall & Olofsson, 2014). The training of military and police officers eluded this trend toward academisation, retaining in-house, specialised, often primarily hands-on, programme-based training.

In the post-Cold War period, the gradual downsizing of the Swedish Armed Forces and its reorientation towards international missions led the Swedish government to rethink military careers. The “new normal” was to be that a majority of officers were to switch to civilian jobs in their late 30s, and the analysis held that this would become much easier if officer education led to an academic degree and diploma. The thinking was that academic qualifications would elevate the societal status of the officer corps, or at least preserve it in a society where an increasing number of occupations underwent university training. An academic officer degree would, it was argued, make military knowledge increasingly visible and more recognized by other occupational groups – not least in the civilian HR departments, where the decisions regarding the hiring of former officers would be made.

In the early 2000s, the Swedish National Defence College (NDC) started developing a model for a uniform, centralised three-year academic programme for officer cadets, with academic subjects exclusive to the college itself (e.g. war science, leadership and military technology). The NDC management declared that in order for the Swedish officer corps to become a proper profession, officer education had to consist of military academic subjects to be studied at the NDC, all the way from undergraduate level (basic officer training) to graduate level (a master level career course).¹ This, it was held, was the only way the Swedish officer corps could “conquer their profession.” It should be noted that the model includes all three military services: army, navy and air force (which is a very rare approach to junior officer training, at least in the industrial democracies). Thus, in this PME context, “the military profession” became synonymous with the project of transforming officer training into a centralised three-year military academic programme (see Hedlund, 2004, for a more detailed analysis).

In a recent critique, NDC academic staff and mid-level officers (Alvinus et al. 2020) claim that, rather than leading to professionalisation, the military academisation effort risks an outright de-professionalisation of the officers. Their argument is that the effort to academise officer education has caused the curriculum

1 The Swedish National Defence College view effectively implies that a very large majority of officers in the United States, Britain, Germany and France should not be considered members of a military profession, since their academic degrees are typically not in academic disciplines exclusive to military colleges and universities.

to diverge from professional practice, especially at the junior officer level. A shift towards theoretical content has, they maintain, steered the training of junior officers away from the genuine occupational demands awaiting after graduation.

While this chapter does not want to discount the up-close observations of NDC staff and military students, it will argue that even with a rebalancing towards less theory and more practical elements, the education and training of junior officers could end up rather wide of the mark for many cadets. A fundamental problem stems from the fact that the NDC approach to the military profession concept implies far too much similarity between arms and branches, resulting in a de facto lack of specialisation. The Swedish Officer’s Programme, marketed using a “military profession” label, is organised along one-size-fits-most principles, where navy, air force and army cadets (supposedly part of the same profession) receive largely identical educational content at the Military Academy over four semesters, with the addition of two semesters of more specialised training in different parts of the Swedish Armed Forces.

Both Navy and Air Force officers have stated that the Officer’s Programme is “army-centric.” A Navy cadet observes that at the Military Academy all cadets collectively undergo substantial amounts of infantry combat training, resulting in a lack of arena-specific skills such as sea warfare training (Sjödén 2013, p. 214). In a more recent assessment, two naval officers conclude:

“The problem that the Navy has long pointed out and tried to address is that the newly graduated naval officers do not have sufficient knowledge to take up their first position... the real testing practical navigation periods come after graduation, which worst case means that the cadet has trained – and been employed – in a profession he/she is unable to perform.” (Nilsson & Martinsson, 2021, p. 179).

This sentiment is voiced not only in Navy or Air Force circles; the technical branches within the Army also have reservations, similarly claiming that the focus of the Officer Programme is largely on infantry, often far from the professional needs of junior officers in engineer, signal or artillery units. One Anti-Aircraft colonel stated:

The junior officers we receive are very good people, but they arrive poorly prepared for their task. The designated officer programme output is an infantry platoon leader... Well, what use is somebody trained to be an infantry platoon leader at an anti-aircraft regiment? (Colonel, 2016)

The analysis was based on recent regimental experience. The Anti-Aircraft regiment initially did as told and made the newly arrived junior officers platoon leaders, thinking that with the support of experienced Non-Commissioned Officers the new 2nd Lieutenants would manage. But, having observed the fallout, the regiment quickly revised the policy; a consensus emerged that the gap between what competence is demanded from an actual Anti-Aircraft platoon leader and what the cadets had learnt in the Officer's Programme was simply too big.

Clearly, the observations provide a basis to question the assumption that the notion of one military profession should serve as an unproblematic model for the design of a uniform system for educating junior officers. It is, I argue, misleading to think of military officers as belonging to one single profession from a knowledge perspective, especially at junior level. The skill and knowledge requirements differ considerably, between, say, a junior mechanised infantry officer, a junior anti-aircraft officer, a junior navy officer, and a junior air surveillance and fighter control officer. Whilst differences can similarly exist also in higher military ranks, they are normally lesser, as administrative duties and staff procedures tend to take up more time, whatever the military occupational speciality. Returning to the influence of the United States and the 1990s project "The Future of the Army Profession," it is worth noting that it specifically addresses the *army profession*. Army officer, navy officer and air force officer are sometimes best understood as related and parallel, but nevertheless separate, military occupations within the same organisation.

There are of course related elements across different military services – but I would argue that in terms of delivering junior officer training and education, treating the services largely as one collective risks resulting in the one-size-fits-most solution described above, as has indeed been described by Swedish officers and cadets alike. The Navy cadet Sjödin (2013) reports that much of the four Officer Programme semesters at the Castle Karlberg military academy are spent on generic ground combat content, while only two days in total were devoted to navy-specific content. Sjödin also questions why navy cadets do not get any course in practical leadership. While the reported reason was that navy officers "do not lead troops," the navy cadets were still required to take an army-centric course on counter-insurgency. Other observations, likewise, concern lack of relevant specialisation.

While details in junior officer training have certainly been changed since 2013, the overall programme design remains intact – it remains a one-size-fits-most model, legitimised by the label of military profession and the handing out of academic degrees and diplomas. This would be a case of social closure impacting on functional expertise, in terms of a largely army-centric curriculum only partly relevant for a substantial number of cadets.

A different point of departure would be to view the military as consisting of several professional categories with different skill requirements, each operating according to different logics of action. While a mechanised infantry officer, a navy officer and an air force officer have some things in common at the beginning of their respective careers, their obligations require increasingly different competencies, as they are obliged to manage different technologies and tasks. Some training activities might arguably generate transferable skills – but they can hardly make up for substantial skill deficits, as has been demonstrated in the case of the anti-aircraft regiment. On a related note, Stjernstrom (2020) observes that the meaning and implications of tactical concepts such as “mission command” will be understood quite differently in, for instance, mechanised infantry units and Air Force units, respectively.

In the following, I will broaden the analysis of the concept of the military profession somewhat, looking not only at the content of officer education but also at everyday occupational practice and job content. Depending on the nature of operations and daily duties, it is possible to discuss officer categories in terms of the degrees to which actual professionalism is being developed in training/education and everyday work activities.

A tentative model for analysing military professionalism

In traditional analyses of professions, a long, coherent theoretical education was deemed a prerequisite for professional status. The pursuit of professional status by different occupational groups has therefore generally been intertwined with efforts to establish, or prolong, academic programmes. The first step has normally been an undergraduate degree, with a subsequent master’s degree, and sometimes the addition of a doctoral programme.

In terms of analysing military professionalism, it is obviously relevant to take account not only of the contents of preparatory (junior officer) education or a mid-level career course. Central to any profession is the content of the work proper. Considering professionalism in the Swedish Army, Borell (1989) holds that profession status presupposes both a certain area of professional expert knowledge, and that the application of that expert knowledge takes place under conditions of a level of uncertainty – the reason why discretion is considered a hallmark of professions. While wartime command would meet both these criteria, an army officer’s service in a peacetime, routinised training establishment does not equate to professional work; being a peacetime instructor is simply not the same as being a leader on actual operations.

Expanding on the profession concepts of Borell (1989) and Abrahamsson (1971), it is possible to construct a model of professional expertise that can take into account both the content and relevance of formal education and the content and relevance of occupational practice (Ydén & Hasselbladh, 2010). The model consists of three factors that can be analysed in terms of how they align:



Figure 1. Professionalism as a function of fit/alignment between a) the professional expertise claim, b) the education/training content and c) actual job content.

The model involves a shift in conceptual focus from assumptions of profession status to the analysis of actual professionalism. Formal education/training (theoretical and practical) is certainly an important part, but the added dimension of relevant everyday occupational practice is also emphasised here. The model can be used to highlight clear differences between different officer categories in terms of how well everyday work practice is aligned to both the claim of professionalism and to the content of education and training.

If we take a junior navy officer, the fit between a (supposedly) army-centric Officer's Programme and navy professional practice is not ideal, according to navy cadet Sjödin (2013) and naval officers Nilsson & Martinsson (2021). On the other hand, serving extended periods of time at sea carrying out missions after graduation would rate quite highly in terms of fit between a claim of professionalism and actual occupational practice. If junior officer education were changed towards a stronger navy focus, the fit would obviously improve – thus making the claim of professionalism stronger. If we instead consider a junior (mechanised) infantry officer, the fit between the contents of an allegedly army-centric Officer's Programme and the claim to professionalism would arguably be better than in the navy case, notwithstanding the assertion by Alvinus et al. (2020) of too much theory and too little practice. However, unless the junior infantry officer is regu-

larly serving on operations, the fit between the professional claim and everyday occupational practice will be loose, following Borell’s (1989) argument about service in a routinised training establishment.

Fighter pilot cadets offer a third example, somewhat similar to navy cadets. They undergo specialised flight training before they graduate and are assigned to different fighter squadrons. Arguably, the model thus indicate a functional relationship between the claim of professionalism, the educational and training content, and quotidian occupational practice. Presently, judging by statements from Army, Navy and Air Force insiders, the fighter pilot education model would compare favourably to both the navy and army counterparts, in terms of professionalism.

What is the relation between formal education and the development of qualified professional skills? Education is certainly one way to develop knowledge and know-how – but it is not the only way. Alvesson (2013) discusses the phenomenon of “education fundamentalism”: a derogatory stance towards practical knowledge and the view that formal education is the best way to develop knowledge altogether. Exaggerated beliefs in the value of formal education can be assumed to exist not least in “education organisations” who mainly produce education and training such as universities and parts of the armed forces.

Of course, practice, and reflection on practice, is key to the attainment of genuine professionalism. Compared with real-life situations, the point of education, training and the simulation is to provide a controlled environment where actions can be performed decoupled from their possible real-world consequences:

The purpose of this practicing is to give the neophyte experience in performing under conditions in which ... no actual engagement with the world is allowed, events having been decoupled from their usual embedment in consequentiality. ... What one has here are dry runs, trial sessions, run-throughs – in short, “practicings.” (Goffman, 1974, p. 59)

According to Goffman (1974), an “exercise” is an event in which actions can be separated from their ultimate consequences. This allows for repetition and gradual progress – we are permitted to try until we succeed. That the ultimate consequences of actions are removed means, however, that what constitutes skilful conduct must be determined in other ways than observing the results. In an organisation that routinely separates action from its consequences, it will become more difficult to distinguish and evaluate professionalism in action. According to Goffman, such conditions are conspicuously evident during military exercises:

The world of practice is both simpler and more complex than that of actual, “live” conditions. ...a dry run can only approach “real” conditions, never achieve them. This dilemma is seen most clearly perhaps in war games, where participants must take seriously that which can ultimately be made serious only by what can’t be employed: “live” ammunition lethally directed. (Goffman, 1974, p. 65)

Knowing that acts of violence do not have real consequences makes their execution less anxious – but it also makes it more difficult to judge both the skill with which they are performed and their applicability in a real situation.

It is possible to elaborate further on Goffman’s line of thought by distinguishing between two different contexts in, say, infantry combat exercises. In the first, an exercise is performed by people who know that it precedes an actual combat mission; in the other, the same exercise is performed by people who know (or expect) that no actual mission is imminent. Of course, the two contexts will be different in terms of dynamics, intensity and the acquisition of knowledge. Further, both of these “dry run” contexts are fundamentally different from an actual combat situation marked by uncertainty about what other actors will do and the understanding that any action has real, irreversible consequences.

It is difficult to argue, certainly in a military context, that experience from genuine operations or missions, where actions have real consequences, would provide less valuable learning opportunities than experiences made in the course of education and training, where actions, being simulated, are removed from their real consequences (Ydén & Hasselbladh, 2010). Education and training with simulations of reality are certainly necessary, but should not be axiomatically treated as superior to practical experience with respect to the development of professionalism. For professionalisation, both are necessary.

Characteristic to professions is the link between professional practice and the methodological development of expert knowledge. Professionalisation means that a professional group bases its practice on an expertise continuously developed through scientific methods. In the military, officers can develop expertise by submitting actual military experience and practice to scientific, reflexive analyses:

Professional groups look to academic research for the theoretical core needed to validate their knowledge, and often obtain official recognition through the institution of degree programmes. It is a sign of a coming of age when they can point to the beginnings of a production of Masters and Ph.D. students, professional appointments and other research positions and tasks in “their area.” (Elzinga 1990, p. 151)

Academisation and professionalisation are often linked – but they do not refer to quite the same thing. Academisation means that a student’s education is accepted into a formal academic system. Professionalisation, as mentioned above, means that occupational practices are made the subject of research and reflexive analysis. To what extent a certain design of military officer education is based on relevant research is an open question. Professionalisation can, in theory, occur either with or without the formal education of an academic system; correspondingly, academisation can be accomplished with or without professionalisation as a result.

As noted in the case of police officer training, academisation can be achieved in more than one way (Hartelius, 2005). Applying his description to a military case, we can, archetypically, distinguish between two variants of academisation. Academisation can be grounded in research on military practices and experiences. It can then promote professionalisation, in the sense that officers’ professional performance is based on expert knowledge, continuously developed through research and reflexive analysis. Elzinga (1990) has created a typology with four stages in the development towards professionalisation:

1. Experience-based practice with no formal requirements
2. Semi-professionalisation; certain regulation of practice, prior knowledge requirements and ethical principles
3. Technification / “pre-scientification”; incorporation of scientific knowledge, establishment of undergraduate academic programs, different career paths emerge
4. Professionalisation; research in professional practice, establishment of doctoral programs and new career paths based wholly or partly on scientific work and scientific training.

Another possibility is that academisation is not rooted in research on military practice, but, rather, that the educational content moves towards theories and generalised abstractions in order to achieve the legitimacy traditionally awarded to an academic degree. Officers would, in this case, undergo an “academic education,” but without professional expertise being developed by officers researching and developing professional practice. The primary aim would not, in this latter case, be the achievement of knowledge and expertise, but rather the status of the occupational group. An “invasion of academics” (Hartelius, 2005) would serve the aim to make the educational programme sufficiently academic (that is, provide the faculty with the right ratio of professors, PhDs or similar) in order for it to be approved by the reviewing authority. This latter case seems to be a possible interpretation of the “NDC critique” by Alvinus et al. (2020), according to which the effort to academise has caused the curriculum to diverge from professional practices.

It is relevant to ask which aspects of the military organisation's complex and varied skills and knowledge needs are most easily academised. Which components of what Boëne (2000) calls the military's "logic of external conflict," derived from the archetype of infantry combat, are appropriate for academisation? In major Western countries like the United States and Britain, the bulk of junior officer training is practical, character-building and formulated to instil discipline. Military education more akin to academic studies is attended by American and British officers later in their professional life, often with an emphasis on planning, staff and management work – practices characterised by what Boëne (2000, p. 10) calls "the logic of internal cooperation." The working life of a military officer is often multifaceted, because the military organisation is highly complex with a number of different internal areas of expertise and multiple logics of action.

This last point has not, so far, formed a frequent subject of military studies. Despite considerable interest in war within various social sciences, there are few studies on the inner workings of modern military organisations, least of all for the navy and air force. Where armed forces have been studied as employers or institutions hosting conscripted soldiers, we see standard organisational psychology applied to the military; to the extent that there are detailed studies of military organisations, these commonly deal with ground combat units (see, for example, King, 2013). It goes without saying that while, for instance, submarine crews, air force mechanics and infantry soldiers certainly can display some similarities, there are vast differences in terms of working procedures, interaction patterns, the meaning ascribed to military rank, etc.

In the final part of this chapter, I will present a model for further analysis of organisational differences within armed forces of industrialised democracies, furthering the argument that it can be greatly misleading to depart from the assumption that all military officers belong to a single, uniform profession. Different officer categories develop different skill sets and operate within different logics of action, while on occasion switching between positions with varying degrees of professional content.

Conceptualising Different Logics of Action in Military Organisations

Theorising about the multifaceted nature of the military organisation can be traced back to the debate between Huntington and Janowitz. In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington (1957) propounded a unique, eternal professional military (warrior) ideal that he believed differed fundamentally from the instrumental and individualistic orientation characteristic of modernity. In *The Professional Soldier*, Janowitz (1960), on the other hand, put forward his convergence theory – a prediction about a narrowing of cultural and epistemic differences between the

military and civilian organisations in society. For Janowitz, the military is a social system with skills requirements dynamically changing in relation to varying conditions and needs: technological and administrative renewal produces new skill requirements. The focus in both these classic texts, largely equating the development of officer professionalism with development of the military organisation, was the officer corps.

Janowitz (1960) showed that the officer’s traditional warrior role (or identity) had been supplemented by two modern officer categories: the military administrator and the military technologist. Linked to these new roles, more instrumental perspectives on military professional dedication developed over time with many officers having, for example, entered the military in order to receive paid training, discovering that military professional skills had civil applications, and subsequently anticipating a career change or comparing their financial conditions with those of other occupational groups. Moskos (1977) discusses both individual motivations and the system-level consequences of the military moving from an institutional to an individualistic orientation; Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981) discuss a possible development towards two parallel military institutions: one military elite-oriented, another more civilianised. In an example taken from the army, fighting units (mechanised, ranger and other ground combat units), characterised by traditional Spartan warrior ideals, were gradually becoming increasingly different from the culture of the surrounding civilian society. Military units whose tasks were primarily logistics, support, engineering or communications, meanwhile, were increasingly converging with the rest of society in skills and norms, interaction patterns, and in the orientation of personnel to work (Moskos, 1977).

A related, contemporary, contribution came in the form of Thomas’s (1981) description of two subsystems in modern military organisations: the first the *operative* one with a focus on the application of possibly violent force and whose primary rationality is ethical; deriving legitimacy from its task, the thinking is holistic, qualitative and absolute, within the framework of a close-knit collective with a command structure and a militarily distinctive warrior identity. The second subsystem is *administrative*. Its purpose is to ensure well-functioning exchange relationships, internally and externally; its thinking is instrumental, quantitative and calculative. Conflicts between goals, careful consideration and negotiation are natural features due to organisational complexity. Compromises and a degree of vagueness are accepted as unavoidable. This subsystem’s culture is similar to that of a large civilian company or a government agency. The typical identities are expert and administrator. The two subsystems are different functionally and culturally rather than structurally. Hence, Thomas, unlike Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981), does not classify various types of military units into the respective

subsystems, instead holding that both subsystems are represented in all military units, even if their relationship and ratio vary greatly depending on the unit and task in question.

Boëne (2000) further develops Thomas's model. Across the military's organisational units there exists a dialectic between the capacity for using violence and the need for well-functioning cooperative and exchange relationships. For Boëne, these are two logics of collective action: *the logic of external conflict* and *the logic of internal cooperation* (the equivalents of Thomas's two subsystems). The term "logic" does not imply logical necessity or any degree of cleverness; it simply denotes the beliefs according to which an organisation operates. Boëne holds that the logics of conflict and cooperation are contradictory and mutually restricting but nevertheless present in all military organising; their ratios change over time and according to task, technology, and the level of organisation.

The logic of external conflict is grounded in the military organisation's primary area of use: the application of lethal force against an enemy. The logic is shaped by the fundamental problem of collective action in combat:

Acceptance of fate, providence, or the fortunes of war, as well as the sacredness of mission and honour ... are central parts of that logic [while] assessment of the outcome of action is difficult to measure in terms other than qualitative and holistic: the enemy's will to continue fighting has been broken, or it has not. With lives on the line, ideals absolute, taboos transgressed, cohesion and discipline overriding concerns, fate uncertain and qualitative success as the yardstick of effectiveness, this first logic of action is pure military uniqueness. (Boëne 2000, p. 10; see also King, 2013)

Group cohesion, the will to self-sacrifice, discipline, obedience, valour and honour, constitute the main elements of the logic of external conflict. The same qualities are also discussed by Dandeker:

The individual must be willing to subordinate him or herself to the common good – the team and the common task. Furthermore, there must be a willingness to sacrifice one's life for the team ... if necessary, coercion may be required. This is what makes military discipline – an effective structure of command for the giving and receiving of orders – quite different from other organizations in terms of the demands it places upon personnel. ... They are obliged to train to kill and to sacrifice self. (Dandeker, 1999, p. 85)

According to Boëne (2000), the logic of external conflict is, in its purest form, found in what he calls “primitive” warfare in which the soldier comes face to face with the enemy. Such situations require the soldier to conquer their fear of death and to be prepared to break social taboos by killing people, even at close range.

Boëne believes that the logic of external conflict’s link to the mortal danger of combat makes it both militarily unique and essentially value-oriented. As a result, it differs entirely from the goal-oriented, calculative approach of modern organisations. An administrative logic (what Boëne calls the logic of internal cooperation) can also be found in the modern military organisation, which he understands to be

oriented to friendly agents or agencies in charge of co-ordination and support functions, be they internal (HQ staff, combat support, service support) or external, to the military (society, civilian organizations). It is a logic of co-operation. Its influence increases in proportion to the reliance on external support. ... This second logic, when it is pure, does not in any way deviate from industrial forms of sociability, which today means that uniqueness is nil. (Boëne 2000, p. 10)

The logic of internal cooperation is shaped by conduct towards non-hostile actors both within and without the military organisation – a mode of conduct not designed for the use of violence against an enemy but for the creation of functioning exchange relations and legitimacy. Since the conditions for coordination are completely different from those on the battlefield, coordination is achieved with other means. The logic of internal cooperation exists in all complex modern organisations, both civilian and military. The explanations for this lie in both the military organisation and in the growth of the democratic nation state with civilian control over the military.

Like Janowitz (1960), Boëne (2000) holds that this logic becomes increasingly prominent following the military organisation’s greater need for outside support and increasing internal specialisation, mainly driven by technological advance. As a result of developments in weapons and information technology, as well as in the growth of a large military bureaucracy, the military organisation today has a greater degree of specialisation and logic of internal cooperation compared to the pre-modern army. With the introduction of staff functions and expert positions, the command and obedience relationships are more complicated vis-à-vis a traditional linear hierarchy. In combat, too, the more technology-intensive military units are characterised more by the logic of internal cooperation – firstly because technology often enables force to be applied further away from the ene-

my, and, secondly, because the extent to which interactions are organised through technological means is greater than in the infantry squad.

A logic of action can be more or less supported by empirical facts: since no organisational structure or task is fully determined by any logic of external conflict, a logic of action should not be seen as a purely functional response to any “objective” task requirements and is, rather, best understood as an artefact of culture and organisation. Tamir and Kunda (1988) illustrate this using examples taken from fighting in the Golan Heights in 1973. Both the Israeli and the Syrian tank crews operated in similar hierarchical units (tank battalions), equipped with comparable technology (tanks) but based on different logics of external conflict, manifested in their actions during the battle. While the Syrian tank commanders sat protected in their tanks, hatch closed, their Israeli counterparts stood up, hatch open. In the Syrian tanks, only the tank commanders listened to the command and control net; in the Israeli tanks, all crew members listened to both the internal net and the command and control net. The Syrian tank commanders had a clearly defined mission, which they alone knew. If one of the tank commanders died, none of his crew members knew what the mission was. In Israeli tanks, information about the mission was continually distributed to all the tank crew members, and if a tank commander was killed, the mission could continue.

A collective logic of action constitutes an *institutional order*: an established system of ideas about the relationship between actors and effects, which dominates during a given period (Czarniawska, 2000). Consider infantry combat. Its collective logic of action undergoes a radical change as a result of the industrialisation of war. The traditional, geometric mass assault is made practically suicidal by the increased rate and greater accuracy of fire (the machine gun being a prime example), which forces soldiers to spread out and take cover, thus, in turn, making it much more difficult to coordinate and achieve collective action (Abrahamsson, 1971; King 2013).

Harries-Jenkins and Moskos (1981) point out that Janowitz’s convergence theory was, in part, based on peacetime conditions and that it is possible for an individual to have dual military occupational identities. An officer can have one occupational identity (administrator) in peacetime and another (warrior) during an operation. Soeters (2000) provides a related intersection at the organisation level. He likens modern military organisations to the two faces of the Roman god Janus, with the double nature comprising the *cold* and the *hot* military organisation, a metaphor borrowed from firefighting units. Cold military organisation designates organisation in non-dangerous situations. Soeters mentions two kinds of contexts, the first of which is administrative:

The managing organization at headquarters...closely resembles an ordinary office organization. ... In this organization one could say the white-collar work (although in uniform) is being done. (Soeters 2000, p. 473)

The other kind of context involves training, exercises, and routine, non-dangerous missions:

The “only” thing one has to do in the garrison, in the barracks, and on routine sailing missions is constantly make preparations for the worst case: train, exercise, maintain the force, and simply be there. (Soeters 2000, p. 473)²

For Soeters, “hot” military organisation refers to military units engaged in battle or doing other highly dangerous work. In these situations, the organisation and the environmental conditions place special demands on coordination and also managing fear and emotions; it is known to actors

when they are on the battlefield, in crisis, or in disaster – in sum, when they are in conditions that are turbulent and potentially life threatening ... Hot conditions occur when the heat is on, when members have to perform in critical, dangerous, violent, ambiguous, and hence stressful circumstances ... [The] hot organization is built around flexible groups having all the characteristics of either the (“one leader”) simple structure or – when explicitly based on self-managing – the adhocracy. ... Leadership in the hot organization should definitely be something more than conventional linear and cognitive behaviour. It should contain emotional aspects as well, such as courage, fear control, and compassion. (Soeters 2000, p. 474)

There is analytical potential in combining Boëne’s two collective logics of action with the twin organisation concepts offered by Soeters. Boëne’s logics of collective action and Soeters’s classifications of “hot” and “cold” organisation all capture differences in military organisation, but along slightly different demarcation lines. Boëne’s two collective logics of action can exist both in “cold” peacetime conditions and in “hot” and highly dangerous military missions. By way of con-

2 According to Soeters, low-intensity peacekeeping operations (Cyprus and Sinai are the examples given) can also be regarded as a variation of cold organization; or “predominantly fairly cold” (Soeters, 2000, p. 473).

crete examples, military organisations, as a rule, conduct combat training, where soldiers and commanders learn how they must act in combat situations. In other words, a certain collective logic of external conflict is reproduced. Such training is generally conducted in peacetime, with varying degrees of realism and based on actual war experiences to widely differing degrees.

The “cold” logic of external conflict conveyed in combat training is an artefact of organisation not necessarily tested in a real-life combat operation. Correspondingly, peacetime staff and command exercises (often without any actual units to lead) reproduce a certain logic of internal cooperation. Media training is done in order to train military officers for future interactions with journalists, and so on. These two different peacetime logics of collective action are matched by their “real-life” counterparts: those present in actual military operations. To illustrate, Figure 2 below contains some examples of organisation in their respective quadrant.

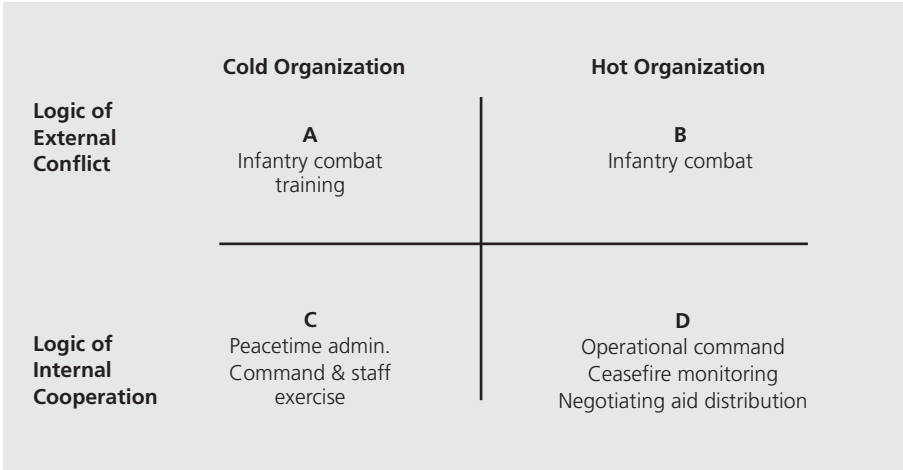


Figure 2. Military organisation as a product of two different collective logics of action and various organisational conditions (A, B, C, D) and some examples.

The “cold organisation” logic of external conflict is shaped by, and expressed in, the description of combat reproduced in officer and soldier combat training. Its relation to the “hot organisation” logic of external conflict (i.e., the relationship between A and B) should be regarded as an open question. Because there is no enemy trying to blow you up during combat training, and because you do not have to kill any actual enemies, key components of actual combat are missing. What remains is a simulation where actions can be decoupled from their most extreme consequences. Certain military units learn from real-life missions through simulated combat training by, for example, having combat-experienced personnel design and carry

out the preparatory combat training where they convey their experiences. In other units, there is less experiential learning, and here the reproduced logics can be based more on assumptions and dogma than on accumulated knowledge of actual events. Borell (1989) relates how advocates of an established logic of external conflict can even resist “learning lessons” from actual war experiences.

The logic of internal cooperation is permeated by a rationality similar to that found in public administration or private corporations. It is shaped by technological development, societal norms and the military’s need for legitimacy in the eyes of society with regard to, for example, rational decision structures, quality, equality or cost-effectiveness. The difference between “hot” and “cold” can be described as a distinction between negotiation or leadership in true military missions and activities being performed in staff and command exercises.

While peacetime administration indeed creates real consequences and differentiates itself, in this respect, from many exercises, it is, according to the classification of Soeters (2000), an instance of “cold” organisation. “Hot” organisation only applies to units facing mortal danger: highly dangerous, dynamic, ambiguous situations in which units develop distinctive cultural codes and ways of coordination. More often than not, they also operate in the borderland of, or outside, the formal rules and regulations. Hence, Soeters’s concept is entirely different from the calculative administrative machinery that characterises leadership even during real-life mission command. It is frequently emphasised that objectivity, logic and taking stock are what higher hierarchical levels should bring to even real-life missions. Therefore, in this context, the meaning of “hot” should not be interpreted as synonymous with the logic of external conflict.

Lanir, Fischhoff and Johnson (1988) point out that fighting is frequently characterised by chaos, ambiguity and fear. In their opinion, the way to create functional order on the battlefield has very little in common with the risk calculations and instrumental rationality of leadership. Operating on the battlefield is about situational presence, impressions, experience and boldness. These great qualities can rarely be verbalised or quantified (in, for example, a “combat effectiveness” percentage) in those optimisation models of staff which have come to permeate military leadership through operational and systems analysis.

The model can tentatively encourage an analysis of various activities in the military organisation relating to whether they can be analytically assigned to one (or more) of the four quadrants and the relationships between them. It can be stated that a military organisation, especially one in a democratic nation, inevitably needs to be able to manage activities in all four quadrants and that well-functioning relationships between activities in different quadrants are highly beneficial. The two left-hand quadrants constitute, in terms of size, by far the

biggest part of the organisation. They are also prerequisites for the military's legitimacy and its ability to develop skills systems and other operating conditions; frequently, they are arenas where there is friction between line and staff (for example), demonstrating that even in relatively calm situations, interorganisational dynamics can be turbulent. The two right-half quadrants represent the contexts in which developed abilities are put to the test in real-life situations, regardless of whether it is a firefight, naval warfare or ceasefire negotiations. It is here that the organisational units' full potential to solve the main task is used. All four logics of action thus have their *raison d'être* – but it is important to understand their respective “content” as well as the differences and potential tensions between them. Once again, it is worth stressing that the term “logic of action” does not imply a sufficient degree of competence. To what extent a certain activity is characterised by actual competence is a question for further research.

The model can help formulate hypotheses or questions. In the case of “teeth units” or staffs, for example, one can examine the respective logic of action's relationship between exercises and simulations and real-life situations (A–B and C–D) as well as the mutual relationship between both logics of action regarding exercises and real-life missions (A–C and B–D). In a customarily unhostile country like modern Sweden, it can be expected that a large percentage of the military organisation's personnel spend most of their time in the lower quadrant of the left half of the model. What consequences does this have for the overall function of the military organisation? What is the impact of actual operations on resource allocation, career trajectories and organisational development?

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has argued for an increased focus on various manifestations of military professionalism, thus de-emphasising broad and unspecific, perhaps spurious, claims relating to profession status. Modern armed forces are technologically advanced, complex organisations and this greatly affects military personnel, officers among them. While they certainly share similarities, on balance it is generally more helpful to consider army, navy and air force officers as related professions rather than as members of a single, uniform military profession. With the considerable resources typically made available for military training and education, it should be possible to make substantial progress in the development of military professionalism. That, however, requires paying more attention to actual military practices, including an increased emphasis on empirical studies in army, navy and air force contexts.

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