

THE MILITARY STRATEGY AND OTHER TYPES OF STRATEGIES

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The military strategy enrolls a major political decision regarding the use of military forces, means, resources and actions not only for enforcing its own will over the adversary but also for accomplishing some security and defense-related aims and objectives and other goals than the ones coming strictly from the war phenomenon.

Strategy generally represents the science, the art, the experience and the means to shape a political decision, and also to harmonize the estimated effects of certain actions with the axiological dimensions of the political-military factor. It results that the military strategy is the science, art, experience and means to put into practice a political decision regarding the composition, training and means assigned for war and the armed conflict, and also the means of military expertise is done for the political decision maker.

Thus, the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has not reached yet its final form, and is still undergoing a complex process of evolution in order to elaborate a continuous and structured cooperation in what concerns the EU security and defense. The Romanian strategy of independence and unity chose and implemented the most suitable forms of actions: the alliance with one great power to counterbalance the strength of the other. So did Michael the Brave by his political strategy of unifying and centralizing the Romanian state, and his political-military plan materialized in 1599-1600.

Strategy appeared first in the military field, in ancient times, and was transmitted by oral tradition. The first strategy theorist, who left us a written work, is Sun Tzu, who lived in China in the 4th century B.C. In Ancient Greece, Thucydides defined strategy as: an elaborated art of the war and a perfect understanding of the relationship between the political and the military man¹.

At the end of the 19th century, Jung referred to the civil strategy, and Dupuis promoted the ideas of integral strategy, that could control the three types of strategies: military, governmental and diplomatic².

Limited to small political-military fields, strategy has become today a science studied within the military education, i.e., **the scientific strategy**. Strategy is both an art

¹ Hervé COUTAU-BEGARIE, *Breviar de strategie*, Editura SITECH, Craiova, 2002, p.6

² *Idem*, p.7.

and a practical strategy and a science, as theoretical teaching, because in the military, as in other fields, there is the military theory and the military practice. In fact, every part, every level of the military field has this dual aspect, theoretical and practical, because any practical activity is based on laws, principles, methods and theoretical methods and, in its turn, theory results from practice.

In ancient times, strategy expressed the functions of the general, the qualities of the general and the art of an army leader or, generally, the art of leading, but strategy was not limited only to the fight and was not static at all, but directly linked to maneuver.

The Chinese strategy represents a concept (owned by Sun Tzu) equivalent to the one of the Greek and Roman world, but more extensive, which the contemporary translators render simply by the term 'strategy'. But, in reality, the notion is larger and can be expressed by military methods and even by the art of war. Sun Tzu's famous treaty shows methods and was meant for those who were leading one or more armies or a campaign, which clearly is the resort of strategy. At the same time, theorists have expressed quite clearly the relationship between war and politics, referring to the idea that a king could expand his territory only by war and thus become the master of the world or, on the contrary, if some territory were lost he would lose his power. In ancient times there were no examples of ancient kings who had become masters of the world without victory in war, nor of kings who had lost their powers without being defeated. The art of kingship (Shu), expresses all the techniques that allow to preserve power and to govern the country, including leadership of military operations in an extremely wide vision, closer to the contemporary orientation of the strategic studies: "*The battles represent only a fifth part in the importance of war*³."

Although in the ancient China we do not find the perfect equivalent for the word strategy, because the categories of the Chinese thinking are different from those of the Western one, the concept exists (i.e., general arts, training plans, situation analysis, method) and is not only put into practice, but also theorized in the writings we inherited.

The classical definitions of military strategy are based on the emergence of leading the operations and which fall into two broad categories: the strategy as an art or the science of strategy. Thus, strategy is defined as the science of war, which elaborates plans, creates an overall vision and influences the military actions being considered "the science of generals-commanders". The General's Art, respectively strategy, is a noble activity, reserved for those who have reached a high level of responsibility and belongs to both military practice and theory. As shown previously, any practical activity is led by taking into consideration the laws, principles, methods and procedures established by a theory like the military one which, in its turn, learns from the military practice, by continuous nurturing⁴.

³ **Hervé COUTAU-BEGARIE**, « *Tratat de strategie* », Vol. I: *Strategie generala*, Editura U.N.Ap. "Carol I", București, 2006, p.44

⁴ **Benone ANDRONIC, Eugen SITEANU**, *Schimbări și tendințe în strategia militară și arta operativă*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare, București, 2005, p.13

The Military Strategy and other Types of Strategies

The bases of the military science, strategy and tactics have been built by famous authors, such as Jomini, Lloyd, Bulow and Carl von Clausewitz who defines tactics and strategy as follows: "*tactics is the theory of using the armed forces is the strategy is the theory of using the fighting to achieve the purpose of war*⁵."

In some schools, the war strategy is known as general or global strategy (grand strategy) and the strategy of the armed combat is called by some authors 'the little strategy'. Other schools, among them the French one, identify the grand strategy with the general strategy of the state or, in more modern terms, with the *national security strategy*.

So, military strategy contains the war strategy and the strategy of the armed combat, but has at the same time a practical-applicative character.

As to the Romanians, in the Middle Ages, chroniclers such as Grigore Ureche and Nicolae Costin and the scientist Dimitrie Cantemir wrote about the military strategy and some of its principles, e.g. the possibility of saving their own army, in case the enemy outnumbered own forces, by executing some skillful maneuvers by forces and means and indirect actions, and by concluding an alliance with one or another of the great powers in order to counter the hostile power of other big states. Throughout the Romanian military history we can find many aspects of the application of strategy in the difficult wars that our forefathers have fought under the leadership of great strategists. Thus, the political strategy for unification of the Romanian provinces of the Roman central state was materialized in a brilliant way by the great ruler and military commander Michael the Brave in the years 1599-1600.

Two centuries later, Jomini, in his paper *Precis the l'art de la guerre*, published in 1839, believes that *strategy is the art of war going on the map and including the entire theater of war*. In his work, *On War* (1832), Clausewitz proposes an original definition: "*Strategy is the theory referring to the use of fighting in war service*", which is centered on the battle, the most important moment of the war. This is because Clausewitz the theorist considered that "*the destruction of the enemy forces is always the most effective and higher means, to which all the others must be subdued*⁶."

Around World War I, some strategists still thought that *strategy is the art of commanding armies*. However, they had reached consensus regarding the concept of **strategy**, namely that **it is military, both a science and an art and refers to leadership in war time**.

It is normal that each country has its own military strategy, but today there is not only military strategy but many other strategies: i.e., political, diplomatic, economic, financial, cultural, educational, naval, security, strategies to combat corruption, etc. So, military strategy is at the origin of all policies and comes in relationship with them. A first expansion stage of the concept appeared in the late nineteenth century in France, about the political strategy, diplomatic strategy and military strategy, controlled by an "integrated

⁵ E. BADALAN, V. ARSENIIE, D. ALEXIU, *Tratat de tactică militară: fortele terestre*, Editura Academia Fortelor Terestre

⁶ Carl von CLAUSEWITZ, *Despre razboi*, p.13

strategist⁷". A similar evolution also occurs in Germany and USA. In the early twentieth century, strategy is defined as "the art of leading the force to the goals to reach⁸", which means transcending the term strategy from the military field to the one of strength and beginning the competition between strategy and politics.

In the second phase of its expansion, strategy went to the non-military fields, and the non-military strategies appeared. Transgressing the military area meant questioning the meaning given to strategy in the 19th century when the term strategy was used in the civil field only in a figurative sense. After the First World War, the definition and wide usage of the concept of economic strategy started because the economic mobilization of belligerent States' economy was needed, which led to the recognition of non-military dimensions of strategy. This idea first appeared in the USSR in 1920, where Frunze, who became marshal, did not make any difference between peace and war, developing a new military science, which concentrates all the forces in one unique direction, based on the unique assembly: military strategy, political and economic strategy⁹. Also, the Soviets introduced two new concepts: the integral strategy and the integral strategic.

After 1920, Liddell Hart elaborates the grand strategy, which aimed to quantify (assess) and provide (develop) the economic products and demographic resources of the state to support its military power, not only during wartime but in peacetime too, and Admiral Castex writes about the general strategy as the art of leading the system of forces and combat means of a State, both in war and in peacetime. In the latter's view, the general strategy was meant to coordinate specific strategies (political, naval, land, air, economic strategy, etc.). He is among those who sustained that besides military strategy there are other strategies such as, for example, the political one. Recently, there have appeared all kinds of military strategies such as, for example, operational strategies, strategies of military intervention, strategies of army transformation, which was also found in our country¹⁰ (the transformation strategy of the Romanian Military) and security strategies (the European Security Strategy); the classifications of military strategies are done from different points of view: e.g. politically, according to the environment in which the military actions are done, the duration of the actions, the nature of forces (assets and shares), etc., talking about: the national military strategy, the alliance strategy, the partnership strategy, the coalition strategy, the military land strategy, the military air strategy, the military naval strategy, the space military strategy, the strategy of joint type, the integrated military strategy, the military pre-conflict strategy, the crisis strategy, the war strategy (the battle), the post-conflict strategy, the military strategy of deterrence, of collaboration, of threat, of conflict, the classic military strategy (conventional), the nuclear strategy, the nonsymmetric strategy, the asymmetric strategy, and about other types of strategies. Other theorists

⁷ **Hervé COUTAU-BEGARIE**, *Tratat de strategie*, Vol. I: *Strategie generala*, Editura U.N.Ap. "Carol I", București, 2006, p.53

⁸ *Ibidem*, p.54

⁹ **Hervé COUTAU-BEGARIE**, *Tratat de strategie*, Vol. I: *Strategie generala*, Editura U.N.Ap. "Carol I", București, 2006, p.54

¹⁰ Amiral Castex, *Theories strategiques*, III, p.52

proposed, after 1920, the concepts of total strategy and later the global strategy, respectively the national strategy.

In the third stage, strategy was generalized and put apart from the sphere of the state and conflict, because it started to be applied in any social activity. Thus, the strategy of enterprise appears after 1950 in the USA, in response to the policy of enterprise which Fayol and Taylor had written about. Starting from these reasons, strategy became the sum total of coherent actions/operations, unitary and judiciously/judiciably coordinated, as well as of the maneuvers adopted to reach a certain aim.

It seems there exists at least one strategy for each domain. Although it seems an exaggeration, we frequently speak about strategies in information, communication, tourism and even in football, handball, gymnastics, even in the daily activity of each human being. There are strategies even in logistics, in acquisitions, in the management of the human resources, in international relations, in the durable development, in (scientific) research, in security, marketing strategies, governmental strategies as, for instance, anticorruption strategies or for preventing and fighting against corruption, strategies for developing education, strategies for developing underprivileged areas, national strategies in the domain of health, the strategy of the government regarding the reform of the public administration, the strategy of the government regarding the computerization of the public administration, the strategy of the government regarding the development of the public services, the strategy of the government regarding the protection of the children in difficulty, the strategy of the government regarding improvement of the situation of the Roma, etc. In any profession, activity or any action we can notice that we have a certain strategy because everybody started to claim that they have their strategy and it becomes harder and harder to contradict them. This concept of “strategy“ has “distended” and “diluted” and as a consequence it does not have the initial content anymore, because there are now very many manners of perceiving the term “strategy”. That is why we ask ourselves if such strategies are real/true or the concept has long exceeded its normal/rational limits.

As we will demonstrate in what follows, it is neither correct nor normal that the security strategy of a nation be the strategy of the government, but that of the Parliament, because only the Parliament would represent the public opinion and even the entire people or the whole nation. The national security strategy is often confused with the security strategy of the state and that is why we opt for the collocation “the security strategy of the nation” because it should be understood that this strategy has as objective the security of the whole nation. There have been numerous cases in the world history when states and nations disappeared, as Poland, not only once, but several times, however the Polish nation did not die and managed each time to rebuild the Polish state, which means the nation is more important than the state regarding the elaboration of the security strategy of a nation.

The security strategy of the nation is at the interface between the political and strategic domain and has the role of achieving the political-military and strategic harmonization of these domains and of concentrating the security effort of all domains and components, national structures in European and international context from different perspectives.

Strategy has become a universal term and we cannot live without strategy, the same as we cannot live without politics, because there is no strategy without politics¹¹, because before any strategy there is a political decision. As a rule, those who make the decision also choose the strategy of applying it (the decision), which does not seem fair, nor logical to us, because only the expert in strategy is properly trained to elaborate the strategy of accomplishing a political decision. Consequently, decision-makers also choose the strategy of applying the political decision and by strategy they understand a medium or long term project of organizing the activities of implementing the decision. Others understand by strategy the art of convincing and influencing communities/people, or even that of cheating or manipulating them¹².

The result is that some define strategy as the science and art of planning and organizing the activities of realizing the medium or long term decision. Actually, some of the authors¹³ consider (define) strategy as the science and art of the political decision factor “serving the total war”.

It is imposed that each organization elaborate its strategies. For the international organizations this became a top priority and can be illustrated by numerous examples: the Strategy of the NATO transformation, the European Security and Defense Policy, the Strategic Concept of the Alliance, etc.

Military strategy puts into operation a major political decision regarding using the military forces, means, resources and actions not only for imposing its own will on the opponent and for realizing some aims and objectives from the domain of security and defense, but also for other aims than those which account for the war phenomenon.

The policy without strategy, without strategic expertise, is like a body without its central nervous system, it was proven, demonstrated by the confrontations since the oldest times until today, such as, for example, the experience of the wars in Spain (the invasion of the armies of general Napoleon Bonaparte – the emperor of France), Vietnam and Korea (the aggression wars of the USA against the two states).

The Vietnam war, started in 1964 by the USA against North Vietnam, took place in the jungle, in order to defeat the Vietnamese resistance. This guerilla war ended with the victory of the Vietnamese resistance forces which managed to unite the country under the name of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976. In this war the two parties had totally different strategies: the Americans chased to the vital centers which were not vital at all, and the destruction of the guerilla forces, and the guerilla strategy had the aim to erode the American forces, to attract them into the jungle, to exhaust and decimate them, to lengthen the war in order to determine the USA to put an end to it and to withdraw their forces on basis of the aid of the world public opinion. The Vietnam war was insufficiently prepared by the Americans, either from a political point of view, or a strategic one. After this war the Americans defined by law the responsibilities of the political and military factors in

¹¹ **Eugen BĂDĂLAN, Valentin ARSENIÉ, Gheorghe VĂDUVA**, *Strategia militară contemporană*, Editura CTEA, București, 2006, p.24

¹² *Ibidem*

¹³ **Hervé COUTAU-BEGARIE**, *Op.Cit.*, p.56

preparing the troops, in order to fulfill the politically, media and financially sustained missions, and planned in detail, with minimum losses. North Vietnam used the strategy of resistance to invasion, which was also adopted by the Afghan guerilla forces against the Soviet troops on December 27th 1979. In Afghanistan, the Soviet troops occupied the important cities and the plains, but the Mujahideens hid in the mountains and harassed the invasion forces continuously. The Soviets were forced to retreat with a lot of losses in 1989, under the pressure of the international public opinion.

The strategist must never lose sight of the fact that nature and the world are domains with a multitude of events, which issue out of a complex dynamics, and perceive that although he knows a lot, he knows too little, because the more knowledge and information he acumulates, these, as well as knowledge, need to grow. The strategist always thinks at the interference between politics and action as a designer, planner and organizer of the action. As a consequence, without a well designed strategy, the political decision cannot be put into operation, because the action would be incoherent and inefficient, and the results would be inadequate.

Strategy represents, generally, both science, art, experience and the way of putting in operation a political decision, as well as the harmonization of the effects estimated of some actions with axiological dimensions of the political-military factor.

The result is that military strategy is the science, art, experience and way of putting into operation a political decision regarding the composition, preparedness and using of the forces and means destined to war and armed fight, as well as a way of military expertise for the political decider. It has principles, norms and rules, out of which some have been left unchanged for centuries or even millenniums, and others adapted to the new conditions proving flexibility, always enriching the theory, respectively the science of strategy. Therefore, the strategy is dynamic, flexible, complying to the laws of Hegel's dialectics and permanently adapting to the evolution of the globalizing process, of politics and information, of economy and culture and, of course, to the evolution and revolution of the arms systems. It also adapts to the Revolution in the military domain and to the network-based War which imposes the reconstruction of space and especially of the strategic time. Yet, the great coordinates of strategy remained unchanged. But the new strategic space and the new strategic time determined not only the emergence of a new philosophy of military maneuver and transformation, but also an obvious tendency for asserting the unity and ubiquity of strategy and, as a consequence, to its integrality. And all this results naturally from the unity of human action, from the philosophical unity in diversity, according to the universal connection of the objects and phenomena and from the high degree of integrality of the systems and structures of the human society¹⁴.

Changes resembling those of mathematics when the non-Euclidian geometry appeared are occurring in the 21st century strategy. It did not deny the old (Euclidian) geometry, although the latter referred to an ideal space which exists in our proximity and

¹⁴ **Eugen BĂDĂLAN, Valentin ARSENIE, Gheorghe VĂDUVA**, *Eseu despre arta strategică*, Editura Militară, București, 2005, p.10

was valid only in a limited space and not the interstellar or intergalactic one, which is the real space.

The same happened in the case of strategy. Although it still is the way of realizing/accomplishing the political decision, and also the science, art, experience and ability to put into equation a certain dialectics of wills of the confronting parts, in our century it has expanded to all domains in which a conflict exists. Although the scope and content of strategy have evolved and developed, it has remained the same practical science, art and experience of putting a political decision in operation, of building a dialectics of will which confronts itself, of building and destroying, of operating with the unpredictable, with uncertainties, starting from a few certainties, of harmoniously building and of destroying the will of the opponent part in order to defeat using the most adequate means, the most effective and the most efficient ones.

In this way the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has reached the final form and therefore is still undergoing a complex process of evolution which has the aim of developing a continuous and structured cooperation regarding the security and defense of the EU.

The expert uses strategy with rigor and flexibility in order to organize, fulfill and accomplish the objective set by the political factor. In order to do this the strategic expertise has to be designed by findings and retrievals of wise and therefore ingenious connections and determinations, which should ensure the accomplishment of the political decision, or which come with scientific arguments for correcting the decision.

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