Thoughts on Leadership

Marija Jezernik

Military Education Center
Slovenia

The basic question in the process of leadership education and training is the definition of "good enough leadership". Leadership is an interpersonal phenomenon of second order reality. During early socialization each person establishes his or her personal set of assumptions concerning leadership.

There are four basic role models of military leaders, which develop as a result of specific social conditions. Despite changes in the social environment, they remain a personal fantasy of the appropriate role model, which entails a leader and a follower.

The problem arises when these fantasies are no longer complementary. At this point, military organizations face two general options. First, the traditional approach encompasses the establishment of compatibility through the re-socialization process of their members. The second approach is to train their members, at least, their leaders, to accept the differences. When this approach is practiced, it is necessary to understand the different fantasies and their consequences for interpersonal relationships.

Transactional analysis provides a useful tool for understanding. It prevents individuals from using their own personal model as the primary approach for leadership leaving the results for organizations unpredictable. Transactional analysis therefore can optimize the outcome of military leadership training.

In discussions about leadership training programs for military leaders, the question of their early socialization rarely appears. The programs are uniform, based on vague assumption that they will create the same behavioral patterns, which is favored by all the participants at the time. However, "work with executives has shown that the personality of a top executive influences the strategy, the corporate culture, and even the structure of his organization to much greater extend than most people, in particular executives themselves, are likely to admit" (de Vries, 1997). The same goes for the candidates entering a military career. Their own personal concept about their role is already established at this point.

Through the evolution of militaries in Western societies, different role models played by military commanders can be tracked such as aristocratic, technological, intellectual, and revolutionary models.

The aristocratic model of military commanders is derived from feudalism. Within the framework of this model, being an officer is not just a profession but a specific way of life. There is a pronounced coming together of the civilian and military elite. Those who belong to this model are of the same origin; they share similar primary socialization principles, education in special institutions, and a sense of belonging to a unique social group that forms the main pillar of social power. All socialization processes are directed towards a single goal: "to control oneself and rule the others" (Gwin Harries-Jenkins; 1989). We are dealing with a

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cavalier of a noble tradition sharing a specific set of values with other members of the same social group, summed up by Cunliff as: "A mounted figure, an officer, a gentleman proud of his family, proud of his calling" (Gwin Harries-Jenkins; 1989). All other individual personal features, knowledge and skills were less important than this set of values, called "the character".

These officers led subordinates who were socialized to assume a complementary social role. On the one hand, the officers expected from their subordinates to be absolutely dependent, obedient and adaptable. At the same time, the subordinates hoped that their socialization model would bring them a special benefit for this behavior in the form of total protection.

Psychologically, one could claim that all conditions were met for a symbiotic fusion of a commander and his subordinates. In military circles, this symbiosis is embodied in the ideal of a unit or an entire military organization "acting as one man", which does not fall apart because of internal tensions.

The Industrial Revolution shook the established balance in many different ways. The first consequence was the introduction of technology into military organizations. "Character" was no longer enough to manage a military organization. There were certain skills and knowledge required and, in particular, a certain level of intellectual ability. To a certain extent, this disqualified the officer profession in the eyes of the aristocracy, whose primary socialization had allowed them, to hold the leading positions in politics, in the church, and in the military up to this point. Military organizations started to recruit future officers from other social classes, and this is where the problem began. These candidates had the necessary intellectual potential and were able to acquire the knowledge and skills for handling new technical devices, but it was their "character" that was problematic. Representatives of this role model see military career as an opportunity to promote social status and mobility. Their reference group is the civilian expert   equivalent. Even schooling in special military schools could not entirely eliminate their being different, as a consequence of their primary socialization. At the same time, social power criteria were being differentiated, and this was also echoed in military organizations. Social status became less transparent, and the number of criteria determining social power was increasing. The primary socialization of subordinates also became less straightforward. An increasing number of members of lower social groups were at least partly socialized towards seeking different behavior that would enable them as individuals to assert themselves in ways that were not known before.

These developments led to conflicts not only within the officer corps but also between the two officer models and their subordinates. Officer aristocrats looked down on officer technocrats and vice versa. This is how anyone coming across the bearer of a completely different system of values is most likely to react. If one or the other system of values that coexist in the same group is seriously threatened, it is even possible to expect hostile reactions with the goal of eliminating the main representatives of unacceptable values. In relations with subordinates, the well established master and servant relations with members of the aristocratic model began to disintegrate. There were more and more subordinates who were simply no longer socialized to assume a complementary role. Despite efforts to find ways to re-establish past stability, the problem was only made worse. The members of the new group of   officers of technological role model were also facing a leadership problem.. In the absence of primary socialization as aristocrats, they had problems with a group of subordinates who were looking for a master. They were not complementary and had no power whatsoever in the eyes of such subordinates. Unlike the aristocrats, whose advantage in relation to this group was control of their own impulses and supervision and protection of their subordinates, the new officer group

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lacked these traits and behavior. In addition, there was also a problem with leading other groups of subordinates as the technocrats just did not have the knowledge or skills necessary to manage the variety, and they did not have the opportunity to obtain this knowledge either in the process of primary socialization in their families or at military schools.

It was at this point that intellectuals, in particular socially oriented, started to enter military organizations. They were considered a necessary evil as in the military, intellectuality meant physical and social incompetence. The traditional military structure was reluctant to let the theoreticians, who were more familiar with books than with practical applications, into the exclusive military circle. Opposition against the intellectuals was tempered with the hope that their arrival would help overcome the increasing conflicts between the two groups and their relationships with subordinates.

The members of this intellectual model also had second thoughts about military organizations and their members. One could claim that there was mutual dislike between them. However, in optimal circumstances, it is natural for military organizations to expect the intellectuals to offer constructive assistance in developing leadership which would be capable of facing changed circumstances brought about by social development and inevitably reflected within military organizations. This, however, takes concessions from both sides. The leadership in military organizations needs to accept the fact that leading by playing the aristocratic or technological role is inadequate in changed circumstances. The good old days are gone forever. On the other hand, intellectuals in military organizations are forced to step down from the pedestal of pure science and demonstrate their readiness to translate scientific findings into operational practice. Operations officers need new knowledge and, in particular, leadership skills. It is not enough for individuals to be familiar with the latest scientific achievements in the area of leadership. They need to adapt these achievements as fast as they can so that they can be used for training and brought into practice. In order to be able to do this, intellectuals must be aware of and account for actual specifics in these organizations. If both conditions are met, both, "those who prefer sitting in the saddle to sitting at the table" and "those who prefer sitting at a table and reading theory," will find out that the quality of leadership will increase.

For the majority of militaries in western civilization, we can argue that all three military professional models are still represented, both, as a concept and as a daily   practice. The denial of the connection   between leadership qualities and the kind of pre-military socialization is not useful. Similar, gradual progress of these models can be traced in all militaries that have evolved and developed without bigger revolutionary changes.

 However, another model should be mentioned here: that of the militaries in countries which have experienced more intensive revolutionary leaps. As a rule, revolutionary movements of all kinds were also reflected in military organizations and they have influenced the model of military professionals. Typically, "old" personnel was removed and, in turn, certain traditions were interrupted. Usually, it was the members of the aristocratic model who were the most exposed. After they were removed, the gap was filled from the new, revolutionary cadre. The opponents of the "aristocrats" always made promises of an entirely new military with different relations and were intent on introducing different values. Problems surfaced when the revolutionary enthusiasm subsided. The revolutionaries, who normally knew exactly what they did not want, had more difficulties in defining what they *did* want. And there were even more problems in putting their wishes into practice. In the best case, revolutionaries represent a technological model and, in the worst case, they remain eternal revolutionaries and are swallowed by the revolution when it is over. The collapse of the existing establishment is

usually not connected with the knowledge and skills necessary for the establishment of something new. Therefore, many protagonists of revolutionary changes draw from what they already know about introducing new things, i.e. the aristocratic model. So, it is the main actors that change and not the model. But, a revolutionary in the aristocratic role faces the lack of early, and often also secondary, socialization. He refused to accept the role of a subordinate and attacked superiors, but now he is in the role of a superior, and he often performs as he understood this role from a subordinate's point of view. Most of the militaries which underwent revolutionary changes actually started to look for new methods to shape new service members in accordance with the aristocratic model. For example, after WWII, the leading role in the Yugoslav army was taken by the partisans, revolutionaries, who came out of the war as winners. The Yugoslav army reacted to this situation by developing its own "aristocratic" model, based on "the character" described in the language used in this period as "a fully developed, socialist officer personality". Naturally, it was faced with a number of internal and external tensions, since the concept had little to do with reality. Eventually, this led to the inglorious end of this army.

The use of transactional analysis can clarify different role models, their advantages and disadvantages, and give a chance for better understanding of what is going on in the leadership process. Transactional analysis is a theory of personality and interpersonal communication that can also be used for the analysis of organizations and leadership training.

The theory of personality introduced through transactional analysis is based on the concept of structural and functional ego states. E. Berne, the founder of transactional analysis defined the ego state as a "consistent pattern of feeling and experience directly related to a corresponding consistent pattern of behavior" (I. Stewart, V Joines, 1987). There are three ego states, that of the Parent, the Adult, and the Child.

The structural Parent is an ego state that results from the direct copying of values, attitudes, thoughts, knowledge, skills and emotional reactions from the individual's parents or other authorities. The structural Adult is an ego state formed in one's individual development. It includes values, attitudes, thoughts, emotions, and reactions in accordance with the current situation. The structural Child is an ego state that is comprised of instructions for behavior as understood by the child in the period of primary socialization, basic biological needs and impulses, as well as intuitive strategies directed towards resolving a conflict between needs and understood instructions. There are three different frames of reference within one personality used by an individual in the internal dialogue. Individual ego states can be in different developmental stages.

The functional model of personality is also represented by three ego states. It is used for describing interpersonal communication. Functionally, the Parent includes two basic groups of behavior: the controlling and the nurturing. The functional Adult analyses and processes the information. The Child is split between the behavior of the Natural Child that follows natural impulses and the Adapted Child, a part which behaves according to the instructions of its own Parent as understood in childhood. It can follow or reject these instructions and consists from adaptive behavior and the Rebellious Child, whose behavior is a direct negation of the Parent's demands.

When communicating with others, an individual uses different functional ego states. It is the structural Adult who regulates the occurrence of different behavioral ego states, depending on his selection of the most appropriate response. If other structural states are better developed in relation to the Adult or if the Adult is in suspense, an individual "automatically" reacts from other ego states.

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The exchange of messages between two human beings is called transaction. Whenever a leader sends a message, he sends it from one state to the ego state of the person he leads. The subordinate can respond from the ego state which was addressed. In this case, we talk about the parallel transaction that upholds the relationship but does not necessarily lead to a contextual solution. However, the subordinate may also respond from a different ego state. Here, the vectors that stand for the message channels are crossed, leading to a conflict between the persons and to changes in the contents of the communication.

Among many concepts developed by transactional analysis, there is another concept that should be mentioned for our needs - the concept of symbiosis. This concept stands for the merging of two individuals or of an individual and a group into a whole that functions as one human being with three ego states (an old dream of all militaries of how units are supposed to function). This symbiotic relation is an early developmental phase in each individual. It ends with the processes of separation, in the language of transactional analysis, the development of the Adult and Parent ego states in a child.

Using these concepts to describe the aforementioned military professional models provides a number of interesting explanations of what is going on in the leadership process in different models.

The structural analysis of an "aristocratic" personality shows that in the process of early socialization military professionals have the opportunity to copy all of the contents needed for successful leadership in military organizations:

 - All members of the aristocratic class have the same values, regardless of where they work,
- The traditional role of a master is emphasized,
- Adequate behavior procedures and skills for leading subordinates can be copied,
- Adequate emotional reactions can be copied.

The copy of parents in the Parent in a member of the aristocratic model is completely sufficient for job requirements. There is no need for a developed Adult since the tasks are traditional and routine. The materials in the Child ego state are adapted to the traditional ways of adequate behavior. All that the individual needs to do is to apply the Parent when communicating with subordinates. It is important to emphasize that over time the aristocratic Parent developed both basic functional elements: the controlling and the nurturing ones.

 At the same time, there is the personality structure of the subordinate. He has a lot of instructions contained in the Child on how to become subordinate to authority, strategies to please, and basic beliefs that this is the best possible way to survive. The Adult materials are less important, and the Parent materials are supportive of his Child. Most of the time can be spent in the Child ego state, which is usually the best developed ego state. This is the reason that in the relationship between the "aristocrats" and his subordinates, parallel transactions between the Parent and the Child prevail. Leading people is easy, because all the participants play their expected roles. As long as this kind of transactions remains, communication can continue indefinitely according to the first rule of communication.

 This relationship can even become symbiotic, for instance, in case of danger. In symbiotic relationships, the Adults of both participants can be only partly active or absent. The result is a fusion of two persons into one. The aristocratic leader leads automatically using the previously determined pattern. In the case of symbiotic fusion, verbal leadership is not necessary at all, since the reactions of both participants are automatic and natural.

The problems for such a leader start when he is unable to use the power of his Parent to push the subordinate into the Child ego state. In this case, a number of crossed transactions occur in the communication with the person led since the latter replies from the Adult or from the

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Parent. According to the second rule of communication a break in communication occurs when the transactions are crossed and conflicts arise. The involved persons need to shift ego states in order to re-establish communication. The leadership problem also occurs when the Child materials of the person led are no longer compatible with the leader's Parent materials because of different socialization influences.

In the case of a "technocrat" the structural analysis of a personality reveals a developed Adult. The very act of entering into a military organization is conditioned by an individual's Adult possessing specific, necessary contents. His Parent lacks several patterns required for ruling both in the controlling and the nurturing parts. He lacks the traditional belief that he is entitled to positions of leadership; he does not have the necessary skills of aristocratic leadership behavior; and he lacks adequate expression of emotional reactions. His Child encompasses many restrictions concerning his behavior from the position of a superior; therefore, the "technocrats" are not capable of a natural aristocratic bearing (nowadays this bearing is referred to by some authors as a "pattern of high status behavior"). In the leader's role, his Adult is very busy making up for this deficiency.

The person led, who is in compliance with the aristocratic model, uses the Child's strategies to see this deficiency. As a result, he reacts differently to "a technocrat" than to "an aristocrat." In his eyes, the first has far less authority, which complicates the simple leader-subordinate relationship of giving and implementing orders. The Child of the person led, despite his response from the Adult, is sending the message that the conduct of the leader did not meet his expectations (double transaction). The "technocrats" also find differently socialized subordinates problematic in other respects. A subordinate with a different socialization can reply verbally or non-verbally also from the Parent, which inevitably leads to a number of crossed transactions in this relationship. As a result, it is evident that a military professional playing a technological role is highly qualified to work with equipment; however, he is less trained to master a complex set of interpersonal relations.

In the light of transactional analysis, a member of the "intellectual" role model has different Adult materials in terms of the "technocrats." In addition to technical concepts, the Adult materials contain a lot of knowledge related to leadership. This allows the individual to better understand interpersonal relationships although not necessarily more appropriate behavior. In many aspects, members of this model share many structural similarities with members of the model described as "a fully developed socialist personality," the fundamental difference being that in the formation of the later a lot of attention was paid to moving the Parent towards the aristocratic model as well as forming the Adult.

In the model of transactional analysis, a revolutionary is a person with an extraordinarily developed Rebellious Child. His conduct is driven by the negation of authority. The contents of the Rebellious Child may, in certain social situations, prove to be a realistic assessment of an existing situation. This is especially true in times when social processes are led by people who function predominantly according to the Control Parent sample in particular, its negative forms. In this case, it is the Rebellious Child's energy that can send out impulses to change social relations. Problems occur after the changes have been successfully carried out. Holding to the behavior from this ego state proves to be destructive. If a revolutionary is capable of applying, and has available, an adequately structured Adult, he becomes like a "technocrat" or an "intellectual". The absence of a strong and well- developed Adult, the persisting in the Rebellious Child ego state and in a position of social dominant role leads to cleansing or ever-lasting revolutions. An additional problem of the "revolutionaries" is the contents of their Parents. The personal structure of a strong Rebellious Child is usually formed as

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opposition to the strict, even brutal Parent. When it can no longer be projected into the surroundings, it reappears. If a "revolutionary" falls back on it in his leadership, his controlling and pursuing behavior can prevail over the behavior he once fought against. Usually, there is also a specific problem related to the lack of the nurturing patterns in the Parent. "Revolutionaries" who have completely excluded the Parent are a specific case. As a result, their functioning depends exclusively on the Adult, giving their behavior a touch of rigidity. The other possibility is that they use the Child's Parent structure within the Child, who understands and implements Parent input in a black-and-white fashion, and varies in his behavior from grandeur to despair. A specific case is symbiotic relations with others at the level of structural elements of the second order, marked with a powerful emotional charge.

"In the best of all words, a leader's vision is compatible with the external forces in the environment. But in many instances that is not the case. As many of us learned the hard way, a CEO can be completely derailed by his or her hidden motives, not only make life miserable for his or her staff but disrupt the organization's equilibrium enough to contribute to its decline"(de Vries, 1997) The tools of transactional analysis reveal specific leadership characteristics, depending on the personal structure of the leader and the person led. Using this instrument, we can explain certain behavior patterns and find arguments as to why they proved efficient in certain situations and less efficient in others. In order to be a successful leader, a contemporary military professional will have to develop all his ego states, be flexible in adapting them in accordance with the situation, recognize different ego states when they occur in subordinates and respond to them appropriately. The development of   military training programs   needs to   follow the goal of better leadership using contemporary knowledge instead of   dreaming of good old times when leading people was so simple.

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