



MILITARY EDUCATION – THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MILITARY LEADERSHIP AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY –

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In the military, leadership is defined as the leader's ability to organise and conduct the assigned missions, aiming to accomplish them in an efficient and effective manner.

In terms of the military organisation efficiency, it is the leadership that makes the difference between the standard performance and the desired end state, considering the complex, volatile and ambiguous security environment. How can leadership be provided at the level of the entire military organisation so that it can meet the challenges posed by such a constantly changing security environment and an unprecedented technological revolution? Theoretically, through the continuous education and training of leaders at tactical and operational levels. How can military leadership be exported at the level of strategic decision-makers, at the level of civilian leaders? This development is started and cultivated through military education, training and experience. It requires the understanding of what military leaders do and why they do so, through permanent institutional collaboration in the field of security culture.

The Need for Military Education

Broadly defined, the mission of the military education network is to educate, train, specialise and perfect military leaders for the tactical level. It is about direct leadership, face-to-face leadership, which is generally functional in the military structures where subordinates and leaders are in direct contact all the time such as teams, sections, platoons, companies. Numerically, the range of influence of the direct leader can vary from a few to dozens of people.

At the level of "Carol I" National Defence University – NDU, this mission is continued by educating and training leaders for operational and strategic levels. At the operational level, we refer to the organisational leaders who exercise leadership through subordinate leaders, responsible



for leading the various entities that make up the larger organisation. As for strategic leaders, this category includes military and civilian leaders who provide command at the level of the Defence Staff and at the level of the Ministry of National Defence. Strategic leadership guides and integrates several organisational-level units that perform a wide range of functions. It influences several thousand to hundreds of thousands of people. These leaders allocate resources, communicate the strategic vision and prepare both the decisions and the armed forces for future missions. Strategic leaders shape the Armed Forces culture, ensuring that the directives, policies, programmes and systems are ethical and effective.

To achieve this goal, the NDU not only delivers knowledge, it also encourages students and trainees to develop their critical thinking skills, to express themselves providing arguments, using the vocabulary specific to the military leader – an operational and strategic level planner. From the level of initial training through undergraduate studies to the strategic level courses for future generals and policymakers, the academic staff of “Carol I” National Defence University promote the active participation in the educational process of military students and trainees as well as of civilian specialists acknowledged in their own areas of expertise at all levels of the society.

Therefore, military education is necessary not only for military professionals. It is necessary for all citizens and, in particular, for civilian leaders who make decisions at the level of ministries, at the level of Parliament, at the level of all structures related to national security. The military phenomenon, the instruments of state power, the internal and external factors, the necessity for the population to support political-military decisions in crisis situations cannot be understood and analysed without education in the field of security. The same applies to crisis and conflict management.

Because of the trust built, educated and practised between military leaders and civilian leaders, at the level of the intellectual architecture, the decisions related to ensuring national security are in constant balance, benefitting the society in crisis situations.

Imbalances occur when there is lack of confidence in the political-military decision at different levels. The values of military education, expressed through rigour, sacrificial spirit, traditions, flexibility in thinking, analysis of several courses of action under conditions of stress and fatigue, critical and multidisciplinary thinking, can be transmitted to civilian leaders through the study programmes organised by “Carol I” National Defence University.



Military Leaders Education

Military professionals need in-depth knowledge in a variety of areas in order to accomplish their missions. For example, military art generally explains how to achieve military objectives during operations. Technical knowledge consists of specialised information associated with a function or system. Joint knowledge means understanding the role, place and procedures of the various armed forces services and commands that work together in joint, multi-domain operations. Expertise consists of in-depth knowledge and skills developed through experience, training and education. Military professionals employ in-depth knowledge to focus on key aspects of an issue, to make effective, ethical decisions, and to achieve a high level of performance. Being innovative in choosing courses of action requires creative thinking, which entails both adaptive approaches (based on previous expertise and knowledge) and innovative approaches (development of completely new ideas). More often than not, providing solutions to extreme situations requires the ability to be innovative, to rely on both experience and solid knowledge in different fields. Knowledge in geostrategy and geopolitics, for example, raises awareness of cultural, geographical and political differences and sensitivities in a given area, and this type of knowledge can be crucial in ensuring the success of the mission.

Equally, the internalisation of the values specific to the military organisation, such as loyalty, duty, respect, being of service, honour, integrity, courage, is the hallmark of an armed forces professional. To do so represents a pact not only with teammates but also with the people, a guarantee that the person is trustworthy and responsible.



Therefore, upholding, teaching and consolidating military values represent an important responsibility of military leaders, being a part of military education.

Consequently, the education of military leaders and the internalisation of a set of shared values are key aspects, as they contribute to creating the necessary conditions for winning victory.

Civilian Leaders Education

Civilian leaders cover, in my view, the area from the level of the mayor of a sector or locality to the level of the prefect, minister or parliamentarian. Considering the nature of their responsibilities, they cooperate, in peacetime as well as in crisis situations, with the military system representatives, be they commanders of garrisons or ministers of defence. First and foremost, a common language and a common understanding of the concrete situation are needed, in terms of the competences and roles of each structure in crisis situations. The civilian leader educated in military higher education institutions will better and faster understand how to solve a certain problem, because he will assign the tasks in line with the responsibilities of each involved structure, for the simple reason that he knows them and he has gained experience in doing it during the practical activities included in the study programmes of “Carol I” National Defence University.

Moreover, the military-educated civilian leader will know the concepts and the way to implement the national security strategy much better and more effectively than if he had not taken the necessary courses. The civilian leader promotes the national values, respects the symbols of the state, supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Romanian state, as well as the democratic institutions, namely the same values that the military leader promotes. In addition, the civilian control over the armed forces stipulated in the Romanian Constitution cannot be exercised without having at least minimal knowledge of national security and of the normative documents in the field of defence.

Mention should be made that strategic leaders are important catalysts for change and transformation, and their decisions have the potential to influence not only the military organisation but

even the security environment at national, regional or global level. Because they envisage a long-term strategy in terms of planning, preparation, execution and evaluation, more often than not, they cannot reap the rewards of their ideas during their tenure. The armed forces modernisation is an example where long-term strategic planning is needed. Being supported by many teams of subordinate leaders, strategic leaders rely on organisational leaders to implement the long-term strategic vision and ensure that it is known and understood by all personnel.

Based on the mentioned considerations, I appreciate that more could be done in the field of military education at the level of state universities, national colleges and even secondary schools, as it is necessary to promote the values and traditions of the Armed Forces, the connection between the Armed Forces and the nation, to mentally and physically prepare young people for the homeland defence.

Conclusion

Education is acknowledged and assumed by both military leaders and civilian leaders. Society needs models that uphold the core values of the society they belong to, honest citizens who are patriots and love their country. Performance cannot be achieved without educated specialists, without professionals. National military education needs constant evolution and reinvention as well as the ability to educate and train military professionals so that they can adapt to the realities of future military conflicts, to form strong characters, competent and charismatic leaders for all levels.

I am sure that the modernisation of military education will keep pace, as always, with the changes of the operational environment, with the new military capabilities in the inventory, and with the evolution of the Romanian society as a whole.



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