

Helmut von Moltke the Elder, the chief of staff of the Prussian army for 3 decades, revolutionized the Prussian army doctrine with his focus on independent action, reliable officers, flexible and adaptable strategy, and decentralized command structure as opposed to rigid planning coupled with officers ignorant of the overall tactical situation, “Centralized intent, Decentralized command”. The stunning efficacy of his military doctrine can be seen in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the franco-prussian war of 1870-1871.

The first war saw the show of initiative and wit on the part of Prussian officers, as seen in the battle of Koniggratz (1866), officers Fransecky and Horn made an advancing action⁽¹⁾ (moving forward into the Swiep forest and holding position) which was not directly ordered, but served to pin down a large portion of the Austrian army which otherwise could destroy the main Prussian force via encirclement.

The ability for individual officers to make wise deviations to established plans in the chaotic maelstrom known as war was, and remains, invaluable, for as Moltke correctly theorized, concrete plans can only be formulated at the start and end of war. The rewards of the Prussian command structure were victory in the war and unmatched influence in southern and northern Germany.

The second war displayed a truth of war that has incorporated itself into all serious military doctrines of the modern age, that being an emphasis on incorporating the latest technologies into logistics. As a result of the efficiency of the Prussian general staff planning and

the logistical superiority offered by railroads, it is generally believed that the Prussian army deployed in force nearly 18 days before the French(2). Predictably, this logistical catastrophe on the part of the French army led to a humiliating defeat and paved the way for the dissolution of the French monarchy.

His army doctrine had a profound, lasting influence on modern warfare, and by studying it, we can (hope?) to rectify the flaws in our modern doctrine of warfare, whether that be archaic practices and systems that need to evolve with modern capabilities, the relationships that exist between the military and the state, and its position in society. The prevailing military doctrine at the time (early 19th century) still mirrored that of Napoleon's era, military command structures that primarily relied on the general for direct commands and planning of all aspects of the army.(3)

Nations generally did not incorporate new communications and transport technology into army logistics -Railways and telegraphs-, and continued to rely on the trademark Napoleonic method of foraging for supplies. This paper wishes to analyze the differences between Napoleonic and Moltkeian doctrine, and the latter's influences on future army doctrine long after his passing, Multi-Domain-operations being the modern doctrine of my interest.

The two sources on the command structures of Napoleon's army, Durham, Norman L, 2009, "The command and control of the Grand Armee Napoleon as organizational designer", and David Gates, 2001, "Warfare in the nineteenth century" both conduct literature reviews that rely chiefly on secondary, and very little (15% and 0% respectively) primary sources. It can be argued

that the strength of both literature reviews varies depending on the amount of interpolations between the article and the primary source, and the quality of each interpolation.

The first source mentioned did not examine any primary sources of Napoleon's organization/administering of the grand armee, despite it being an article about the organizational structure Napoleon chose for the French army. This lack of first hand sources, which would have otherwise shown how meticulously involved Napoleon was in the managing of the French army, weakens the article.

I believe it to be compensated, at least in part, by the naval-postgraduate background of the researcher, who has likely had extensive research done in army command and structure, and uses modern terms to classify the command structure of the grand armee. Such a background is extremely valuable in the analysis of military history, and therefore, I find this article to be quite strong, despite the lack of primary sources.

The two sources on Von Moltke's military theory, Entullio. J Moltke and the German Military Tradition: His Theories and Legacies, and MOLTKE'S MISSION COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: FALLACY OR VERITY, offer both a historical and philosophical perspective on the influences of Moltkeian military doctrine. The latter mentions the political implications of an independent army (advocated and implemented by Moltke), from the state itself, which allows for development and operation without external interference, for better or worse.

The source on Moltkean command philosophy uses a significant amount more primary sources than the articles listed thus far, increasing its strength. It is also a valuable shift in perspective from a purely historical analysis, offering us an understanding of Moltkeian military doctrine on other facets of society, namely politics. Such a perspective would help us understand some of the wars entered by the German state in the future, as often, the objectives of the now independent military machine differed from the political goals of the state.

The two sources on the parallels between the American military doctrine (multi domain operations) and moltkeian doctrine, David J, US Military Doctrine and the Revolution in Military Affairs, and again MOLTKE'S MISSION COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: FALLACY OR VERITY, adopt, similarly, a literature review methodology, examining a combination of secondary and (sparsely) primary sources to analyze the development between of the doctrines in question.

In historiography, it is common practice to make use of secondary sources for many reasons, some obvious ones being that there is nothing to "test, as in a more scientific field like biology, but also because of the difficulty of obtaining genuine articles. It can be argued that in this field, the lack of primary sources is less important, as a quality interpolation (secondary source) can offer just as much insight and strength to an article.

The second discipline where a source I've picked belongs to (philosophy), differs from historiography; any serious research method must involve primary sources, lest any interpolation dilute the ideas originally present. In its essence, the field of Historiography is the study of past events, their causes and outcomes, which is more robust than Philosophy, the study of ideas. As an example, imagine a serious article on the command structuring of the grand armee, versus an article critiquing a part of Descartes' philosophy.

Would it be conceivable for such an article to not include the primary source, the words of Descartes himself, in its critique? To keep my words concise, I hold that ideas are easier to warp than events, one is a definite (still subject to the errors of human interpretation, but less so) while another is constantly subject to the wild adjustments of its next beholder (which is not necessarily a bad thing), and given this, Historical research methodologies do not need to use primary sources to the degree that Philosophical research methodologies need to.

Virtually all sources listed present recognize that, while the Napoleonic army was revolutionary in the physical decentralization of the army (corps system)(4), which was extremely effective and implemented universally, its command/planning structure still remained archaic. "Warfare in the nineteenth century" emphasizes this fact in much more depth than "The command and control of the Grand Armee Napoleon as organizational designer", which details it in a more concise, but less obvious manner to the reader.

The two sources that discuss modern American military doctrine, David J, US Military Doctrine and the Revolution in Military Affairs, and MOLTKE'S MISSION COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: FALLACY OR VERITY, both agree that the general philosophies that make up the American military doctrine (Multi Domain Operations) show their roots in Moltkeian thought on military doctrine. Both attribute (the former mentions Clausewitz only, but Moltke indirectly, as Moltke was inseparably influenced by Clausewitzian theory) Moltke as an important contributor to command philosophy(5).

The available research was, for the most part, plentiful. I do think that the articles visited could have done more research into the effects of Moltkeian military doctrine and how it alters the relations between the military and the state, and the adoption of the general staff system by virtually all nations around the world, as a means for centralized military planning and operations. The former arguably falls outside the scope of a purely historical research article, but I did find the analysis of the former in the non historical article I analyzed, that being a philosophical one. The latter should have been more present, in articles from both disciplines.

Taking marginally more effort than using solely historical articles, including an article that analyzed the philosophical aspects of Moltkeian thought, served to enrich my article, allowing me to take a deeper analysis of my selected research question. Unlike my original assumption, where the impacts of Moltke's military doctrine concerned itself with only armies

and their success on the battlefield, I was able to analyze the larger consequences of Moltkeian doctrine.

If, as Moltke asserts, an army needs independence from the state to maximize its efficiency in war(6), can we really be sure that tactical decisions are being made in the interests of the policy set by the state? Can we be sure that a war is not needlessly waged in the name of military success? I believe that “military success” only has a definition when it serves as a means to carry out state policy. Otherwise, I deem it firmly to be senseless brutality.

The consequence of the above can be observed in the brutal slaughter that was the First World War. The German state, which originally intended to keep the United States out of the war, was *pressured* by its *too* independent military(7) to allow for unrestricted submarine warfare. Although this short-sighted decision strived to bring about military success through preventing Britain from receiving aid, it had the disastrous consequences of bringing the United States into the first world war.

The value from a multidisciplinary lay not primarily in the article, selfishly, but the ideas previously unknown to me that allow for a broadening of perspective, and that allow me to ask myself questions I would otherwise not have conceived otherwise. “Should the state be fully divorced from tactical operations”?, “Do I know of modern consequences of that idea?”. It is in this way that taking a multidisciplinary perspective allows for an enrichment of the article, the writer, and (hopefully) the reader.

From the synthesis of historical and philosophical articles, I have come to a greater understanding of Napoleonic army structure. Starting from the vague notion of the importance of a general, I now understand the Napoleonic army structures immense reliance on the general for meticulous planning and directing of troops, which was revolutionary in the context of its birth, but over time came to possess many flaws, the most glaring of them being the absence of the general causing the debilitation of military operations at all levels.

It is from this crucial insight that one can begin to appreciate the impact Moltkeian thought had on warfare, its emphasis on decentralization of army command to prevent a single point of failure (death of a high-ranking commanding officer) from debilitating the army, and the emphasis on initiative at all levels of the army. But from the synthesis of scholarly articles in the creation of the Lit-review, there is an essence to Moltkeian doctrine I had previously not realized, being that organizational and command structures, along with strategy, must necessarily evolve with, not merely make use of, the latest technologies.

The interdisciplinary method is effective in garnering unique insights that could only be obtained through a multiperspective approach. Although more disciplines could be included, I think historical and philosophical articles best capture the impact of Moltkeian military doctrine, but other disciplines offer their own unique and valuable insights on the research question. An important impact of Moltke's doctrine, the professionalization of the general staff, was not discussed enough in the articles I synthesized. This is an exciting potential field of research.

