**PROFESSIONAL READING AND THE EDUCATION
OF MILITARY LEADERS**

By

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ABSTRACT

Prominent military figures, both contemporary and historical have, through both personal example and their promotion of critical literacy initiatives, emphasised the role of professional reading in the development of the professional wisdom that underpins effective military leadership. While biographical studies hint at a connection between the extracurricular reading habits of notable military figures and the development of their professional wisdom, the majority of studies on military leadership development focus either through the context of experience or on development through the medium of formal educational programmes. Considering the time and resources invested in formal educational programmes, and the highly incremental nature of self-development that makes its utility difficult to measure, it is understandable but not acceptable that continuous, career-long self-development through professional reading receives scant attention.

Using a hermeneutically derived conceptual framework as an analytical tool, this research explores the intellectual component of military leadership, as embodied in the idea of the warrior-scholar, and the role the phenomena of reading, text, and canon, play in the development of the cognitive skills – critical, creative, and strategic thinking – necessary for successful leadership in complex institutions and environments.

The research seeks to contribute original insights into the role that professional reading actually plays in the intellectual development of military leaders. The research also seeks to determine the extent to which a military canon that embodies professional military wisdom exists, and the relationship that this canon might have on the development of military leaders in the contemporary environment.

The research was conducted through an engagement with literatures in multiple disciplines and 18 open-ended in-depth research interviews with 24 emerging and established military

leaders, and defence academics, in New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Canada, Israel and the United States on the role reading plays in their professional development. Data have been analysed through literature mapping and the deployment of theme discovery and interpretation-centred analysis methods.

In particular, this thesis has examined the artefact of the professional military reading list as used across nations and individual armed services as a component of contemporary professional military education for commissioned and non-commissioned officers at tactical, operational and strategic leadership levels.

The research has confirmed the utility of the reading list approach as a means of promoting professional reading, particularly to assist officers:

- prepare for a posting or campaign
- prepare for formal professional military education courses
- aid developmental activities towards promotion
- broaden general knowledge, and
- cultivate professional military knowledge in breadth and depth.

The research has found that reading lists are syllabi for the informal mode of professional military education, particularly to supplement the study, in breadth and depth, of military history, strategy and doctrine, the art of war, and leadership in command. The research has also examined the construction and implementation of the reading lists and developed twenty principles for the development of reading lists for practical use by militaries globally.

The research has critically engaged with canon as a concept. While it has not found that the canon concept in its 'pure' form as understood in literature studies can be usefully applied to

military education, a set of core texts have been identified as being highly valued by militaries globally for the education of officers.

Although the research did not seek to prove the link between reading and the development of military leaders, such an approach being inconsistent with the methodological lens adopted, the research does however indicate that professional reading in breadth and depth is as important a component in the development of military wisdom as is training, experience, and formal education.

Keywords: Wisdom, military leadership, hermeneutics, self-development, reading, canon, professional military education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	5
Figures and Tables	11
Acknowledgements	13
Chapter One: Introducing the Reader-Leader	15
Developing military leaders	15
Genesis of this research	16
Policy context	18
Research questions	19
Thesis approach and structure	20
Original contribution	23
Chapter Two: Method	25
Introduction	25
Methodological approach	25
Development and use of a conceptual framework	31
Reflexive account	36
The non-use of data analysis software	36
Data collection	38
Literature review	38
Collection of reading lists	39
Research interviews	42

Analytical framework	45
Summary	47
Chapter Three: Phronesis and the Warrior Leader	49
Introduction.....	49
The love of wisdom	49
Phronesis - practical wisdom	57
The modern warrior: caste and profession, continuity and change	61
The concept of leadership	69
The distinctiveness of military leadership	74
Decision-making	80
Summary	83
Chapter Four: Reading the Canon.....	85
Reading and critical literacies	85
Critical literacy.....	91
Canon	96
Educational perennialism.....	98
The problem of canon	100
The ‘Philosopher of War’	102
Chapter Five: Educating Military Leadership.....	107
Introduction.....	107
Professionalism and the military.....	107

Developing officers.....	115
The ‘whats’ and ‘where’ of education	116
Chapter Six: Professional Reading and the Military.....	127
Introduction.....	127
The Ancient World	131
Ancient China	132
Classical Greece.....	135
The Middle Ages and Renaissance	136
The Enlightenment.....	139
The age of industry	142
The era of ideological warfare	146
Summary	161
Chapter Seven: Reading the Reading Lists.....	163
Development of the reading lists	163
Construction of the reading lists	166
Identification of core texts	174
Case studies.....	183
Summary	188
Chapter Eight: Conversations On Professional Development.....	189
Introduction.....	189
The professional context	189

The intellectual component.....	191
Leadership.....	193
The nature of education	196
What education does	198
What it is to be educated.....	205
Summary	209
Chapter Nine: Conversations On Professional Reading	211
Promoting self-directed learning.....	211
Professional reading.....	215
Reading lists.....	221
The canon.....	224
The ‘hidden’ canon	227
Fiction	229
Coda	230
Chapter Ten: Developing the Military Professional	233
Introduction.....	233
Leadership, professional wisdom and the modern warrior	233
Professionalism	236
Intellectualism in the military	239
Change and a ‘liberal education’	241
Practical wisdom.....	243

Educating military leaders	247
Critical literacies	250
Self-development	254
Chapter Eleven: Professional Military Reading	261
Introduction.....	261
Reading for leadership	261
A common canon?	269
Chapter Twelve: Are Leaders Readers? Conclusion	273
Introduction.....	273
Key conclusions	273
The influence of professional reading.....	274
The development and utility of military reading lists.....	277
A military canon?.....	279
Original contribution.....	285
Implications for theory.....	285
Implications for leadership theory	285
Implications for methodology.....	287
Implications for method.....	289
Implications for practice	292
Limitations of the research.....	295
Areas for further research	297

Closing thoughts	298
Bibliography	303
Annex One: Military Reading Lists	333
Annex Two: Interviews and Personal Correspondence	337
Annex Three: Research Information Sheet And Consent Form	339

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure One	<i>The Two Faces of Prudence</i>	p.22
Figure Two	The hermeneutic circle applied	p.30
Figure Three	The domain of professionalism	p.32
Figure Four	The domain of the modern warrior	p.33
Figure Five	The domain of leadership	p.35
Figure Six	Thesis conceptual framework	p.35
Figure Seven	Reading lists by region	p.40
Figure Eight	Reading lists by service	p.41
Figure Nine	Interviewees by type	p.43
Figure Ten	<i>The School of Athens</i>	p.53
Figure Eleven	Detail from <i>The School of Athens</i>	p.54
Figure Twelve	New Zealand Army Coat of Arms	p.64
Figure Thirteen	The knowledge pyramid	p.94
Figure Fourteen	The professional development framework	p.118
Figure Fifteen	Livingstone's learning framework	p.122
Figure Sixteen	The tomb of Martin Vázquez de Acuña	p.137
Figure Seventeen	New Zealand Army reading list	p.164
Figure Eighteen	Canadian Forces and Netherlands Institute for Military History reading lists	p.164
Figure Nineteen	Reading list construction analysis	p.173
Figure Twenty	Recommended leadership texts by book category	p.182
Figure Twenty-one	Most recommended leadership texts by author provenance	p.182
Figure Twenty-two	Culture Militaire website	p.187
Figure Twenty-three	The Greek helmet as meme for the military arts	p.240
Table One	Adler's reading matrix	p.88
Table Two	Reading list topic analysis	p.168
Table Three	Reading list construction analysis	p.170
Table Four	List of key texts global	p.178
Table Five	List of key texts U.S.	p.180
Table Six	List of key texts non-U.S.	p.180
Table Seven	Twenty Principles	p.293

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE READER-LEADER

“Everything man is and does is modified by learning and is therefore malleable. But once learned, these behaviour patterns, these habitual responses, these ways of interacting gradually sink below the surface of the mind and, like the admiral of a submerged submarine fleet, control from the depths. The hidden controls are usually experienced as though they were innate simply because they are not only ubiquitous but habitual as well”.

Edward T. Hall (1977, p.42)

In this introductory chapter I introduce the inspiration for my topical focus and its policy context, and outline my research questions and the thesis approach and structure. I close the chapter by highlighting the original contribution the thesis makes to the literature and to professional military practice.

Developing military leaders

Militaries have historically invested considerable time, energy, and talent in education and leader development (Masland and Radway, 1957, Barnett, 1967, Hirai and Summers, 2005). Senior leaders have long recognised that growing a quality force of professional, well-trained, and highly creative men and women requires a long-term commitment to educational excellence (Shelton, 2001). In theory, the role of, and benefits from, a professional military education system that is adequately resourced and institutionally championed are many.

The role of a military education system is: to develop creative, adaptive, and motivated leaders who, in turn, stimulate and sustain professional and intellectual development throughout the force; provide the service commands with trained personnel who are adept in the latest doctrine and warfighting techniques; and create a leadership culture confident in anticipating and planning for the future (Abbe and Halpin, 2009, Allen, 2010, Raymond et al., 2010). The benefits of professional military education include: the promotion of open and informed debate towards the refinement of operational concepts; the promotion of self-development through learning innovations, professional publications and conferences (Shelton, 2001).

As Shelton (2001) notes however, sustaining the education and development of military leaders has long been a competition between the fiscal and operational constraints of the present and the long-term well-being of the force. This thesis seeks to focus on an aspect of professional military education: self-development through professional reading. In contrast to training and experiential development processes, intellectual development through education is more incremental and delayed, and thus harder to quantify (McElhatton, 2010).

Self-development through professional reading, a more evolutionary, incremental process, is even more difficult to quantitatively track and measure, contributing to the paucity of research on it within the broader field of military education studies. However, as illustrated through the opening quote from Hall (1977), it is this very evolutionary, incremental aspect which may contribute to a more deeply embedded form of learning, so gradually gained over time that it can seem innate.

Genesis of this research

This thesis has its origins in a body of work published as *The Strategic Thinking of Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger* (McElhatton, 2008b). As the title suggests, that work sought to establish to what extent the eponymous New Zealand General was a ‘strategic thinker’. While it was gratifying to see the case I made for the affirmative being upheld by some notable students of strategy (McLean, 2008, Till and Strachan, 2010), the more important product of that research has been the key questions it prompted.

Kippenberger was a classic autodidact. While he had tactical experience as a young man on the Western Front, prior to and throughout WWII he had no formal military education. A provincial lawyer and officer in the resource-impooverished New Zealand Territorial Force between the wars, his military education was conducted under the tutelage of the great authors of military history one-to-one in the privacy of his quiet study in small-town New

Zealand. A great leader, he learned his generalship largely through the books he bought or borrowed (Harper, 1997, McElhatton, 2008b, McLean, 2008).

During the research into Kippenberger I began to perceive a certain behaviour of notable leaders of the WWII generation. While few were as purely autodidactic as Kippenberger, the notable leaders, commanders, innovators and thinkers of the period were predominantly voracious, reflective, and critical readers, accomplished and innovative trainers, and, to a greater or lesser degree, prolific writers.¹ Their mastery of their profession, what I will term their ‘practical wisdom’, seemed to have been shaped by a complex interplay between their experiences as junior leaders, their cognitive growth through formal and informal personal development, and their contributions to organisational learning through training innovation and textual enhancement of the body of knowledge (Connell, 1964, Dietrich, 1989, Keegan, 1991, Barnett, 1995, Perret, 1999, Hamilton, 2001, Shukman, 2002).

While these leaders were ‘mould-breakers’ – exceptional individuals in unique times – they still present relevant cases or benchmarks for organisational learning and development in today’s militaries, and potentially for any complex organisation. As Argyris and Schön (1996) posited, individual practitioners are centrally important to organisational learning, “because it is their thinking and acting that influence the acquisition of capability for productive learning at the organisational level” (p.xxii).

During this earlier research I was introduced to the New Zealand Army’s *Professional Reading List*.² Further investigation revealed that similar formal lists were widely used across nations and individual armed services as a component of contemporary professional military

¹ The figures studied in this period were predominantly those junior officers of WWI who rose to senior positions in time to be operational and strategic commanders in WWII for all the major belligerent powers. This reading also introduced me to the major Soviet military intellectuals of this period many of whom were tragically caught up in Stalin’s purges of the late 1930s.

² The NZ Army list was brought to my attention by former Chief of General Staff, Major General Piers Reid. I acknowledge his teaching and book-lending in light of his death in October 2012.

education for commissioned and non-commissioned officers at tactical, operational and strategic leadership levels. The various lists collected as part of this research from across the Anglophone and non-Anglophone world recommend long-acknowledged classics from ancient China and Napoleonic Prussia, to recent releases on insurgency, peacekeeping and global warming. The lists recommend works from business writers and philosophers, and some promote the reading of fiction genres like science-fiction as aids to the development of critical and strategic thinking in the military profession.

So, at the nexus of the consideration of the ‘reader-leaders’ and the reading lists, a research question began to form: what is the influence of professional reading on the development of the leadership skills necessary for military command?

Policy context

Public policy practitioners have framed the contemporary operating environment as one moving from a management to a leadership paradigm (Hughes, 2012). The renewed focus on ‘leadership’ resulting from dramatic organisational and operational change has made leadership development a critical strategy for public and private sector organisations (Thomas, 2006). Leadership development takes time, with large complex organisations like the armed forces recognising that the strategic leaders of the future are ‘grown’ early in their careers (Nestler, 2006).

The education and development of public and private sector professionals is a large and diverse multi-billion dollar global industry (Doh and Stumpf, 2007, p.388). Despite the significance of this investment it has been estimated that less than 20% of organisations investing in leadership development actually evaluate the effectiveness of their leadership development programmes (Avolio et al., 2010).

Coupled with this, the leadership ‘space’ is increasingly marked by pressures on availability and time, resulting in a realisation that alternatives to the development solutions provided by traditional and formal education provision must be explored and promoted. Such alternatives need to satisfy a need for succinctness, convenience, and limited impact on time ‘on the job’ (Walker et al., 2005, p.2).

An outcome of this research is to develop recommendations towards the professional development policies of the military. The importance of leadership development, and the sums currently spent on it despite endemic global recession, mean that the evaluation of low-cost, high-impact alternatives to the prevailing status quo are a professional development policy priority.

Later in this chapter I outline how my approach to literature is grounded in the ethos of strategic studies. At this point it is worth evoking one of the midwives of modern strategy Bernard Brodie (1973) who noted that, while strategy can accommodate “idle academic pursuit[s]”, it is primarily a pragmatic and practical activity, one striving to be ever “policy relevant” (pp.452-3).

Research questions

The three questions I address in this thesis are:

1. What is the influence of professional reading-based self-development and non-formal education on the development of leadership skills in the military?
2. Why and how are professional military reading lists developed, and what are their use and utility among their audience(s)?
3. Is there an identifiable canon of key texts the military deem important to critically read for the development of leadership and command skills?

Thesis approach and structure

The thesis is structured into four sections. In *Chapter Two* I outline the methodological approach, outline the conceptual framework developed to aid the exploration of my research topic, and describe the analytical frameworks and reflexive³ practices I have used to evaluate the qualitative and quantitative data. I have chosen this structural approach for two reasons: to explain upfront the rationale behind the utilisation of a conceptual framework to structure the literature review; to introduce the methodological approach which is itself a conceptual component for consideration.

The literature review is then presented over *Chapters Three to Six*, each chapter focusing on elements of the conceptual framework. The broad focus of each chapter in the literature review can be summarised as concerning: practical wisdom and warrior leadership; critical literacy and the literary notion of canon; professionalism and the professional development of officers; and professional reading by the military.

I present the research findings in *Chapters Seven to Nine*. The first of these chapters presents findings from the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the professional military reading lists. The remaining two chapters in this section present findings from the qualitative analysis of the interviews I conducted with military officers and academics over the course of the research.

Finally, in *Chapters Ten and Eleven* I discuss the findings before offering final conclusions in *Chapter Twelve*.

This work seeks to contribute to both the broader strategic studies and leadership studies literatures. As Baylis and Wirtz (2002) note, the study of the broad field of strategy is an

³ The terms 'reflexion' and 'reflection' will both be used in this thesis. Where reflexion is used, this is to denote self-analysis, an aspect of the hermeneutic process. Where reflection is used, this is to denote contemplation of a theme.

interdisciplinary endeavour (p.3). The student of strategy, particularly in its classical, pre-nuclear form, is a generalist by calling, a grasp of the subject requiring familiarity with the humanities and the social and natural sciences (p.3). Acknowledging that strategic studies “notoriously lacks a clear discipline”, Strachan (2002) notes that it is a subject of “component disciplines” (p.5). Analysing strategic questions requires interdisciplinary lenses (Tsakiris, 2006, p.173). For Perucci and McManus (2013) the study of leadership has a long interdisciplinary history dating back centuries, past Machiavelli, to Plato and before (p.49).

While this research is not concerned with semiotics, symbols and visual memes are subliminally important to the study. The technical difference between an artistic image and visual writing is essentially that the former conveys subjective or personal meaning, while the latter is an institutionalised means of conveying a message capable of being understood in the same way by all those who are using the writing system (Crystal, 1997, p.198). However, beyond the elementary or merely functional, deriving meaning from the writings of another, particularly one long dead and/or from another culture, can also be an exercise in the subjective. As I have written about elsewhere, the understanding of any phenomenon is an exercise in engagement with, and interpretation of, the range of its ‘cultural texts’; its symbols, traditions, language, biographies, doctrines etc. (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012).

This thesis will use visual images beyond the need to merely represent data; but also to convey meaning. As in *Figure One*, the *Allegory of Prudence* from the tomb of Francis II, Duke of Brittany can be used to illustrate consciousness of time and place. *Prudentia*, one of the ancient virtues that the Romans derived from the Greek idea of *phronesis* that will be considered in due course, is represented in the tomb as having two faces; one of an old man looking backwards to the wisdom of the past, the other of a young woman facing the future. She holds a pair of compass dividers, long used in art as a symbol of reason, vision and

imagination (Janson, 1970, p.472), and a mirror, the symbol of contemplation and truth. The allegory is that of practical wisdom and the forces of change and continuity.

Figure One: *The Two Faces of Prudence* (Jibi44, 2005)

The representation of *Prudentia* symbolises a second way to consider my approach to literature, through the prism of canon. Without pre-empting the later discussion on canon, it should be pointed out that certain works from the mooted literary canon have woven their ideas into the thesis. While this was subconscious initially, my reading of these works has been an exercise in reinforcement, the power of the works acknowledged by both their covert and overt impact on my thought.

During the thesis narrative it will be necessary to quote from both primary sources (e.g. interviews and source documents) and secondary sources (e.g. key texts). Where an extended quotation is taken from a primary source:

It will be presented indented with no spacing.

Where it is taken from a secondary source:

It will be presented indented and italicised with no spacing.

Original contribution

This research makes an original contribution to the literature and to professional practice through:

- conducting the first quantitative and qualitative review of professional military reading lists across national and service boundaries
- updating the literature on the influence of professional reading on military leadership development through an interdisciplinary literature review and qualitative engagement with military leaders and academics
- the application of the hermeneutic method to a military leadership context
- the formation, propagation, and validation of principles for the development of professional reading lists.

CHAPTER TWO: METHOD

Introduction

Three primary research methods have been employed for this inquiry: a reflexively-driven hermeneutic engagement with discrete literatures relevant to the components of the conceptual framework; a documentary analysis of 67 multi-service contemporary military reading lists drawn from 19 national contexts; and 18 semi-structured interviews and correspondence with 24 emerging and established military leaders, and defence academics. In this chapter I outline the methodological approach adopted for the research, the data gathering process and the analytical framework used to interpret the data.

In introducing the methodological stance adopted for the research it is important to highlight its role in guiding the ontological and epistemological cast of the research as well as its role as a fundamental component of the conceptual framework used to posit and address our research question. Thus, I am using hermeneutics to guide my interpretation of my subject and I am considering the use of hermeneutics in the intellectual development of military leaders.

Methodological approach

In her consideration of the relationship between epistemology and methodology, and the extent to which the epistemological position we adopt prescribes which research methods we use, Willig (2001) highlights the difference between ‘method’ and ‘methodology’.

Acknowledging that both terms are often used interchangeably, she distinguishes between a general approach to studying research topics – i.e. methodology – and the use of a specific research technique – i.e. method or what Hart (1998) describes as the ways and means employed to gather and analyse our data. Willig (2001) notes the importance of

distinguishing between the two terms because methodology is much more directly informed by the researcher's epistemological position than method (p.8).

The methodological approach the research takes is as much an epistemological stance as it is a methodology (Gadamer, 1960/1996, ps.505-6). The hermeneutic process has long focused on the pursuit of knowledge through critical engagement with the power and mystery of the written word (Abulad, 2007). This research seeks to understand the influence of professional reading on military leadership and the hermeneutics of leadership; how meaning is sought through the interpretive arts by decision makers.

An engagement with the history of hermeneutics recalls a not so distant age when the gods and heroes of Homer provided parables and lessons for aspiring military leaders (Coker, 2007). Importantly, through the history of the development of philosophical hermeneutics, an opportunity is presented to examine the German intellectual ferment, a by-product of which were the great innovations to military organisation, training, and theory of the nineteenth-century (Gat, 1989) that continue to shape the military culture of our own day (Dupuy, 1977).

As Crotty (1998, p.91) has noted, hermeneutics is “no mere academic exercise”, but a form of inquiry into the application of the meaning in texts. Given the policy context outlined in *Chapter One*, and the conceptual focus on practical wisdom, the applied character of my methodological approach serves to further rationalise the choice of methods and the particular form in which these have been used (Crotty, 1998, p.7).

In *Chapter Three*, I note the nebulous nature of leadership. English (1999) has asserted that leadership is a topic that has been “veiled” or “obscured” by the dominant theories or metanarratives used to explore it, requiring an interpretive or hermeneutic approach to unveil its true essence. Grint (2005) has argued the perspective of leadership as a social construction. Arguing for an alternative epistemological and ontological approach to

leadership to the dominant empirical approach, Smith and Blase (1991) have advanced the hermeneutic perspective, holding that social reality is socially constructed, facts are not separate from values, and that the goals of inquiry are the interpretation of meanings and intentions (p.6). Pointing out that “the goal of hermeneutics is not prediction and control, but rather to realise an interpretative understanding of the meanings people give to their own situations and their interactions with others” (p.11), Smith and Blase (1991) cast leadership as a dialectical activity, one founded upon the social activities of debate and discussion (p.19). This considered, and while acknowledging that other researchers might approach this topic from alternative epistemological perspectives, I have chosen a hermeneutic lens to pursue this research.

Modern philosophical hermeneutics – the basis of the modern methodological approach – has had a distinguished evolution from Schleiermacher and Dilthey in the nineteenth-century to Husserl, Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer and beyond in the twentieth-century (Bleicher, 1980). Significantly for this study, this German-dominated philosophy grew in parallel to, and in largely the same intellectual environment as, the significant nineteenth-century contribution to military theory, history and the great reforms of the general staff and professional military education system I noted earlier (Gat, 1989, Strachan, 2007).

Hermeneutics is an inquiry approach focussing on the interpretation of meanings inherent in human activity. It is a methodology with ancient roots. Apocryphally, the term hermeneutic is rooted in the persona of Hermes, messenger god of the Hellenes, “bearer of knowledge and understanding”, herald of the gods’ decisions to man (Crotty, 1998 p.88), the bridge of understanding between the sacred word and humanity. For the narrative at hand, Hermes is a useful metaphor; the transmitter of advice to strategising Odysseus representing the sage guidance ‘classics’ like *The Iliad* and *Odyssey* have to offer us.

Hermes serves also to represent the gap between endowed leadership and leadership learned. Homer relates how the great kingly scepter passed to mighty Agamemnon from the godhead Zeus, through Hermes to martial man in the persons of Pelops, “that fine charioteer”, and Atreus, the “marshal of fighting men” (Homer, c.800 BCE/1997 2:120-126). Thus while leadership is something endowed by the gods, it is done through the medium of knowledge and through our ancestor technical tacticians and people-managers. Hermes serves us warning through time, however, on the dangers inherent in the task of correctly interpreting the words of the great. On accepting his role as herald he tells his father Zeus that he will, “never tell lies, though I cannot promise always to tell the whole truth” (Graves, 1960 p.65). Many readers of profound but difficult works like Clausewitz’ *On War* might attest to the enigmatic chasm that separates a truth from the whole.

Finally Hermes, juxtaposed against his brother Apollo, is symbolic of the methodological tension between the scientific method and the phenomenological method. Apollo represents objective, aloof, scientism. Hermes, on the other hand, is not aloof and removed; he is down here among us. He represents duplicity, trickery, interpretation (Harpur, 2002 pp.70-2).

Following the phenomenologists and the existentialists, Gadamer (1960/1996) saw in modern science a tendency to dominate and de-humanise experience. Rather than there being timeless universal truths waiting for the scientific method to reveal, for Gadamer (1960/1996) all knowledge, all understanding is *interpretation*, epistemology being therefore hermeneutic (ps.505-6). The hermeneutic view is that the attempt to determine knowledge or arrive at truth is, in fact, an exercise in interpreting or translating reality and language; and that our condition as finite, bounded beings means truth, in its metaphysical sense, is not available to us.

Gadamer (1960/1996) has written extensively on the evolution of the distinction between the social and the natural sciences. For the social sciences, the distinction is found in the German term for them, *Geisteswissenschaften*, where *geist* is ‘spirit’. When studying the phenomenon of reading we are examining something psychological, beyond the merely mechanical. The method must also therefore have a humanistic framework complementary to its logical framework. My inquiry into this human phenomenon, which itself concerns the study of human phenomena, thus necessitates my conclusions to be derived from artistic instinctive induction (Gadamer, 1960/1996).

A tenet of the hermeneutics of Gadamer particularly is that human inquiry is embedded in ‘horizon’, the limited perspective of an individual’s history, language and tradition. This perspective argues that, contrary to the assertion of science, the purely objective approach to human affairs is never possible, escape from the basic primal experience, the pre-theoretic experience of life as we live it, being beyond our innate ability. The conclusion of this perspective is the belief that we never come to know anything without an element of presupposition, the particular portion of reality we see always serving to prejudice us. Importantly, and constructively, the notion of prejudice doesn’t carry only its commonly meant pejorative implication, but can be helpful if acknowledged and refined as we correct our assumptions or seek new horizon (Gadamer, 1960/1996).

Using Michrina and Richards’ (1996) schema, to illustrate the dialectical form of the hermeneutic inquiry (see *Figure Two*) on the surface a dialogue can be seen between researcher and cultural members or authors of a particular cultural text. In the case of the cultural members for this research – the military profession – their text has many volumes, editions and translations. The researcher also comes with acknowledged *prejudice* or *bias* and a particular *horizon*, though in this case one that is purposefully seeking expansion. The researcher engages with text, through the hermeneutic circle, in a cyclical, though

evolutionary process. For hermeneutics, a flaw in trying to apply the scientific method rigidly to human studies was the distraction of objectivity – humans are rarely objective so a study of human phenomena that failed to acknowledge the latent prejudice or bias of either the researcher or text would be untruthful (Michrina and Richards, 1996).

Figure Two: The hermeneutic circle applied (after Michrina and Richards, 1996, pp.27-8)

While the hermeneutic approach to textual analysis is, in the opinion of many theorists, consciously or unconsciously the bedrock of all contemporary criticism (Guerin et al., 1992, pp.296-7), the approach appears to be relatively uncommon, or at least unacknowledged, in studies relating to military leadership. Scholars who have chosen the hermeneutic path to study a similar topic to our own have looked, for example, at Robert E. Lee's leadership at Gettysburg (Schlesinger, 2005) and the impact of adversity on leadership development (Haller, 2005).

My own published research has used the hermeneutic method to explore two diverse, though related, textual phenomena. The inquiry into *The Strategic Thinking of Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger* (McElhatton, 2008b) used the hermeneutic circle to interpret the critical annotations of this already discussed figure. The consideration of Chinese models of

leadership (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012) used the hermeneutic method to engage with texts from the classical Taoist canon.

Development and use of a conceptual framework

Metaphorically, the qualitative focus of my enquiry would be akin to a Russian doll: the heart of the enquiry was nested within ever larger and related concepts that would have to be ‘opened’ one-by one to reach the focus.

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe theory building as being reliant on a few general constructs that subsume a “mountain of particulars” (p.18). These constructs or categories are then used to label the “intellectual bins” (p.18) we use to store a range of discrete phenomena. Labelling, arranging and defining the interrelationships between these bins leads one to a conceptual framework, a “visual or written product”, one that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, concepts, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.18).

For Maxwell and Loomis (2003) the conceptual framework for a study consists of the theory or theories relevant to the phenomenon being studied that inform and influence the research (ps.242, 245). Complementary to this, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) see a conceptual framework as the usual basis for reframing the research questions and for “formulating hypotheses or making informal tentative predictions about the possible outcome” of a study (p.704).

As Barrow (1977) has argued, the key to the concise conceptualisation of leadership, and its related phenomena, is elusive (p.231), thus supporting the use of analytical tools like conceptual frameworks to study it. As Elkins and Keller (2003) show, conceptual frameworks can help us to understand the relative importance of the environmental and contextual factors that impact on leadership (p.601). The decision to use a framework to model the research was

made when it became clear that my research topic embraced a range of contingent variables and factors. To create a more unified conceptualisation of our topic, a manageable approach to the research that could codify the variables would be necessary (Barrow, 1977, p.245).

The framework developed over time and took shape as oral and paper presentations to peers exposed ‘chinks in the armour’, forcing on-going reconceptualisation of the linkages and relationships between the individual and emerging components of our research topic. The framework is comprised of what I term *conceptual* and *contextual* components. These components were identified throughout the literature review as having a relationship to the broader research topic.

The first component I had to consider was the notion of professional reading, as exemplified by the active engagement with the military reading lists. This nestled within the broader concept of professional military education (PME), itself a subset of, and determinant of, professionalism. This relationship is shown in *Figure Three*.

Figure Three: The domain of professionalism

Now that I had contextualised ‘the act’, i.e. professional reading, I had to factor in its relationship to ‘the actor’, i.e. military officers. Referring back to Michrina and Richards’

(1996) idea of cultural members, I had to interpret their cultural text – the tradition, symbols, doctrine, ethos etc. that make up their cultural whole.

A rich vein of literature, complemented by pictorial source material,⁴ highlighted the resonating heritage of the military which I began to conceive in terms of ‘caste’, both in its historical ‘class’ sense, and in its meaning related to occupational position in society. In contrast, a further body of literature emphasised the professional identity of the modern officer corps. The overlap between these two identities of caste and profession was encapsulated by the term ‘modern warrior’ which emerged from the literature.

Parallel to these literatures was a body of literature which debated continuity and change in the nature and character of war. The importance of the study of this debate in the development of officers’ professional judgement indicated that I would have to factor it into my considerations. The relationship between these concepts is shown in *Figure Four*.

Figure Four: The domain of the modern warrior

⁴ Richly illustrated works like Leventhal and Byrne (1973), Garrett (1976), McCormick and Darby Perry (1990) and Van Creveld (2000) provided much visual fodder for conceptualising the heritage aspect of the officer identity.

To this point I had a means by which to conceptualise the act – i.e. professional reading – and the actor – i.e. the modern warrior – but there remained the conceptualization of the relationship between the two. To do this I had to explore some discrete, but inter-related concepts.

The first of these related to what was being read, (i.e. the books, journals, professional texts etc.). A follow on from the research on Kippenberger was the idea that there were military classics that formed a body of core texts or ‘canon’ that was important to study if one was to master the military arts. Engaging with these texts would not be a passive exercise but one of critical engagement. My professional work on literacy developed a conception of ‘critical literacy’ that could help explore this engagement which I conceived as being a fundamentally hermeneutic process.

A teleological aspect to the research topic emerged. What was the end or utility of this professional reading? While the end point of ‘mastering the military arts’ seemed a reasonable utility for the activity of professional reading, it didn’t quite reflect the idea of something internalised as suggested by Hall’s (1977) quote at the beginning of this thesis. The end-point of ‘wisdom’, at least in its Aristotelian ‘practical’ form, seemed an ideal concept to explore, particularly as I felt it sat comfortably with the equally opaque notion of leadership, the field of inquiry I had one foot planted in. The relationship between these concepts is shown in *Figure Five*.

The challenge for the research was then to link these disparate, but related, concepts together into a conceptual whole that I could use to explore the topic holistically. Inter-relating the three domains that related to act, actor, and teleology of action, I depicted a conceptual framework as illustrated in *Figure Six*. In line with Miles and Huberman (1994), this framework provides a construct to enable me to build theory on the “mountain of particulars”

(p.18) that comprises the whole of my topical focus. The framework will provide the shape for the literature review and the discussion of my research findings.

Figure Five: The domain of leadership

In addition to this, as Muller (2008) demonstrates, modelling professional knowledge and learning using conceptual and contextual continuums reflects both the way our educational institutions have changed their orientation and mission, and the way we have changed our conception of the utility and function of theoretical or liberal learning and practical or vocational learning. This is a key referent because, while the inquiry has some rather abstract qualities, its purpose is wholly towards application.

Figure Six: Thesis conceptual framework

Reflexive account

Reflexion and reformulation of understanding are vital components of the interpretive art and, as highlighted in Michrina and Richards' schema, is integral therefore to the hermeneutic circling through, and engagement with, the cultural text. To ensure that any truth claims or assertions drawn from analysis of our data are able to be properly contextualized and perspectivised for both researcher and reader, an acknowledgement of the researcher's particular prejudice and horizon must form the starting point for the reflexion and reformulation.

As Steier (1991, 1995) has noted, the concept of reflexion has its origins in reference, not to things, but rather to patterns, particularly to patterns embedded in relationships. Reflexion, literally a bending back onto ones-self is, accordingly, a diverse process depending on the particular relationship being subjected to reflexion, but includes the application and reapplication of the researcher's experience to the patterns in the relationship being researched (1995, p.63).

With this in mind, this research includes a reflexive account which is built into the thesis narrative. Reflexion draws on the researcher's own intellectual and professional background and perspective where it provides context for any analytical approach to the literature or data.

The non-use of data analysis software

Before I outline the method and analytical framework it is important to highlight an important impact of the methodological approach on my method. As shown, the hermeneutic method relies on an interpretative interaction between researcher and the researched – i.e. the 'data' – to arrive at an eventual understanding (Bernstein, 1983). The data is not the object of the inquiry, merely, as Bleicher (1980) shows, the material for the task at hand (p.82), or for Bubner (1981) the structural ordering between one theme – in this case professional reading –

and the many contributions (p.154) – in this case the elements of my conceptual framework and my qualitative data sets. While the literature on the hermeneutic method reveals disagreement by the major theorists on a range of issues (Marino, 2011), there is general agreement that ‘understanding’ is the basic posture of human life, dialogue as a means toward understanding and making the ‘strange’, or unknown, more familiar (Taylor and Mootz, 2011, p.1). It is a very ‘human’ method.

This was considered during the data collection period, when I was introduced to, and given the opportunity to use data analysis software, particularly NVivo. While engagement with this software package confirmed the potency of this tool, it raised questions regarding the compatibility of the use of such a tool with the philosophical inclinations of the chosen methodological approach.

After some deliberation, I decided to preserve the epistemological purity of my approach by relying on the long-standing analytical methods of the pre-digital age. The reliance on hand-coding had a number of impacts on the research, the labour-intensity of the method being the most obvious. While I leave the discussion regarding the question of the validity and reliability of my research findings to the conclusions chapter, a positive impact of my approach, the security of my data, should be highlighted.

The hand-coding approach adopted was a ‘pure’ one: individual pieces of data, (i.e. reading lists or interview transcripts), were printed, coded by hand and analysed. This preference for the use of hard-copy data proved a boon when, in 2010, my main computer⁵ was infected with a particularly nasty Trojan virus. While much of the soft-copy data was lost, I was able to rebuild my data-sets through reference to the hard-copy versions.

⁵ The whole of my research has been conducted remotely from my university with no use of that institution’s internal servers or network. While this was convenient for me, it also meant that I had to rely on my own system of back-ups and electronic security to protect my work.

Data collection

Literature review

A first task was to determine the extent of prior research on my topic broadly. While I had recourse to a body of literature on professional military education generally and studies of professional reading like Nye (1986), or studies of individual leaders like Dietrich's (1989), I was unable to determine whether there existed any prior research on the artifact of the professional military reading list.

The scoping of my research topic and subsequent development of the conceptual framework meant that a number of key literatures would have to be consulted. The related literatures of defence and strategic studies and military history were a significant focus, particularly that produced by research outputs from within the broader defence community. I drew from the literature of vocational education and education and learning psychology for an understanding of informal education and the act of reading respectively. Philosophy, literature studies, and leadership bodies of knowledge broadened my understanding of wisdom, command and canon.

Complementary to my research topic, a distinctive approach taken to the literature review was a deliberate focus on book-based literature, and 'riper' works, particularly those texts identified by promoters of the canon as having some timeless message to impart.

The analysis of the reading lists required a familiarity with the individual works on the lists themselves. While years of prior reading, including that done for undergraduate and Master's-level study, provided familiarity with many of the texts, over the course of the research it was necessary to develop a broader understanding of the recommended works.

This was done through a variety of means including: in-depth reading; skim reading sessions

physically in specialist libraries and online through tools like Google Books and Amazon's 'read inside' function; and book reviews in journals and specialist publications.

Collection of reading lists

The analysis for this paper is based on 67 multi-service contemporary professional military reading lists from nineteen national Anglophone and non-Anglophone contexts (Annex One). The lists for this study were predominantly gathered over a four year period, 2007 to late 2011. The lists were sourced through: direct approaches to individual institutions and individual military contacts in New Zealand and abroad; systematic searches of institutional websites; and systematic web searches using a variety of phrases related to the artefact. The initial phase of the data gathering yielded the greatest numerical results in terms of individual lists, though these were overwhelmingly from the Anglophone world, and particularly from United States institutions.

While the direct approaches to individual institutions in the non-Anglophone world resulted in only a minimal number of replies, positive or otherwise, it was important to the study that a perspective be gained on the diversity *or* homogeneity of the core and common readings international militaries were recommending to their cohorts. It was, therefore, vital to source a selection of lists from outside the Anglophone world. It was recognised that the initial approaches to non-Anglophone institutions were flawed by my use of the English language in communications and the assumption that, in the hyper-active working environment, addressees would respond to a 'cold call' in a language other than their own. A second web-based search approach was adopted.

Recognising that a search using only English language words and phrases would be unlikely to yield results from institutions where English was not the primary language, this second phase of data gathering was enacted with the specific aim of yielding military reading lists

from the non-Anglophone world. To do this, seven distinct search phrases – ‘professional military reading list’, ‘army/air force/navy reading programme’, and ‘army/air force/navy reading list’ – were translated into thirty-one key international languages using online translation programmes and used to systematically conduct further web searches. This approach yielded a smaller, but important, set of new national lists, primarily from Europe and Latin America.

Figure Seven: Reading lists by region

As illustrated in *Figure Seven*, slightly over 75% of the final lists gathered for this analysis were still from militaries in the Anglophone world, with over 50% from the United States. While the dominance of the sample by Anglophone lists might seem to negate a claim that the analysis of these lists will produce findings of a globally representative nature, three points should be highlighted that contribute towards a mitigation of the apparent Anglophone bias. The first point is that the United States is overwhelmingly the dominant influence on military thought and practice globally. With a significant military presence in over 130 countries (Ferguson, 2004, pp.16-17), and considering that there are 192 member countries in

the United Nations (2011), how the U.S. trains and educates its military leaders disproportionately influences how other nations train and educate theirs.

The second point is that, referencing the indicative ‘military power rankings’ of an international defence analysis organisation (GlobalFirepower.com, 2011), the sample includes lists from five - U.S., India, UK, France and Germany - out of the ten most powerful, and arguably most influential, nations militarily. The military traditions of the three European powers mentioned have produced a disproportionately influential canon since at least the seventeenth-century (Van Creveld, 2000), much of it still of relevance today. The final point is that we should be wary of viewing the U.S. military organisations and institutions as being a homogenous or monolithic whole. Murray (1999, p.144) has argued that due to historical and operational differences, the five service arms and their sub-branches have evolved “extraordinarily different” cultures and worldviews. I argue that these three factors go some way to mitigating bias in the sample, a point I believe will be borne out in analysis.

Figure Eight: Reading lists by service

As represented in *Figure Eight*, the sample reading lists have primarily been sourced from armies, military academies and joint forces initiatives, the last two displaying a considerable land-based focus. While again this points to bias in my sample, this time towards a land-based view of military leadership, it needs to be acknowledged that, as services with a heavily mechanistic, technological and engineering approach to warfare, navies and air forces have long had an educational and training focus that reflected this (Murray, 1999, pp.144-5).

Research interviews

Ethical approval for the research interviews was approved by Victoria University of Wellington's Pipitea Human Ethics Committee. The approval process involved the development of an information sheet and consent form (Annex Three) which would be supplied and explained to each interviewee prior to the formal interview. The information sheet detailed:

- the style of interviewing – open-ended questioning
- interviewee refusal and termination rights
- data access and security
- destruction of data – five years after completion of thesis
- attribution and consent
- intent of researcher to publish.

Four categories of interviewee of interest to the research were identified:

- serving military officers of Captain rank and above
- retired military officers in academic positions
- civilian academics working in military or defence related state institutions
- civilian defence academics.

As illustrated in *Figure Nine*, in total 24 serving and retired officers, civilian defence officials and academics, from New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, United States, Canada, Israel and the United Kingdom were interviewed (Annex Two). Interviews were conducted from 2009 to 2013. The interviews were predominantly conducted face-to-face, but telephone and written correspondence interviewing methods have been used and were a prominent method used for the final suite of interviews. This was to ensure I had a broad range of data to draw from.

Figure Nine: Interviewees by type

Potential interviewees were identified using three criteria:

- association or involvement with the development or promotion of military reading lists
- command position
- relevant position within a defence education or research institute
- academic or professional publishing on leadership development and/or military education.

Potential interviewees were formally approached in writing. On acceptance, interviewees were supplied with the information sheet and a supplementary talking points sheet outlining the points I wished to cover with each interviewee. These points included generic topics relevant to my research questions and topics tailored to the individual based. Interviewees were given confidentiality and anonymity options but all waived these.

Securing the interviews was the single biggest challenge of the project. A considerable amount of time was spent making the formal approaches, and a significant portion of those approached declined to take part in the research, mostly with no reason given for the decline. Some interviews that had been tentatively secured failed to happen due to a variety of reasons including change of working circumstance of the interviewee or time pressures. In one case, a series of previously confirmed interviews with officers from the national military academy of a country were cancelled in the eleventh hour prior to arrival in that country. This introduced an interesting cultural dimension to the research.

This dimension related to the relative ‘openness’ of military culture generally and by individual nation and service. My experience of a certain wariness of engagement with non-affiliated civilians by the military was confirmed during the research by other doctoral researchers from within the military who themselves experienced varying degrees of access issues depending on the particular culture being engaged with.

While the interviews to date are quantitatively more biased towards serving or retired officers, the research is heavily influenced by the ideas and writings of a range of civilian academics who exert an influence on military thought disproportionate to their actual physical experience of war.

On top of the interviews I conducted towards this research, I have relied heavily on an analysis of public domain speeches and lectures by prominent serving or retired international

military leaders. The availability of these through various military, academic, and public policy websites has made access to the personalities, experiences and ideas of these soldiers more accessible and more susceptible to scholarly critique than was previously an option for the researcher relying on edited collections and often self-serving and sometimes turgid autobiographies. While the knowledge of the fact of a speech being recorded and published will make the tongue circumspect, the digital window into once closed peer-to-peer presentation environments like the U.S. Army War College or the Royal United Services Institute, gives ‘outsider’ researchers a better inclination on the prevailing military mind-set than has previously been available.

Finally, I have engaged in many informal conversations on my research topic with serving military from New Zealand and abroad. While the informality of these conversations has excluded them from use in my data sets, or as contributing to my findings, it would be counter to my methodological approach to deny their influence in shaping, if subconsciously, my understanding of this topic.

Analytical framework

An analytical framework was developed to examine various aspects of the construction, structure and content of the reading lists.

- coding and analysing texts within lists according to a typology set relating to book category or genre, author provenance
- ranking texts according to their appearance across all the lists, and separately according to the frequency of their appearance across the lists from the U.S. and elsewhere
- a topic analysis of the reading lists

- the development and utilisation of a constructional analysis matrix to determine how the lists have been constructed in relation to: the accessibility of the texts chosen; whether the books in each list were narrative and discursive or more theoretically oriented; the relative contemporaneousness of the books in each list; and the relative breadth or narrowness of the domains of learning covered by each list.

The analysis of the reading lists, and subsequent findings, is presented in detail in *Chapter Seven*.

The interviews were analysed using a categorical scheme consisting of two steps as outlined by Krippendorff (2004). First the text was transcribed and subjected to first-level thematic analysis to determine the relevant themes and ideas. Then the texts were parsed into smaller units relevant to the emerging themes and ideas. This process highlighted words, sentences, or quasi-sentences that reflected the emergent themes.

Following this first step, the second step involved coding each unit by assigning a category from the coding scheme to each text unit according to a three-level schema. This hand coding schema provided a means to drill down to the key thematic messages. Extensive use was made of white-boarding techniques to model and re-model the emerging structural themes and findings.

Quotations selected for direct use in the findings *Chapters Eight and Nine* were chosen both to represent the key thematic messages, and for their contribution to the narrative flow. Direct quotations were not used from a small number of interviews. This was a stylistic decision, all interviews contributing to the overall thematic analysis.

Summary

I have introduced my method chapter at the beginning of the thesis for two reasons: to explain upfront the rationale behind the utilisation of a conceptual framework to structure the literature review, and to introduce for consideration the methodological approach, hermeneutics, which is itself a conceptual component. In introducing the artefact of the professional military reading list and my interview locus of serving and retired officers, civilian defence officials and academics, I have framed the context of this research: the influence of professional reading on military leaders.

The second section of this thesis, over *Chapters Three to Six*, considers the literature relevant to the main components of the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER THREE: PHRONESIS AND THE WARRIOR LEADER

“Leadership is an intangible”.
General of the Army, Omar Bradley, (1972, p.2).

Introduction

This chapter is the first of four literature review chapters, anchoring the conceptual and contextual elements of the framework to my particular research topic. In this chapter I begin my examination of the conceptual framework by considering the components ‘wisdom’, ‘the modern warrior’, and ‘leadership’.

I do this by introducing the concept of wisdom and highlighting its practical form, *phronesis*, as expounded by Aristotle. I then consider the concept of the modern warrior with reference to the influencing forces of caste and professionalism and continuity and change. I then consider the concept of leadership, particularly regarding its distinctive military form. This portion of the literature review illustrates the research topic from one perspective. This is the modern warrior-leader, a product of both past and present, in pursuit of the skill essential for command: the ability to make wise decisions.

The love of wisdom

The popular Anglo-Saxon image of the philosopher for the latter part of the twentieth-century was of the idealised Oxford Don; an absent-minded and socially indifferent eccentric, verbose and abstract (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, p.44), largely cloistered and only venturing into the real world to make profound statements about great existential issues - Bertrand Russell *in caricature* in other words. Like all caricatures, this picture is at once a truism punctuated with a large dose of fallacy. A truism because, as Critchley (2001) points out, for a large part of the last 100 years, ‘professional philosophers’ in the Anglo-Saxon school were content to distance themselves from the largely practical activity that was the stuff of philosophy from ancient times – the meaning of life, who should rule, how should we

educate, what is love etc. – and concentrate instead on abstract knowledge, on epistemology. Philosophy, the mother discipline of the academy, is, in much of its modern ‘professional’ form, not widely read, and not popularly considered relevant to ordinary, everyday life (ps.1-6).

The caricature is false however because, the output of some philosophers historical and modern aside, philosophy in its many guises is, at its heart, an inquiry into the human condition, and the very best philosophy since ancient times is marked by its readability and relevance to ordinary men and women. We can read Plato, Montaigne, Locke and Schopenhauer; Nietzsche and Foucault are loved and loathed because they disturb us; Russell won his Nobel Prize for his masterly and accessible public writings, not his mathematical reasoning.⁶

I have made these points because philosophy lies at the heart of this inquiry. On one level, this relates to the focus of the inquiry – the education of the ‘warrior class’ – a concern of philosophers since Socrates debated it in *The Republic*. On another level it is because my inquiry seeks to consider the notion of wisdom, the love of which is the Greek *Philo Sophia*.

Notwithstanding this etymology, philosophically-informed researchers have only returned to the study of wisdom relatively recently. The decline in wisdom studies between the Enlightenment and the 1970s has been attributed to two primary factors; the rise of empirical science and the parallel development of the theologically and historically grounded discipline of Bible studies. While Cowan and Darsoe (2008) describe the marginalisation of wisdom as the result of an active struggle between reason-championing science and wisdom “usurping” religion (ps.332-3), Trowbridge (2005) sees a much more benign process at work. Until gerontology offered a new scientific lens on wisdom in the 1970s, Trowbridge sees the, then-

⁶ http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1950/russell-lecture.html

new science of psychology and its philosophical forebear as passively “ignoring” wisdom during the late-nineteenth, and the bulk of the twentieth-century, thus leaving the theologically-minded to fill the inquisitory vacuum (ps.1-3).

This long-standing wariness of the concept demonstrates that, in *wisdom*, we are faced with something nebulous and elusive; something, as in the case of leadership, that defies empirical attempts to define it or pin it down (DePree, 1991). However, the pre-modern philosophers did not share this reticence, and long understood that wisdom derived or evolved from knowledge or *theory* gained and applied (Critchley, 2001, pp.1-11); to be wise was to have the habits and skills of applying knowledge to develop oneself and others (Baltes, 2004, p.8).

As Baltes (2004) would have it, understanding the idea of wisdom must be pursued in both a scientific and a humanist-intuitive (hermeneutic) manner (p.10). Or, alternatively, as Kellerman (2010) notes regarding leadership, through, “an area of intellectual inquiry that is interdisciplinary. How can we know [it] without knowing...history, philosophy, psychology, politics...literature, art, and so on?” (p.xxv). This essentially humanistic notion expressed by Kellerman is important because it brings us back to a time before the creation of disciplinary boundaries or barriers, when scholars studied, mused and wrote across the fields of human inquiry (Watson, 2006).

Hanson (2002) notes that, for the classical Greeks, a life of action and one of contemplation were not incompatible opposites but necessary facets of a whole ‘lived’ life (p.3). For all Greek citizens, philosophically minded or not, military service was a fact of life. Among the philosophers and intellectuals of the era, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Xenophon and, importantly, Socrates were all veterans of the horror that was Greek battle (Hanson, 2002, p.3). We encounter the warrior philosopher-historians Thucydides and Xenophon later in this study, but for the moment, mindful of his early framing of the

discussion of the education of warriors just alluded to, I will use Socrates to advance my thesis.

In a recent work, Waterfield (2009) states that “everyone has heard of Socrates”, noting that the manner of his death – trial and execution by his fellow Athenians in 399 B.C.E. – and its parallels with the martyrdom some four hundred years later of “a Jewish prophet called Yehoshua”, have led to the long cultural canonisation of the man (p.xi) of whom the Oracle of Delphi thought there was none wiser (Plato, c.399 BCE/1984, p.69). A key point when considering Socrates, man and philosophy, is that he wrote nothing down; what we know of him, his ideas and his method we derive primarily from his student Plato (Hall, 2010, pp.20-3). His friend Xenophon and his lampooner, the playwright Aristophanes, are also important sources (Waterfield, 2009, pp.xi, 13-5).

As Solomon and Higgins (1996) note, because he wrote nothing down, to the present, a “lively and unresolvable debate” continues about how much of Plato is Socrates, and how much of Socrates is Plato (pp.45-6). I address Socrates’ antipathy to writing in the conclusion, because his reasoning provides much food for thought for a consideration of the future of professional reading; but for now it is suffice to say that Socrates’ generation was the last classical society to rely solely on the oral dissemination of knowledge,⁷ text ownership and private study not becoming common until two generations later when Plato’s pupil Aristotle built up one of the first known collections of manuscripts for private use (Manguel, 1997, pp.22, 59-60).

⁷ By the period in question, written culture was firmly established from the Mediterranean, through the Middle East and Persia, to the Indian subcontinent and China. The oral cultures of Northern and Eastern Europe only began their transformation to a written culture some thousand or so years later, with other established cultures like the Polynesians only codifying their culture through writing after their introduction to Europeans in the late nineteenth-century (Barber, 1964, Crystal, 1997).

Plato and Aristotle together cast a giant shadow over all subsequent intellectual inquiry (Russell, 1959, p.56).⁸ For Solomon and Higgins (1996) the entire Western philosophical tradition can be described as “an elaborate extension of the debate” between the pupil, and grand-pupil of Socrates (pp.67-8). And this debate is important, highlighting as it does among other things rivalling conceptions of what it means to be *wise*. These rivalling conceptions can be illustrated through Raphael’s 1511 fresco *Scuola di Atene* or *The School of Athens* as pictured in *Figure Ten*.

Figure Ten: *The School of Athens* (Raphael, 1511a)

If his biographer, the canonical Vasari (1568/1965), is to be believed, Raphael of Urbino was an exceptional human being in all senses of the phrase. His prodigious and abiding talent aside, Vasari portrays a man of such fine “qualities of mind...grace, industry...modesty, and excellence of character” (pp.284-5) that we have Renaissance wisdom *in persona* in the collective oeuvre that is Raphael and his artistic legacy. A contemporary of the Florentines Michelangelo, Leonardo and Machiavelli, Raphael was drawn to Rome by the warrior-Pope Julius II and commissioned to create the vast frescos on the Vatican walls that still amaze today. *The School of Athens* depicts ancient Greek philosophy and faces on the opposite wall his fresco *La Disputa del Sacramento*, a depiction of the then-modern theology (Levey, 1968, p.112).

⁸ Russell’s collaborator Alfred North Whitehead (1929/2010) famously characterised the European philosophical tradition as “a series of footnotes to Plato” (p.39).

Figure Eleven: Details from *The School of Athens* (Raphael, 1511b)

Most (1996) notes that Raphael was the first artist to depict philosophy without the use of metaphysical or mythical allegory; in the fresco, philosophy is depicted as a thoroughly human activity, the fifty-eight characters philosophising as philosophers do through writing, debate, argument, questioning and pondering (p.146). At the centre of *The School of Athens*, as illustrated in *Figure Eleven*, are Plato (painted to resemble Leonardo) and Aristotle. Deeply in debate, in their left hands they hold the *Timaeus* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* respectively; with their right hands, Plato points upward to the heavens, and Aristotle's open palm seemingly motioning ground-ward.

While interpretations of the work's rich symbolism are many and varied (e.g., Vasari, 1568/1965, Gutman, 1941, Most, 1996), it is generally accepted that the two hand gestures represent the simultaneously contrasting and complementary concerns of philosophy – Plato's metaphysical and abstract speculation, and Aristotle's empirical, temporally-based temperament (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, p.68). This interpretation is reinforced by the books each philosopher is carrying. While Plato's later dialogue the *Timaeus* (c.360 BCE/2009) is an extrapolation on the physical and metaphysical nature of the universe, Aristotle's (c.330 BCE/1906) *Nicomachean Ethics* is concerned with how best to live one's life. Why the differing worldviews of the two philosophers matters for both education and the pursuit of wisdom will become apparent.

Philo Sophia – literally the love of wisdom – is a compound of two words that don't quite translate directly into modern English. Translation, a literary skill and art which is considered later in this work, has at its heart a problem; there are few word-for-word correspondences between languages. For Hitchens (2008), "translation is a competition between transparent expression and fidelity to the original" (p.144). Because we are not ancient Greeks, this tension is the source of much intellectual angst, because the nuances so clear to them are, to us, shadows.

Despite having just pinned the flag of wisdom to the mast *sophia*, a *practical* issue with this term as was understood by the Greeks must be signalled; one which relates back to Plato's metaphysical and abstract speculation. *Sophia* as a conception of wisdom can be traced back to the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus who conceived of wisdom as a state of grasping the *logos* of things (Allen, 1966, p.10). Only superficially translating as 'word', but more akin to the balance/disorder concept of the unity of opposites, *logos*, much like the Chinese concepts of *Tao* and *Yin-yang* (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012), is a concept at once simple and esoteric, practical and metaphysical.

Allen (1966), noting the cryptic nature of Heraclitus' writings, describes *logos* as "the first principle of knowledge", the basis of the structure or pattern of the world. Plato drew an essentially metaphysical interpretation from Heraclitus, his wisdom being a quality that aspired to the divine, and framed existence in epistemological and ontological abstractions (p.10-11). This almost supernatural, or, more correctly, superhuman, conception of wisdom presents a problem for the study and understanding of wisdom to this day.

Hall (2010) highlights some of the issues with our popular conception of wisdom. Recent psychological surveys asking subjects to nominate figures who they perceived as being especially wise produced a list of figures that were overwhelmingly historical, male, and

somewhat otherworldly. The lists were dominated by the likes of Gandhi, Confucius, Socrates, Jesus, Solomon, Buddha and the Dalai Lama (pp.11-13). While I have no room to critique the model of wisdom embodied (or not) in these figures, and Hall does point out their many flaws as actual humans, it can be deduced that, popularly, wisdom is perceived as something associated with the spiritual and is beyond the attainment of ‘ordinary’ people (especially women). However, the manner in which one frames *logos* shapes the way we can perceive and conceive wisdom.

Plato’s conception of the ideal republic, that ruled by his philosopher-kings, required a rejection of the old Olympian order and the establishment of a whole new cosmology, the new religion of philosophy (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, pp.53-4). As Manguel (2007) notes, this also involved a dilemma for Plato; an implicit rejection of Homer, the poet he most admired, but one who depicted both humanity *and* the gods as fallible, worthy of our temporal empathy (pp.38-42). Striving to conceive the *ideal* required a suppression of the *actual*. It is paradoxical that Plato’s rejection of the deities resulted in an even more esoteric and metaphysical depiction of the cosmological order.

Nehamas (1999) argues that, because of the interpretive gap between reader and an author so temporally far removed, each generation is presented with a dual dilemma/luxury paradox of both having to, and being able to, interpret Plato according to the presenting needs, circumstances and values requiring explanation or validation (pp.xix-xxv). Thus whether to justify elite authoritarian rule in the 1930s (Crossman, 1937, Gigantès, 2002), or help bolster the argument for ‘authentic leadership’ in the 1990s (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999), Plato’s, particularly later, writings are so fundamentally esoteric that they allow a multitude of often conflicting interpretations and can be selectively picked through to justify nearly any course of action. This point will be revisited when considering the works of philosopher of war Carl von Clausewitz.

When considering the symbolism of the *School of Athens*, I noted the texts illustrated in the fresco. While Plato's (c.360 BCE/2009) *Timaeus* is, according to its translator Jowett, a work "most obscure and repulsive" to the modern reader (p.5), in contrast, the *Ethics* (c.330 BCE/1906), in which Aristotle outlines his conception of wisdom, is a wholly accessible and relevant work for the modern reader, even in the 1906 Weyl translation that my study has relied on by choice. In Book VI of the *Ethics*, Aristotle lays out his conception of the active conditions or dispositions of the human soul, a figurative term representing the primary activity or faculty of living things. For Aristotle, a central striving of a good human was to attain phronesis, a practical, everyday form of wisdom, and one of the five intellectual virtues (Cairns and Sliwa, 2008, p.319).

Phronesis - practical wisdom

Aristotle (c.330 BCE/1906) defines phronesis in the Nicomachean Ethics as "the capacity of deliberating well upon what is good or expedient for oneself, not in a particular, but in a general or comprehensive sense" (p.183). For Aristotle, phronesis was neither art nor science, but a "rational and practical state of mind in the field of human good and evil" (p.184). Phronesis was a quality he observed as highly developed in effective politicians and strategists like Pericles (p.184).

As Noel (1999) notes, the term phronesis has been translated and interpreted with a number of different English phrases in the attempt to capture the full meaning of the term. These translations have ranged from practical reasoning and practical wisdom to moral discernment and insight (p.273). Noel notes that the various translations have tended to emphasise different important facets of the Aristotelian concept of phronesis above others, depending on the contextual or ethical milieu of the translator.

Some translators focus the attention on rationality, others bring out the nature of perception and insight, while others highlight the moral and ethical character of the *phronimos* or one with phronesis (Noel, 1999 p.273). Cairns and Sliwa (2008) note that these differing emphases have served to present some confusion and contradiction around the concept in the growing body of scholarship, both across, and within, disciplines (p.318). One reason for this may be confusion on the part of modern scholars of the nature of *virtù* in relation to the practical conduct of those with this practical wisdom.

As shown by Hall (2010), popular ascriptions can be interpreted as equating wisdom with ‘virtue’ in its Christian sense of being *morally* good or righteous. However, in the classical model as laid out by Livy and Seneca, rediscovered by Machiavelli, and somewhat hinted at by Aristotle, *virtù* is a quality that is good or admirable, but not necessarily in terms of morality (Foster, 1942, ps.275-6, Skinner, 1981, ps.26-37). *Virtù*, the quality of ‘good’ (i.e. able or effective) politicians, generals or strategists, is the protection of interests “in a dark world” in which most of one’s protagonists are not “good” in a Christian sense either (Skinner, 1982, p.37). It is according to Kaplan (2002) a “morality of results rather than of good intentions” (p.53).

Thus, while much of the contemporary interpretations of phronesis are strong on values, as Flyvbjerg (2004) notes, they largely ignore, or are weak on, issues of power. In contrast to many contemporaries in management studies, Flyvbjerg attempts to balance values and power by seeing phronesis as involving both appreciative judgements in terms of values *and* an “understanding of the practical political realities of any situation as part of an integrated judgement in terms of power” (p.284). It is very much concerned with the art of judgement or decision-making or, as Rooney et al. (2008) would have it, something less concerned about “how much we know and more with how we apprehend and deploy that knowledge” (p.345).

In *Chapter One* the image of the *Allegory of Prudence* from the tomb of Francis II, Duke of Brittany was invoked. Prudence, from the Latin *Prudentia*, the Roman translation of phronesis, is often depicted carrying a book or scroll and a mirror and occasionally is depicted with a serpent, an ambiguous symbol of cunning or artifice in Judeo-Christian tradition, at foot (Hibbard, 1957, Goodman-Soellner, 1983). As seen in the *Allegory*, Prudence, as anthropomorphised, is often depicted as having two faces; that of an old man implying the wisdom of the past and a future-facing young woman.

In his consideration of the great virtues of the Western philosophical tradition, Comte-Sponville (2003) notes that while the concept of prudence is one of the four cardinal virtues of antiquity and the Middle Ages, it is now overlooked in moral and ethical studies, its central characteristics more falling within the domain of psychology and decision theory (p.30). This may be in part related to the outmoded or unfashionable nature of the term itself.

In Mediaeval Scholasticism, the intellectual movement that is the foundation of Western academia (Watson, 2006, pp.443-6), prudence, in reference particularly to the ideas of Aristotle, was associated with a range of characteristics we might find familiar from much of the trait-based descriptions of leadership. From their reading of classical sources, the Scholastics included as the characteristics of prudence: a form of open-mindedness that enabled the sizing up of presenting situations; and ability to make ‘prudent’ decisions based on prior learning and experience; shrewdness or quick-wittedness; discursive reasoning or the ability to compare alternative possibilities; foresight and circumspection; and caution or risk mitigation (Southern, 1995, Comte-Sponville, 2003, Watson, 2006).

Interestingly for my study, Comte-Sponville’s (2003, pp.33-5) description of Ciceronian prudence, with its emphasis on the patient, attentive and careful handling of complexity, paradox and friction is virtually identical to the model of strategic thinking proposed by

Luttwak (1987) and to a lesser degree that of Liddell-Hart (1967). Prudence therefore, with its enveloping of beginnings and endings, change and time, and the past and the future serves as a metaphor for the tactical and strategic arts and the ability to “think dynamically in space and time” (McElhatton, 2008b, p.15).

Crevani et al. (2007) have described an “emergent movement” in leadership studies towards viewing leadership in terms of collaboration between two or more persons in contrast to the dominant perspective where leadership is something exercised by a single person (p.40). For Perucci and McManus (2013) the emerging ‘discipline’ of leadership studies has been characterised by a move “beyond the simplistic view of leadership as synonymous with leader” (p.50). In his study of Athenian statesman and *strategos* Pericles, Kagan (1990) presents an interesting counterpoint to this move.

While acknowledging that the ‘Great Man’ or heroic approach to historical or biographical analysis “is not fashionable”, Kagan (1990) argues the need to take such an approach, with qualifications, to exceptional individuals like Pericles (p.xi). While, on the surface – using lens like Pericles the ‘politician’, ‘soldier’, ‘educator’, ‘crisis manager’ and ‘strategist’ – he does so, his key subtext is that Periclean leadership is one where the hero-leader is not the supreme commander imposing control from above, rather one that seeks to “unleash the latent power of thousands of individuals” to join (albeit involuntarily) in a “common effort to achieve unprecedented greatness” (p.26). In contrast therefore to the picture presented by Cervani et al. (2007), Pericles, or at least Kagan’s Pericles, embraces both the individualistic *and* the collaborative models in one leadership ethos.⁹

⁹ Russell (1959), describing him as “of the stuff that makes a leader” (p.50), paints a much more patrician picture of Pericles, one in keeping with the ‘strongman’ conception of leadership popular during the aftermath of WWII.

Why this is worth noting here relates to Kagan's attribution for the philosophical underpinning of Pericles political and leadership philosophy; the teachings of Pericles' friend and mentor Anaxagoras, pre-Socratic philosopher and theoriser on *Nous* or 'Mind' (Kagan, 1990, ps.23-6). Now, while Anaxagoras' surviving writings are cosmological in focus, the intellectual tradition he advanced was the prioritising of the use of reason over myth to explain the presenting world (Allen, 1966, Kagan, 1990, Patzia, 2007). His philosophy, including his somewhat abstract theory of *Nous*/Mind, served to liberate his student from the common superstitions of his day and develop a rationally based, or *prudent*, approach to political thought and practice (Kagan, 1990, ps.23-6). A contemporary conception of *Nous* is encountered in *Chapter Seven*.

As Grint (2007) has shown, phronesis is essentially rooted in action rather than simply reflexion and is something intimately bound up with lived experience rather than abstract reason (p.236). Grint also noted that phronesis is gained, or in his interpretation *gives*, through leaders leading in "real situations that require decisions where uncertainty, anxiety and risk generate the opportunity to learn wisdom" (p.243). This makes it an ideal concept within which to consider education for application; that is the education of professionals.

The modern warrior: caste and profession, continuity and change

Leaving a fuller examination of professionalism to *Chapter Five*, I continue to explore the conceptual framework by briefly considering caste and profession, change and continuity. Green (1980, pp.15) defines caste as "the social character men derive from their profession or vocation". This notion of caste is something independent of the caste members' individuality, and, importantly, of the prevailing social and economic conditions. Thus, while in public discourse the tribal or feudal notions of caste, and its related notion class (Noss, 1999, p.87), have been abolished by the forces of democracy and market economics, in reality caste still remains a powerful, if in 'the West', a somewhat subterranean, idea (Green, 1980, p.16).

To the outside observer, modern militaries can be seen as varying manifestations of a hybrid construct formed by the fusing of caste and professionalism. The degree to which this melding has progressed or even begun differs from nation to nation and within and between the individual services of each nation. A study of any long-standing military service over a long period of time will reveal “striking resemblances and profound differences” (Strawson, 1989, p.xi). As Coker (2007) has shown, the concepts of warrior and war can only be adequately considered through an interdisciplinary lens where the literatures of philosophy, psychology, political thought, history, and culture coalesce to aid our examination of a multifaceted whole.

Coker (2007) has examined the warrior concept, from the embodiment of the ideal that is Homer’s Achilles, to today’s ‘post-modern’ warrior he frames as struggling with the declining resonance of the warrior mythos, society’s scepticism about martial glory, and the increasingly technological basis of war. Despite this, Coker argues that the idealised warrior ethos and its associated code of honour and morality, is essential to maintaining a psychological, humanitarian and political restraint on the conduct of war both by the ‘legitimate’ forces of the state and by the irregulars of the *guerrilla*.

For Coker (2007), ‘warriors’ should be understood through a consideration of their instrumental, existential and mythic dimensions. Most modern soldiers only inhabit the instrumental dimension; they are public servants in professional service to a state that may require them to make the ultimate sacrifice for its interests. The existential dimension – sacrifice on behalf of one’s friends in the heat of battle – is where soldier transforms into warrior, itself a concept from the mythic dimension, the heroic realm where Achilles is the ultimate ideal (p.7). Importantly for our focus on professional reading, Coker (2007) shows how “Achilles is invoked time and again in the memoirs of those warriors who reflect on their own profession” (p.7).

The two worlds of caste and profession are uniquely evident in the military in a form only rivaled by the traditional clergy, medicine and, to a lesser extent, the legal profession (Freidson, 1984, Downes, 1985). The New Zealand Army illustrates this in the way it depicts itself through that most professional artifact, the institutional website.

Linked to Twitter and Facebook, and featuring sophisticated gaming features to test the skills of aspiring soldiers, Army.mil.nz is a professional and sophisticated corporate website.

Throughout, the language and imagery of tradition blends effortlessly with the contemporary profession modes of operation. A corporate public relations piece on a recent deployment is accompanied with an image of stripped-to-the-waist warriors performing a traditional Māori *haka*, or war dance. Images of cutting edge military technologies are posed adjacent to images of soldiers doing what they've always done – digging, watching, waiting.

The symbolism of caste is codified in the Army Badge. As illustrated in *Figure Twelve*, to the traditional elements of British martial heraldry – crown, lion and sword – the badge adds a *taiaha* or Māori staff and the legend *Ngati Tumatauenga* or 'Tribe of the War God' (NZArmy, 2008). The two seeming incongruous worlds of tribalism (caste) and professionalism are united in the Army's professed image of itself.

Ngati Tumatauenga acknowledges what the Army is - one family of people bound together by the ethic of service to our country, military professionalism, common values, and mutual respect, mutual trust and camaraderie. As one people we are one tribe. Ngati Tumatauenga reflects our oneness and our unity; it has seen us develop our own New Zealand military cultural practices and ceremonial guided by Tikanga Maori on the one hand and British and European custom on the other (NZArmy, 2011).

So, the New Zealand example illustrates the conception of the modern warrior as a child of caste and professionalism. The tensions within this, as indicated in the framework, are the forces of *continuity* and *change*.

Figure Twelve: NZ Army Coat of Arms (NZArmy, 2002)

It is commonplace to read in contemporary political and military literature of the increasing complexity and unpredictability of post-modern life. For some senior commanders the contemporary operational environment “is now more complex and unpredictable, and the future operational environment promises to be equally so” (Flowers, 2004). For strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski (1993) the vantage of the early 1990s showed a “notable acceleration in the velocity” of a contemporary history uncertain in its trajectory resulting in “sharp discontinuities that collide with each other, condense our sense of perspective, and confuse our historical perceptions” (p.x).

This thesis of Brzezinski has it that “change” is sweeping across the world in “waves of ever-accelerating speed and unprecedented impact” (Toffler, 1970, p.18), that we live in an environment of *historically unprecedented* “volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity” (Paparone and Reed, 2008, p.66). The widespread acceptance of this thesis has important ramifications for organisational learning and leadership education, no more so than in modern militaries.

As Murray (2004) has highlighted, the “technological monism” of dominant factions within the U.S. defence sector has led them to advocate the abandonment of traditional inductive methods of learning from historical experience in favour of predominantly deductive or

assumptive methods where one can posit the future without reference to the past (ps.2-3). The educational stance of these technophiles is essentially that history, even that of the recent past, has been rendered irrelevant, and so, not worthy of space in the professional military curriculum.

This belief in ‘unprecedented change’ is not confined to the political and strategic literature. In their attempt to argue that organisational leadership in the twenty-first-century was moving from a “Newtonian paradigm” to a paradigm of “chaos”, Tetenbaum and Lawrence (2011) greatly weaken the credibility of their argument by claiming that “life moved relatively slowly in the 1700s and 1800s, such that there were few major changes to which businesses had to adapt” (p.41). The absurdity of the statement is evident through even the most cursory consideration of the impact on business during that age of factors like the industrial and agrarian revolutions, the rapid growth of cities, and the consolidation of the global economy and the emergence of new products and markets, of railways and telegraph, social and political revolution, not to mention spectacular advances in the sciences and medicine (Watson, 2006).

In a critique of each generations’ propensity to overstate the relative complexity or turbulence of their environment to that of generations past, a critique aimed squarely at the futurist writings of Toffler, Ansoff et al from the 1960s, Mintzberg (1994) noted; “environments are always changing in some dimensions and always remaining stable in others; rarely do they change all at once, let alone continuously” (p.207). This is echoed by Maharey (2013) who summed up the mega-selling Toffler output as “wrong or mistimed or self-interested” (p.30).

That the forward-looking often neglect the past is illustrated when we consider the words of a political commentator and leadership theorist writing of “the great changes and variations,

beyond human imagining, which we have experienced and experience every day”; that Machiavelli (1532/1999, p.79) wrote this of *his* contemporary environment is instructive.

By anchoring an ancient concept like wisdom to our modern notions of leadership, I am highlighting a question as to whether there is a need for the cultivation of historically minded skills and hermeneutic or interpretive perspectives in military leaders. The question regarding the nature of the wholly intellectual component of leadership (as opposed to the wholly moral or wholly physical components to which it is nonetheless inexorably bound) is whether it is a decision-oriented quality. If so, it may conform to Strayer’s idea that “learning is useful in meeting new situations, not because it provides a basis for prediction but because a full understanding of human behaviour in the past makes it possible to find familiar elements in present problems and thus makes it possible to solve them more intelligently” (Strayer quoted in, Marwick, 1970, p.18).

A significant portion of the literature reveals a pervasive infatuation with the notion that technological innovation is the prime author of complexity rather than it being one facet in the continuously complex struggle and rich tapestry that is the human experiment. Gadamer (1960/1996) illustrates the importance of considering continuity and change: “What changes forces itself far more on the attention than what remains the same...the perspectives which come from the experience of historical change are always in danger of distortion because they forget the hidden constants” (pp.xxiii-xxiv).

As Newton, Colley and Sharpe (2010) note, a key lesson from the writings of Carl von Clausewitz is the importance of distinguishing between the enduring nature of war and the transitory character of warfare. Elucidating Clausewitz, Gray (2010b) argues that while new technologies can, and do, change the character of warfare, the nature of warfare – its social, political, and emotional dimensions – remains constant. For many strategic theorists from the

Clausewitzian camp, their view of war is predicated on the idea that continuity is central to its understanding (Strachan, 2002, p.8).

One constant that can be easily forgotten when engaging with non-contemporary texts is an author's sense of themselves in 'the now'; texts composed in our past were all written in some other human's present. While certain conventions of speech, value judgments, and, particularly, scientific capacity change, the argument that the human condition remains largely constant is one that has dominated the literature on international relations since Thucydides (Doyle, 1990).

Picking a copy of Thucydides' (c.395 BCE/1972) *History of the Peloponnesian War* off the book shelf, an immediate impression conveyed by the packaging is 'ancient', 'artifact', 'museum piece'. The typeface is old; the cover shows a picture of semi-naked spear and club bearing warriors, which a picture credit tells us is a detail from a Greek vase found in the Louvre; the cover note begins, "Written four hundred years before the birth of Christ...". However, as Plattias and Koilopoulos (2010), Harloe, Morley et al. (2012), and Nation (2012) demonstrate, on engaging with the text itself we are surprised to be spoken to by a modern scholar, one every bit as conscious of the difficulties inherent in ascertaining human truths as any twenty-first-century strategic thinker.

Rather than some historical figure speaking from his present/our past, we read in Thucydides a living man, rooted in the present, with his eye on the future, fully cognisant of the continuities of the human experiment. This quality is not unique to Thucydides. Artillery Colonel Oliver Spaulding (1933) wrote of his engagement with the military texts of classical Greece and Rome:

"Their modernity...is surprising; one realizes, almost with a shock, that the ancient warrior did not know that he was an ancient warrior. He thought that he was a highly modern warrior; and after reading more we are forced to admit that he was" (p.658).

The professional literature of the post-Cold War period, until the experience of war in Afghanistan and Iraq somewhat queered the pitch, showed an infatuation with the almost utopian potential of the technological leaps of our age and the change to come from the ‘revolution in military affairs’ (Krepinevich, 1994). This led, particularly within the U.S. defence establishment, to a hubristic and “fantastical” conception of the character of future war (McMaster, 2008, p.19), one where novel technocentric concepts dressed up in the “buzzwords” and “bumper sticker” slogans of change, trumped the lessons and insights of history (Owen, 2010).

Ironically an infatuation with the technological or *material* side of war is nothing new. In lectures to the French Army at the turn of the nineteenth-century, the later Marshal Foch (1903/1918) bemoaned the overemphasis in professional military education on teaching aimed at the material aspects of war – ground, fortification, armament, organisation and administration – over the living aspects of troops in movement and action – human needs, passions, weaknesses, self-denials, capacities (pp.3-5). For Foch, the Prussian system of historically-grounded military education as shaped by Generals Scharnhorst, Clausewitz and Willisen correctly had identified that, to know and understand war, one should not confine oneself to “examining the tool which is used in warfare, and taking it to pieces in its component material parts, without taking man – who uses it – into account” (Foch, 1903/1918, p.4).

As Fuller (2003) demonstrates, an over-emphasis on change over continuity, or on continuity over change, creates a fallacious and dangerous thinking in the military profession. The latter of these, the inflexible adherence to the familiar and dismissal of technological, tactical or social innovation, has well documented historical consequences on land (Dixon, 1979, Strawson, 1989), at sea (Palmer, 2005) and in the air (Maier, 2000, Smith, 2000). The former of these faults leads to us forgetting that our predecessors were often in a similar position

with regard to new and challenging technologies, and faced up to the challenge in much the same way as we do ourselves, through trial and error, making (often costly) mistakes, improvising, and persevering.¹⁰

So, I have argued that the modern warrior inhabits a space where continuity and change meet and merge (Jablonsky, 1994, pp.4-6). This morphing of caste member and professional varies to a greater or lesser degree from service-to-service, culture-to-culture and nation-to-nation (Dzvonik, 2008). The eternal friction of change and continuity reveal themselves through an engagement with the literature of military history (Powers, 2006, Warner, 2006, p.484, Harari, 2007, Gilboy and Heginbotham, 2012, ps.xvii-xviii). Having located our modern warrior in the intersection of caste and professionalism, the notion of leadership, specifically leadership in the military, must next be examined.

The concept of leadership

In the concept of leadership, much like that of wisdom, we are faced with something nebulous and elusive, something that defies empirical attempts to define it or pin it down (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 1997, Nye, 2008). Ahn et al. (2011) note that, despite significant changes in technology and organisational modes and structures, the study of leaders and leadership has been a persisting source of interest and inquiry as societies “have evolved from tribal communities to the rise of nation-states to modern global, multinational enterprises, and multilateral institutions” (p.6). Despite a long interdisciplinary history of study dating back millennia (Perruci and McManus, 2013, p.46), and a long commitment in education to ‘teach’ the phenomenon, there is still little agreement on the nature, character, and function of leadership (Shushok and Moore, 2010, p.71).

¹⁰ Corrigan (2003) provides an engaging interpretation of this regarding the adaptation to new technologies by WWI strategists.

While one account in the late 1990s reckoned there were at least 130 different definitions of leadership in the literature (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 1997), by the mid-2000s, studies were counting at least 221 different definitions of leadership, with clear patterns of definitional focus trending from the literature of the 1920s to that of our own day (Nye, 2008). Theories of leadership are no less prolific, with studies again showing the tendency for definitions to conform at particular points in time to particular theoretical trends then current. As Collinson and Grint (2005) pointed out in the premier edition of the journal *Leadership*, despite the amount of research and expositions on leadership historically and contemporaneously, they found “little sense of any established conceptual commonality from amongst the writings, let alone a sense of community between academic leadership researchers” (p.5). They characterised leadership research as frequently fragmented at best and trivial at worst, “too often informed by the rather superficial ideas of management and academic consultants keen to peddle the latest, pre-packaged list of essential qualities deemed necessary for individual leaders and as the prescribed solution to all leadership dilemmas” (p.5).

However, despite noting that “the intellectual integrity of leadership as a legitimate and important field of study has remained open to question”, Collinson and Grint (2005) viewed leadership as such a critical element of all forms of organisation, whether formal, informal, business, public, civilian, military, historical and contemporary, that it warranted ongoing academic attention. This should be innovative, interdisciplinary and internationally focused (p.6). The international focus is particularly important because, as McDonald (2011) highlights, there has been extensive Western bias in leadership development theory and practice, hindering the development of alternate leadership exemplars, and obscuring an emerging perception that leadership development is more complicated and difficult than current approaches and theories assume (p.643).

Citing Ciulla (1998), Ahn et al. (2011) state that the focus of leadership studies is, however, not to define leadership, but to explore, “What is good leadership?” They note that the use of the word ‘good’ in this inquiry has two connotations - morally good or technically good or effective (p.9). This distinction, as has already been noted, is important.

In essence, leadership studies examine the abilities, qualities and behaviours associated with the role of controlling, dominating, directing, inspiring or manipulating a group.¹¹ While most of these terms may seem anathema to popular conceptions of *transformational* (Burns, 1978), *servant* (Greenleaf, 1977) or, say, *ethical* leadership (Grace, 1999), they are qualities that leap out from the pre-academic leadership scholarship that is the great canon of human histories, biographies, mythos, and literature. The leadership we encounter in *The Iliad* or *Odyssey*, that Thucydides presents in *The Peloponnesian War*, Machiavelli instructs on in *The Prince*, or Shakespeare constructs and deconstructs in *Henry V* or *Julius Caesar*, represents the perennial moral or ethical debate on the good action, and the consideration of ends, ways and means (Kaplan, 2002, Grayling, 2006). As Kellerman (2004) reminds us, until relatively recently, leadership was not a moral concept (p.45), ‘bad leadership’ being more associated with weakness than moral bearing (p.42).

Fundamental to a discussion of the phenomenon of leadership is the genetic theory of leadership (Page and Miller, 2002, p.16), including the question of whether leaders are born or made (Brungardt, 1997, Johnson et al., 1998, McDermott et al., 2011, Yammarino, 2013). The pre-modern justification for the exclusive selection of officers from the aristocracy was the underlying belief that people from a particular class congenitally possessed the desired traits for leadership, in the case of monarch-soldiers, their gifts the product of some ongoing, transcendental process of negotiation between them and the metaphysical powers-that-be

¹¹ Hackett (1983) asserted that, “military leadership has always been...manipulative. What has changed in our generation is the material, but only in accident, not in essence...The method of manipulation has tended to change” (p.223).

(Bendix, 1978). As Grint (2000) has noted, this essentially traits-based approach emphasises the selection of leaders rather than their development (p.2).

While Bendix (1978) shows how the influence of post-Enlightenment thinkers like Rousseau eventually came to irrevocably challenge the hegemony of the luckily-born few over the now-educated many – as Carlyle (1872) put it, “nature could no longer produce great men” (p.187) – Carpenter (2005) has argued that the trait theory of leadership endured as a concept for examining military leadership until relatively recently. In their study of the models of leadership typically emphasised in U.S. Marine Corps leadership training and education, Page and Miller (2002) claim trait models as the foundation of Marine Corps ideas on leadership, the remaining notable models – behavioural, contingent or situational, normative, developmental, transformative, and servant - being more or less congruent with enduring Marine Corps thought.

I look at the concept of professionalism in more depth in due course, but it is worth noting here Huntington’s (1957/1981) assertion that one of the key factors in the development of a modern, professional military was that aristocratic birth as a requirement for officership was abolished. For New Zealand’s military, WWII was a watershed in this regard. Scholars like Tonkin-Covell (2003) have highlight the transition in domestic military leadership from a land-owning, ‘home-country’-centric, muscular elite, to the ‘home-grown’ variety of leadership represented by the post-Kippenberger-era’s emergence of a distinct national identity.

As Dunnigan (2003) points out, nations have historically selected their military leaders on the basis of their military traditions, experience and perceived needs (p.302). I have noted that the oldest approach is to select candidates from the upper or ruling classes. This approach only tends to be consistently effective where there also exists a career service corps of

professional Non-Commissioned Officers – think of the Roman Centurion or British Sergeant-Major - who know how to run an army (Dunnigan, 2003, p.300).

The three other approaches to leadership selection are what Dunnigan (2003) terms “trial by experience”, “trial by examination”, and “trial by fire”. The first, used notably in Israel, sees a single tiered entry point for all soldiers, with potential officers selected from the ranks and promoted based on performance at each level of command. Once potential officers are identified, they are given a technical and academic military education. In the “trial by examination” approach, most rigorously used in the Russian ‘scientific’ approach to leadership, promotion is based on candidates excelling in written examinations (ps.297, 300-1). “Trial by fire” is the system that “naturally” emerges in wartime. As Dunnigan (2003) puts it, “in the hazardous atmosphere of combat, only the competent survive” (p.301).

While the roll of history has revealed the pros and cons of all of these approaches, the huge array of variables that impact on the performance of military leadership greatly impede our ability to reduce the selection, education and success of leaders to scientifically quantifiable terms (Blumenson and Stokesbury, 1975, ps.1-3). As Grint (2000) has posited, leadership is simply not accessible to purely scientific approaches (p.4). This is largely because, the waning of the popularity of its theory aside (Lorsch, 2010) due to its lack of strong empirical support (Yukl, 2011), leadership is dependent on internal and external contingencies. Over the personal and professional contingencies a leader has some limited control. Over the external ones – time, space and environment – the leader will have even less (Blumenson and Stokesbury, 1975, p.2).

I highlight this because, despite the questionable assumptions about leadership education and development that Kellerman (2012) has so provocatively challenged, I believe, as does she, that leadership education and development is both possible, and worth pursuing. To better

understand the context being studied, the unique aspects of military leadership will now be more closely considered.

The distinctiveness of military leadership

Despite the willingness of paragons of generalship like Omar Bradley to emphasise the commonalities of military and business leadership (1972, p.3), military leadership has some important differences from leadership in business or the public sector – this despite the literature extolling the management lessons of Alexander, Jengiz Khan, or Horatio Nelson.

As *Command – The Australian Way* (Meecham, 2000) would have it:

“Only military commanders have the authority to commit soldiers, sailors and airmen to battle, in circumstances that are likely to endanger their lives. Only military commanders have the awesome responsibility for difficult decisions involving lethal and organised force, for which they will be held accountable” (p.6).

Wong, Bliese and McGurk (2003) show in their review of the military leadership literature, this centrality of the management of violence, combined with the separate legal structure, the long and resonant tradition, culture and history of military leadership give it unique and distinguishable characteristics from other professions.

In addition to these overt differences, Ulmer (1998) identifies four other organisational factors that emphasise the civil/military divide. First are the virtually unique ‘unlimited liability’ employment contracts and the development of ‘organisational goals’ that implicitly involve a threat to the life of individual, and teams of, employees. Second, all senior military leaders are promoted from within the ranks of the organisation. Third, the exceptions of social breakdown aside, countries only have one army, air force, or navy; exiting the organization means exiting the profession (pp.8-9).

Finally, unlike the civilian world where “young people...often wait five to ten years for opportunities to head a project team or be responsible for an office of 20-40 people”, most

young officers are “exposed to command and staff relationships and resource management early on” (Ulmer, 1998, p.9). I come back to this distinction when I examine my findings and conclusions; suffice for now to say that it can be inferred that this distinction means that the learnings from leadership literature may have more immediate applicability and relevance, and be more easily comprehended, critiqued and/or assimilated for entrant officers than for neophytes in other professions.

On top of these distinctions, and crucially for this study, the military profession is unique in that its leaders ultimately train for a context that they may never experience and a role they rarely get to practice (Montgomery, 1968, p.21). For the defence forces of most post-modern nation states, military leadership is usually learned in an “experiential vacuum”, peacetime leadership being the norm for most of the post-WWII period, but wartime leadership being the gold standard that history judges the military leader by (Dunnigan, 2003, p.295).¹² It is arguable that, whereas most public and private sector leaders can learn from their mistakes as they go and grow accordingly, when a military leader makes a mistake in the context that matters most to his or her profession, only other leaders will have the opportunity to learn from those mistakes (Blumenson and Stokesbury, 1975, ps.361-374).

Military leadership can be defined through the concept of command. Shamir (2011) views the function of command, and the development of a chain of command, as an evolutionary step beyond leadership in civilisation’s progress from tribal warfare to military organisation (p.9). Blumenson and Stokesbury (1975) state that command has two basic elements: authority and responsibility. The commander exercises authority over subordinates through rank or assigned position; the commander is held responsible by superior command for everything

¹² In contrast, General Sir John Hackett (1983) argued that, in spite of the absence of some of the “deeper stresses” found in wartime, the management of a major military unit was, “in many respects” more difficult in peacetime. This was due both to the financial constraints in peacetime and the need to keep up with the administrative and human resource management processes that are largely dispensed with during active service (ps.215-6).

done under that authority (p.363). Reid (1998) defined command as “the totality of military activity; it is about recognizing what needs to be done and acting decisively to do it” (p.112).

For Pigeau and McCann (2002) command is inherently a creative activity, the structures and processes of military doctrine and operational policy requiring change, adaptation, alteration, interpretation and, sometimes, even re-invention to suit the evolving needs of the military situation. Solving the multitude of unanticipated problems, both large and small, that together can impede mission objectives, requires creativity (p.55).

The correlation between command and phronesis is emphasised by Hankinson (2011) in his conception of commander as judge. In this conception, commanders use their experience and deep knowledge together to weigh up the conflicting evidence and then to arrive at “right” or good decisions – ones that may simply minimise extant risks – and then see these through to their conclusion. These decisions are communicated as their command intent, which become the guiding light for their subordinates to follow (p.38).

Defining command as the “creative expression of human will necessary to accomplish a mission”, Pigeau and McCann (1995), critical of the cybernetic, ‘human as computer’ perspectives of much of the literature on command and control, stress the uniquely human qualities and attributes of command.¹³ Emphasising these human qualities, Dempsey (2012) views command through the prism of ‘trust’, both internal and external. Internal trust, “integral to the chain of command”, is the bond between senior and subordinate and extends vertically and laterally in both directions. External trust is the bond between the military profession and the government and people they serve (p.4).

¹³ In a rare commentary on his personal experience of war, Sir Michael Howard memorably described one commander as “a mobile service station moving among his troops and filling them up with courage”. Quoted in Strachan (2002, p.2).

Leadership, or rather a deficit of it, is a prime concern of contemporary institutions, armies and their sister services not the least of these. Every year the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute publishes a *Key Strategic Issues List* (KSIL). The list is designed to give researchers, both military professionals and civilian scholars, "a ready reference" of the strategic issues of particular interest to the U.S. defence community at any particular time (Lovelace, 2007,p.V) and seeks to form "a critical link in an ongoing research cycle" by connecting researchers with potential defence sponsors (Lovelace, 2007, p.V).

The KSIL seeks to present a list balanced between issues relating to matters of foremost and immediate concern, and issues that, while overshadowed, might have the potential to create future challenges. Thus, while strategic questions arising from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been prominent, theatre questions from a multitude of smaller recent operations get prominent billing.

In the KSIL that I have studied since my research began, leadership has featured prominently. While the mooted research questions vary from list to list, a leader education commonality can be ascertained. "The future Army...will require...increased cultural sensitivity. How should the Army proceed to make this a reality?" (Lovelace, 2007, p.41); How can the Army "address the significant moral-ethical challenges it will face in the future?" (Lovelace, 2008, p.131), "assess efforts to identify, manage, and sustain the Army's intellectual...talent" and "assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities military leaders require in complex contingences and/or stability operations" (Lovelace, 2009, p.9); and "assess the moral and ethical implications of civilian casualties with regard to decision-making in contemporary war" (Echevarria, 2012, p.10).

A review of the KSIL over time lends weight to the findings of military sociologists like Nuciari (2007) and Caforio (2007) that, while the physical and technical qualities of military

leadership are every bit as important as ever, the post-modern operating environment requires a professional military education that is as humanistic as it is technocratic.

For Linn (2009), the source of leadership deficiencies in the U.S. military in the post-Vietnam era was that the educational culture of the professional military education system had evolved into more of a training and indoctrination culture largely producing officers with a technocentric “engineering, business management” approach to war. Linn (2009) considered that the graduates of this system found most utility in the deductive methods of learning, those that downplay the utility of the past as a teacher.

Carforio (2007) tracks the technocratic training model for officers to the immediate post-WWII era when the evolution of weapons technologies and scientific discoveries, particularly nuclear energy, had led to the conviction that officers had to be prepared principally in the mathematical sciences. Heavily influenced by U.S. military hegemony, a science-dominated educational model “took root and spread”, complementary to the weaponry, and the tactical and strategic deployment models of the Cold War. This left little room for humanistic subjects (ps.89-90). As Linn (2009) points out, while the military blocs in the West and East were training and preparing for a strategic level confrontation in the Fulda Gap, the strategic corridor from East Germany to Frankfurt, the actual wars being fought were of a very different character.

Writing about the period between the end of the Cold War and prior to the invasion of Iraq, Morgan (2003) identified five major changes that characterise postmodern militaries. These should theoretically influence the education and training of its leaders. These were: the structural and cultural overlap of civilian and military spheres; a decreasing sense of difference within the military based on branch, rank, or role; moving from war fighting to

non-traditional missions; more missions authorised by international bodies; and the internationalisation of military forces (p.373).

Ten years on, Hajjar (2013) sees changes in the postmodern military in terms of cultural developments, highlighting: the impact of the “global growth of ambiguity”; the quickening acceptance of multiculturalism; information age and new technologies; substantial growth of military civilians; an increase in the questioning of authority and ideas; and emergence of a “multi-mission military”. Central to, and, paradoxically, unaffected by, these changes is the warrior identity (ps.2-3).

Regardless of the differences expressed by writers from Morgan (2003) to Hajjar (2013), the continuities highlight challenges for leadership development in the armed forces. These can be summarised using criteria from Caforio (2007), Dauber (2009), Pfaff (2011), Shulman (2012) and Outzen (2013) as:

- Decision-making processes have shifted towards lower levels of the hierarchy
- Even small units find themselves interacting with units of other nations that often exhibit quite different professional ethical codes, value systems and military preparedness
- Inter-cultural awareness is paramount
- Officers have to deal with different rules of engagement from one operation to another
- Officers have to interact more with civilian officials of international organisations and therefore need to develop political nous
- This interaction includes cooperation with nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), whose ideologies and operational methods can be quite different from those of the military

- A 24/7 ‘mainstream’ media hungry for content, the availability of new, accessible, media capture and manipulation devices, and the rise of YouTube and social media, means that every officer is a permanently in the business of public relations
- The consequences of military action at all levels are now political and, potentially, globally resonating
- A high-tempo operational environment is now commonplace, with personal and family ramifications for all.

Essentially, these points all boil down to a need for military leaders to be developed in a manner that facilitates the ability to make sufficiently informed decisions.

Decision-making

A common thread running through the literature singles out decision making as the keystone skill of military leadership (Richardson and Freidin, 1956, Blumenson and Stokesbury, 1975, Keegan, 1991, Palmer, 2005). In a practical sense, officers are commissioned to face and solve problems that will be in the best interests of their soldiers and their nation. Some of these decisions will be routine and the solution apparently obvious; some will be hugely complex and seemingly impossible to resolve. But all will require a decision, the choice of a course of action, including, as the Chinese military classics show us, that choosing to take ‘no action’ is a decision too (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012).

While the concept of ‘strategic thinking’ is commonly referenced in a range of organisational and situational contexts, for the Cold War period, strategic thinking was situated at the apex of the government-academic policy interface (Kaplan, 1973). During the course of the Cold War and the Damoclean spectre of ‘the bomb’ (Kennedy, 1961), decision making in war, particularly at the strategic level, came to be viewed through the theoretical lenses of decision theory, game theory, bargaining theory and strategic analysis (Kaplan, 1973).

While the literature on decision theory and game theory has been an important part of strategy since the dawn of the nuclear age (Dixit and Nalebuff, 2008, ps.ix-xiii), I have not drawn on it for this research. The sheer complexity of the body of theory aside, I have also chosen to gravitate more to the school of thought that regards decision making in complex and crisis situations as less an exact science than, as Herring (1995) describes it, “an inexact art of judgement” (p.251).

Pois and Langer (2004) point out that, while there are psychological factors and circumstances that can contribute to, and impact on, decision making in any professional context, the remarkable degrees of stress that weigh upon decision making in a military context distinguish it somewhat from other professions (p.217).¹⁴ While Boin et al (2005) appear to suggest that decision making in the tactical or operational arena is much greater than that at the political, it should be reasonable to suggest that the psychological pressures on military decision-makers are comparable only to, and superseded by, the psychological pressures on all-too-human political leaders as documented for example by Margach (1979) or Owen (2007, 2008).

Highlighting the conflicting psychological factors affecting military leaders in war, Pois and Langer (2004) note the often simultaneous impacts of decision-making that will result in the immediate mass slaughter of humans, friend and foe, the future reputation of the decision-maker in the one context that has been trained and prepared for, and the overwhelming desire to succeed in this most crucial context (pp.216-218).

Writing in the inter-war period, the then Colonel de Gaulle (1932/1960) stated that, “the essential role...which a military commander is called upon to play, is that of assessing the

¹⁴ While it is acknowledged that medical and legal professionals, for example, have to frequently make decisions that have significant and thus weighty, consequences, these are usually done on an individual or localised level and thus the resonance of their broader social impact is moot.

conditions of every special case as it occurs” (p.79). Discussing this in depth, de Gaulle emphasised the importance to the commander’s ability to make effective decisions through the development of flexible doctrine. De Gaulle warned of the ever-present danger of doctrine becoming dogma, and the misery caused through the years through the inflexible thinking, the mental paralysis caused by the slide into dogma from improperly drawn ‘lessons’ from previous wars and conflicts (ps.79-101).

De Gaulle (1932/1960) attributed the power of the French Revolutionary army to its rejection of dogma. Of Napoleon’s style of decision making he wrote:

“The whole of Napoleon’s method of procedure in the field was firmly based on three essentials: to grasp the situation, to adapt himself to it, and to exploit it to his own advantage. There is not the faintest hint in any of his plans or orders of generalised theory” (p.83).

As Hazareesingh (2004) has shown, the literature on Napoleon is so immense, and the legend so daunting, it can be difficult to focus away from the ‘god of war’, and onto the human commander. While *le petit caporal* was an amazing, and thankfully rare, force of nature, his command skills were also, as he freely admitted himself, the product of intense study and concentration. In contrast to de Gaulle’s hagiography, Napoleon acknowledged that he was a great assimilator of other men’s ideas and had no use for “the mind unformed by study” (Blumenson and Stokesbury, 1975, p.16).

Through their research, Wong, Gerras et al (2003) determined that the ability to operate effectively at the strategic level of command required a foundation of competence that had been laid down in the early stages of the officer’s career and continually built on through assignment change and career progression (p.9). A key factor for Wong, Gerras et al (2003) in this competency development was lifelong professional reading in breadth and depth. While they asserted that this reading should be initially grounded in military history and theory, competency would only fully develop with broader, interdisciplinary reading (ps.7 &

11). If, as French Army doctrine claims, “command is timeless” (Zeigler, 2011, p.5), it might follow from this that studying command only in contemporary settings might risk the oversight of important, enduring lessons.

Summary

In this chapter I began my examination of the conceptual framework by considering the components ‘wisdom’, ‘the modern warrior’, and ‘leadership’. Through the concept of practical wisdom, the consideration of the influencing forces on the modern warrior and the distinctive nature of military leadership, this portion of the literature review has illustrated the research topic from one perspective. This is the modern warrior-leader, a product of both past and present, in pursuit of the skill essential for command: the ability to make wise decisions.

To advance my thesis, I now need to use the conceptual framework to examine the intellectual component of this command skill and how it is developed.

CHAPTER FOUR: READING THE CANON

“Who reads must choose, since there is literally not enough time to read everything, even if one does nothing but read” (Bloom, 1994, p.15).

In this chapter I consider the research topic through a second perspective, that of the development of the intellectual component of military leadership through reading. I do this through a consideration of the concept of ‘critical literacies’ and the development of these intellectual skills through reading, before examining the idea of ‘canon’, the mooted concept of core, immutable texts.

I complete the chapter by linking hermeneutics back to our philosophical introduction to phronesis, warrior and the development of leadership intellectually. I do this with reference to the ‘philosopher of war’ Carl von Clausewitz, a thinker whose magnum opus has been included on lists of ‘great books’ beyond the military realm (Seymour-Smith, 2001).

Reading and critical literacies

Ulijn and Salager-Meyer (1998) argue that learning, whether in formal, informal or non-formal settings,¹⁵ largely depends on information derived from texts, and that it is the ability to read that governs an individual’s quest for, and acquisition of, knowledge (p.80). Literacy pioneer Marie Clay (1979) defined reading as a “message gaining, problem-solving activity, which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced” (p.6). Clay saw the art and act of reading as an extraordinarily complex activity which functions in an irreducible yet fundamentally integrated way with the other human-brain sensory-operative processes. For Ulijn and Salager-Meyer (1998) reading is “a form of human cognition the ultimate goal of which is comprehension” (p.80).

¹⁵ I distinguish these three terms in *Chapter Five*.

Apart from our “chief tutor”, practical experience, Grayling (2001) considers reading, when engaged in actively and attentively, a vital means of developing the practical intellect associated with wisdom (p.179). Critical for this study is the link between the reading function and the predictive function. As “prediction is a method of asking questions and a means of eliminating alternatives”, we “read with anticipation...to read with comprehension” (Clay, 1979, p.6). This process corresponds with the predictive aspect of command where, pending the production of further information, commanders must make anticipatory decisions (Ziegler, 2011).

I have used Clay to provide some context in which to consider reading. Despite its seemingly intrinsic place in the phenomenon of being a modern, educated human, defining reading is not a simple exercise. Smith (1978) notes that reading, like many other ‘simple’ words in our language, has a multiplicity of meaning. What reading means on any particular occasion will largely depend on the context in which it occurs (p.102). Rather than a “mere set of skills”, reading is a complex phenomenon inextricably inter-related to writing, the broader concept of language, and the personal and social conditions that lie beyond being merely ‘literate’ (Johnston et al., 2010).

For this research the term ‘reading’ is an enigma, subsuming ideas like: what it is to be literate; the relationship of reading to comprehension and that to the visual and non-visual information we process as part of the reading process; and the relationship of language to the nature of meaning. This last point has vexed some of the greatest minds of the last century (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, pp.283-6, Edmonds and Eidinow, 2001); I explore it no further here other than to highlight two points.

First, as Wolf (2007) demonstrates, language is universal and stretches back to the earliest points of human development. All humans, special individual circumstances excepted,

acquire and use language. However, writing and reading came much later (interestingly for this study, later than the phenomenon of war) and are not universal. Not all humans acquire writing and reading and not all cultures developed it.¹⁶ Furthermore some cultures developed and other cultures co-opted writing and reading (Powell, 2009).

Secondly, meaning is not something that a reader derives *from* language, but rather brings *to* language. The difference is critical, implying as it does that reading is not some passive activity but one involving “complex intellectual processes that must always be actively initiated and directed by the reader” (Smith, 1978, p.9). As Ong (1977) has claimed, reading and writing have “restructured consciousness” and created new “interior distances within the psyche” (p.17).

Thus ‘books’ and ‘reading’, are terms that cover “many different levels of reflexion” (Gadamer, 1960/1996 p.29). All books are similar in the sense that they share a common format, but, as Smith (1978) notes, while reading different books involves employing the same initial neural processes and cognitive skills, reading a complex treatise on strategic theory say requires the engaging of higher perceptive gears than does an engagement with a work of popular escapist fiction (p.103). Adler (1940) came up with a matrix for considering the relationship between types of *reading*, *learning* and *books*.

For Adler, *Reading II* (A) is related more closely to *Books I*, and *Reading II* (B) is related more closely to *Books II* (p.114). Answering Tristram Shandy’s question “Shall we forever make new books, as apothecaries make new mixtures, by pouring out of only one vessel into another” (Sterne, 1759/1996, p.241), Adler believed that *for understanding* we should engage with *original communications* (p.114).

¹⁶ A related point to this illustrated by Janks (2010) is that many languages do not have a word for ‘literacy’ or ‘illiteracy’ (p.1).

	Types of Reading		Types of Learning
I	For amusement	I	By discovery: without teachers
II	For knowledge A. For information B. For understanding	II	By instruction: through aid of teachers A. By live teachers: lectures, listening B. By dead teachers: books, reading
	Types of Books		
I	Digests and repetitions of other books		
II	Original communications		

Table One: Adler's reading matrix

These original communications are problematic. For Adler (1940), these texts are a source of 'truth', but one that requires hard work, interpretation, time and prior knowledge to elicit.

This would seem to imply the existence of a fixed or proper meaning within a text and clear authorial intent towards it. However, as Mailloux (1995) argues, interpretation – an act directed simultaneously toward a text and for an audience (p.121) – is always an argument at “particular moments in specific places to certain audiences” (p.135). And then there is the problem of intention.

Considering the historical literary and legal discourse, Patterson (1995) demonstrates the challenge posed by the attempt to conceptualise authorial intent. For Valdés (1998), while literature is acknowledged for its capacity to make sense of certain aspects of human experience, 'meaning' is a problematic construction, part of the more general problem of language as a collectively generated, but individually realised, mode (p.4). I leave this avenue of inquiry to the literature on semantics and semiotics.

Reading involves much more than the picking up of *visual* information – e.g. the letters or pictographs on a page – by the eyes, and the subsequent processing of this data by the brain.

Reading relies on the presence of *nonvisual* information – e.g. prior ability in reading, familiarity with the language presented, and familiarity with the subject matter – already in the brain prior to the reading experience (Smith, 1978, p.13). Generally, but particularly so when the reading experience has some contextual purpose, prior reading creates foundational content, thematic threads, and the derived experiences we term knowledge, and leaves what Birkerts (2010) terms the ‘residues’ and ‘resonances’ (p.40) of authorial intent.

What is occurring is assimilative learning – that is learning by addition, growth through the gradual build-up of knowledge and experience (Illeris, 2009). Wolf and Barzillai (2009) note that reading propels comprehension through an array of sophisticated processes that include inferential and deductive reasoning, analogical skills, critical analysis, reflection, and insight (p.33). While Wolf and Barzillai (2009) refer to these processes as ‘deep reading’, I refer to them as the components of critical literacy discussed presently.

To be human is to be the product of biological, neurophysiological, cultural, linguistic, social and historical developments (Wenger, 2009, p.216). However, at the heart of the human condition lies learning. That we all learn is self-evident. However the details of learning – the how, when, what and why of this phenomena – are, despite millennia of inquiry, still a matter for research and debate (Moore, 2012). The learning landscape is a grand vista with many paths for exploration.

For this study, reading needs to be considered for both its influence on the individual and on the organisation, in this case militaries. Bibliotherapy, the therapeutic use of books to solve personal problems, is practiced widely by psychiatrists and psychologists (Jackson, 2001). Despite this popularity, there is little definitive research on the psychological impact of reading on individuals (Adams and Pitre, 2000, Levitt et al., 2009).

Koch (1994) has shown how reading impacts on the political interests and activities of students, while Campbell and Smith (2003) have examined the actual impacts of self-help books on stimulating personal change. Research like that by Jackson (2001) and Mains and Scogin (2003) has shown the impact of reading on mental discipline and emotional adjustment and the therapeutic value of targeted reading on some disorders. Taken as a whole, this particular body of literature suggests that engagement with text has a short-term impact on cognitive make-up. The long-term impact of reading on humanity has been considered in another body of literature.

The part writing and reading has played in the development of human society has been explored in recent years through the different approaches of Manguel (1997), Man (2002), Wolf (2007), and Dehaene (2009). We learn from these collective works that the development of reading and writing coincides with the rise of settled technological cultures and the development of the trappings of culture that go beyond the foundational human accessories of clothing, jewellery, idolatry, and basic weaponry. Human development to this point in time seems to have been dependant on a socially, culturally, technologically and economically innovative elite who, through the mastery of reading and writing, took conceptual intelligence to new ideas of idea generation and application. Writing and reading, and human advancement go hand in hand.

As Chandler (1974) notes, settled civilisation and the move from purely tribal to more organised, formal, *professionalised* violence (war) are contemporaneous (p.21), the earliest records of civilisation showing that thoughtful humans have long struggled to bring some theoretical order to, and derive applicable lessons from, the “great bloody confusion of war” (Dupuy, 1992, p.9). This is the context to which I am applying the conceptual framework.

Critical literacy

In the consideration of canon, I highlight the ideas of the educational perennialists. An educational movement allied, if not subsidiary, to the perennialists was the notion of essentialism. Prominently propounded by Bagley (1934, 1938), the essentialist call for a ‘renewed’ focus on reading, writing, and arithmetic (Moss and Lee, 2010), remains a powerful education policy debate today, as illustrated by the intense debate surrounding the introduction of National Standards in New Zealand primary schools in the late 2000s by the National Party-led government (Trevett, 2011, Hawke and Simpson, 2011).

This debate is usually framed using conceptual approaches to literacy. Before I outline the conception of critical literacy I ground this study in, I must distinguish this from three other approaches to literacy: the functional; that from Critical Literacy Theory (CLT); and the related theories that engage with the idea of leadership literacies. As Jank (2010) has shown in her study of literacy and power, these competing approaches, centred on theoretical arguments about whether literacy is a cognitive skill or a social practice,¹⁷ have contributed to an unproductive academic discourse widely termed the “literacy wars” (p.xiii). This rancorous debate mirrors the debate on canon.

Thompson and Gadd (2006) define functional literacy as the ability to understand, respond to, and use those forms of language that are required by societies and valued by individuals and communities. This functional perspective appears to frame literacy as a social good, something of benefit to all. On closer examination however the definition reveals the source of the social tension between the functional and the CLT perspective.

In Thompson and Gadd’s (2006) definition, there is an implicit hierarchy of importance in the sequence of “required by societies” and “valued by individuals and communities”, and a

¹⁷ Jank (2010) herself considers literacy to be both cognitive skill *and* social practice.

distinct separation of ‘society’ from ‘individuals and communities’. While not implying any sinister motive on the part of the authors, the definition has been framed disingenuously.

Interpreting the definition, ‘society’ is a euphemism for financial markets, employer elites and professional politics, and ‘individuals and communities’ a meaningless conflation of the differing socio-cultural and economic groupings that make up nations in the West. Functional literacy could here be more honestly framed using a term like ‘useful to employers’.

Literacy as an ideological issue or construct, and one linked to prevailing power structures, is the CLT perspective (Pahl and Rowsell, 2011, p.130). For critical literacy theorists then a functionally literate individual is therefore one who can function *for* the dominant paradigm. In contrast, for CLT, to be critically literate is to be able to read texts in an active, reflexive manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships (Coffey, 2008); a function *in resistance to* the dominant paradigm.

For Luke (2012) the classical questions of critical literacy ask, “What is “truth”? How is it presented and represented, by whom, and in whose interests? Who should have access to which images and words, texts, and discourses? For what purposes?” (p.4). In CLT, critical literacy aims to empower the marginalised and, crucially, as Pahl and Rowsell (2011) note, aims for the “interrogation” of canonical texts (p.131), canon viewed as the elite preserve its critics claim for it.

First expounded by Friere (1970/2007) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a work written using Marxian class analysis, the critical literacy of CLT is positioned within a critical socio-political context, the functionally literate oppressed transcending their marginalisation through a critically literate interrogation and demystification of the texts of the powerful (Lee, 2011).

Responding to Grint's (2005) conception of leadership as a social construction (p.1473), and building on social complexity theories like Complexity Leadership Theory (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007, Uhl-Bien and Marion, 2011), Dynamic Complexity Theory (Chia, 1998), and Complex Adaptive Leadership (Obolensky, 2010), Davis (2012) developed a Leadership Literacies Framework to create an alternative cognitive frame through which to engage, think about, and consider the place of leadership. Key to the framework is "the power of language and its role as a signifier of underlying mindsets and cognitive frames that influence leadership" (p.73). Davis aligns with Fairhurst's (2009) view that critical theorists and discursive scholars understand that "language does not mirror reality, but constitutes it" (p. 1608).

In contrast to the three approaches to literacy outlined above, I approach the issue from a different perspective. While functional literacy has, for a variety of reasons benign or self-serving, long been of interest to our context, the armed services (Lloyd, 1950, Persyn and Polson, 2012), its attainment by the rank and file is a concern *for*, not *of*, officers, and therefore outside the interest of this inquiry. While there is some conceptual fellowship between the critical literacy of CLT and that from my conception, a key, and for proponents of CLT probably, crucial, point separates us: critical literacy for me is a class- and value-neutral concept.

While Lee (2011) has argued that critical literacy and critical thinking are radically different constructs (p.97), a claim that is undoubtedly correct *from a CLT perspective*, as I outline in the introduction, I bring a strategic studies and leadership perspective to bear on the notion of literacy. While Davis' (2012) Leadership Literacy construct is attractive, it views literacy through a CLT lens and holds a foundational viewpoint derived from Hames (2007), that is repugnant to the thesis I am advancing. This is that twenty-first-century conditions are likely to call for "different ways of thinking about, and enacting, leadership than those that may have served in the past" (p.73).

From these perspectives, critical literacy, over and above those sophisticated processes that propel comprehension (Wolf and Barzillai, 2009), is a catch-all term I use to encompass the higher order of literacies that go hand-in-hand with higher order thinking. Higher order thinking skills have been much considered since the committee led by Bloom (1956) first published the eponymous Learning Taxonomy. Since that influential work other theorists like Ennis (1962, 1991, 1993) on critical thinking, Biggs and Collis (1982) and their Structure of Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO) Taxonomy, and Ackoff (1989), who codified the venerable ‘knowledge pyramid’ from a knowledge management perspective (Rowley, 2007, p.165), have used a variety of models to explain the hierarchy of learning.

The Knowledge Pyramid, or DIKW Model as illustrated by Rowley (2007, p.164) and in *Figure Thirteen*, is of interest to this inquiry, representing wisdom as it does at the pinnacle of a hierarchy of functional relationships between qualitative information typologies. Despite its popularity among information and data management theorists, as Rowley (2007) notes, the DIKW Model is widely believed to have its origins in T.S. Eliot’s 1934 poem *The Rock* where he asks:

*Where is the wisdom that we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge that we have lost in information?* (p.166)

Figure Thirteen: The knowledge pyramid

By this representation, to be wise is a state of substantive essence or cognisance beyond being merely knowledgeable. Across the range of traditionally considered literacies – *write, read, listen, speak* – adults at the highest levels of proficiency have a broad range of skills and abilities including: a vocabulary that includes many general academic words and specialised words; using strategies to analyse ideas and information and to reflect critically on surface meanings and underlying meanings; evaluating the validity (truth) of information in relation to the writer’s purpose and/or the reader’s purpose; and integrating prior knowledge with new information within and across several different texts to deepen understanding (TEC, 2009).

What these traditional conceptions of higher literacies lack however is a correlate to action, an implicit recognition that while one might attain the attributes of the literate, this is of little practical utility if one also hasn’t attained the symbiotic cognitive, moral and physical attributes necessary to function in the human environment (Jank, 2010). For this research, critical literacies encompass a breadth of open-ended concepts now readily familiar from the growing leadership development literature within strategic studies.

These inter-related critical literacies include: the early modern concept of *Coup D’Oeil* or strategic insight (Duggan, 2005); the creative thinking skills that allow the manipulation of ends, ways and means in the abstract (Kelly and Brennan, 2009); the skills of critical analysis that challenge the creative process and allow for the implementation of change (Echevarria, 2006); the contextual thinking skills that help reveal the forces, situations and processes that intersect to shape particular environments (Mancini and Roberto, 2009); and the arts of strategic thinking, the disciplined cognitive processes (Yarger, 2006, p.2) that allow one to “think dynamically in time and place” (McElhatton, 2008b, pp.14-18).¹⁸

¹⁸ I previously unpacked this definition as “the ability to observe and conceive material and metaphysical objects in motion simultaneously through time and space...the ability to make abstract deductions about the likely behaviour of objects and forces as they relate to self over time in a manner more prescient than the human

So far I have used the conceptual framework to connect our actor, the military leader, with our action, professional reading, and its teleology, the attainment of wisdom. The route towards apex of the knowledge pyramid and the attainment of wisdom indicates that critical literacies distinguish reading in its most basic form – the simple processing of information – from its more complex form – the interpretation of knowledge. This brings us to the sources of knowledge as seen in Adler’s reading matrix; the key books he dubbed ‘dead teachers’.

Canon

When Thucydides (c.395 BCE/1972) illuminates our understanding of *hoplite* tactics through his description of, say, the battle of Delium (pp.321-5) he has added to our academic knowledge, something ‘nice to know’. However when, in the Melian Dialogue (pp.400-8), he presents a troubling and perplexing case study on might and right, the comparative flaws of regimes, and the brutal logic of war, he gives us something “permanently life-enhancing” (Cartledge, 1986, p.11); we are confronted with a ‘need to know’ about the enduring character of power relations. If the idea is entertained that some books have some intrinsic and timeless power, some fundamental and enduring message to impart, we begin to approach the idea of *canon*.

Putting its theological origin and associated ‘negative’ principles aside until later in this section, we have in the ‘positive’ notion of canon a belief that “books not only define lives, civilisations, and collective identities, they also have the power to shape events and nudge the course of history” (Basbanes, 2006 p.13). Canon reaches across disciplines embracing works old and of more recent vintage from science, literature, political science, philosophy, and strategy.

average. It is contemplative but is *in time* rather than *in hindsight*. [Its] mark is that it works when it is most needed, it is singularly adaptive”.

Canon has been particularly embraced by leadership studies (Grint, 1997, Humphreys and Einstein, 2003, Wren et al., 2004, Abbott, 2010, Fraiberg, 2010, Kellerman, 2010, Shushok and Moore, 2010, Wilson, 2013), the interdisciplinary sources of canon providing a “new means of addressing the ineffable, aesthetic aspects of human activity” (Moreland et al., 2010, p.69). This is an acknowledgment that mastering an understanding of what the Latin poet Prudentius (C.392 CE/2002) called the *psychomacia* – the struggle within the ‘soul’ or human condition – is key to being able to operate effectively socially, organisationally, and inter-personally.

The idea of canon is not limited to works that directly touched the multitude. As I have previously noted on the Chinese military classics (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012), there are works “though only read by a few in their time...were read all the same by an important few, and thus altered the way humanity views the world” (Basbanes, 2006 p.13). This original sense of canon is that it indicated that a work was worthy of academic study (Johnson, 2005, p.201).

Downs (1983) asserts that certain books have exerted a profound influence on history, culture, civilisation and scientific thought throughout recorded time. This idea hides within it something more fundamental and profound; that writing, and the codices or ‘books’ that developed from it, is one of the handful of basic tools essential for large numbers of people to live together, a building block of civilisation (Watson, 2006, p.100).

For Hutchins (1952), the history of ideas as transmitted through the written word is “the great conversation” of humankind. Hutchins is an important figure in the consideration of canon being, along with his colleague at the University of Chicago, Mortimer Adler, both a founder of the ‘great books’ movement, and an influential member of the school of educational philosophy that underpinned the idea of great books and canon, educational perennialism.

Educational perennialism

Curtis and Boulton (1963) highlighted the paradox of the great theories of education.

While they were products of a particular age and environment and shaped by the individual personalities and attitudes of their respective proponents, they all formulated certain universal and immutable ideas (p.vii). Despite the perception that educational debate is seemingly prone to fads and fashions and the tyranny of the acronym, it is possible to clearly discern in the long history of educational theory, common themes, albeit with sharp differences in process emphasises, among the ‘great educators’ (Rusk and Scotland, 1979, pp.1-6).

Osborn (1959) argued that while methods and fashions in education change, at the heart of education sits the library, what he termed the “conservator of learning” (p.179). While the library as a social construct is much more than the sum of its parts, those parts – books, journals and other repositories and transmitters of knowledge – have, through one of the single most remarkable inventions in history – writing and reading – altered the intellectual evolution of our species (Wolf, 2007, p.3).

Even though, through the impact of digital technologies, reading and the book are undergoing change that has a potentially significant impact on future human evolution (Birkerts, 1994, Young, 2007, Wolf and Barzillai, 2009), to this point in history it is hard to disagree with Carlyle’s claim that, “all that mankind has done, thought, gained or been...is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books. They are the chosen possession of man” (Hoggart, 1998, p.67). This idea of a core common and essential body of knowledge sits at the heart of perennialist philosophy.

The perennialist argument is that the knowledge of our forebears, especially the ancients, has as much applicability to the problems of life today as it did in the past, and that a study of the great books of science, philosophy, the humanities and literature will provide a general

education of enduring utility (Apps, 1973, pp.21-2). This portion of the perennialist argument mirrors the dominant theoretical perspective in strategic studies, that of classical realism (Baylis and Wirtz, 2002, pp.6-7). The realist perspective on the provenance of knowledge is summed up by Morgenthau (1978) in a passage worth quoting in full.

“Human nature, in which the laws of politics have their roots, has not changed since the classical philosophies of China, India, and Greece endeavoured to discover these laws. Hence, novelty is not necessarily a virtue in political theory, nor is old age a defect. The fact that a theory of politics, if there is such a theory, has never been heard of before tends to create a presumption against, rather than in favour, of its soundness. Conversely, the fact that a theory of politics was developed hundreds or even thousands of years ago...does not create a presumption that it must be outmoded and obsolete” (p.4).

That the perennialist view of knowledge, while concerning itself with the broader human condition, is in concurrence is illustrated through Adler’s (1940) statement, “there is not progress in everything. The fundamental human problems remain the same in all ages...The great books are...the primary teachers of mankind...[they] deal with the persistently unsolved problems of human life” (pp.333-5).

Having established a claim that *aspects* of perennialist educational theory are complementary to the realist weltanschauung, I consider the innately perennialist educational ideas of the realist school of strategic thinkers as exemplified by Colin S. Gray (1999, 2009, 2010a), in the discussion on ‘professional reading’ in *Chapter Six*. However I cannot proceed without raising a caveat regarding my depiction of perennialism.

I highlight the word ‘aspects’ in regard to my overview of perennialism because, as well as ideas on the common body of knowledge and the importance of intellectual discipline, the movement also embraced what would now be considered neo-conservative conceptions of faith, principle and morality (Rusk and Scotland, 1979, p.231), and, as was demonstrated during the Bush II years, neo-conservatism has an inherently idealist worldview (Mearsheimer, 2005).

The problem of canon

The perennialist argument aside, canon is a most problematic notion conceptually and practically, something that can be sensed when considering the professional military reading lists. Both Hutchins and his colleague Mortimer Adler, the great evangelist of the post-war era 'great books' movement, essentially believed that there were 100 or so key texts, a life-time's study of which would be sufficient for a first class liberal education (Adler and Wolff, 1959). This project to compile a list of the essential great works of all time is, as Umberto Eco tells us, an attempt to "create culture" and to make "infinity comprehensible" (Beyer and Gorris, 2009). This ascribed 'agenda' of the canonisers has prompted one of the most intense and controversial debates in literary criticism of the twentieth-century (Guillory, 1995, p.234).

Some critics have seen conscious reinforcement at work in the notion of canon and 'great books'. For them canon inculcates "a conservative ideology of classism and sexism, that justifies privilege for the few", and consists predominantly "of highbrow books that defy popular appeal and are read by the privileged few" (Casement, 1995, p.203). This prompted attempts, briefly successful, at canon reform to replace or counterpoint the "dead white males" with the "lost voices" of colour, poverty or femininity (Guerin et al., 1992, p.299).

While the debate was largely driven and flavoured by the intellectual remonstrance relating to class, race and gender that was at the heart of the 'culture wars' of the period (Bloom, 1987, Annette, 1994, Jardine, 1994), as Guillory (1995) demonstrates, we can, if not reconcile, then at least lay these issues to one side and still face objectively framed challenges to canon and canonisation.

Guillory (1995) argues that many of the hostile perceptions of the notion of canon derive from the framing principles of the term during its theological origins in the fourth-century

C.E. (p.233). Originally a Greek term for an instrument of measurement, by the early centuries of the first millennium CE *kanon* had evolved to mean ‘rule’ or ‘law’, a context in which the term is still commonly used today. Applied to the Greco-Hebraic texts of the early Christian corpus, canonisation began to denote a negative process to separate or exclude texts and authors deemed heretical from the emergent dogmatic orthodoxy of the Church. The biblical canon became closed forever, the on-going works of philosophers subject to scrutiny for heresy (Guillory, 1995).

Thus critics have become convinced that any exercise to ‘canonise’ works of literature must operate according to the ‘negative’ exclusive principles used to formulate the biblical canon (Guillory, 1995, p.233). This is contestable. An act of singling out ‘key works’ is arguably a positive endeavour, one seeking to make a simple, but difficult appraisal – in the limited time we have available in our busy lives, what is worth reading, or, more accurately, as Bloom (1994) would have it, what is worth *re-reading* (p.29).

To make something comprehensible – to ‘frame’ it – we often resort to devices of narrative like time, sequence, and continuity (Carter, 1993). As literary critic Sainte-Beuve (1910) pointed out in his essay *What is a Classic?*, the compilation of the non-theological canon was much easier up to the Renaissance because the term ‘classic’ was restricted purely to the works of the ancients of Greece and Rome – the concept was bounded. However, once works began to appear in the vernacular and the great revolution in printing and reading gathered pace, by the late seventeenth-century canon became a fluid and expanding exercise. So rather than a fixed set of classic texts, canon required ever-ongoing enlargement to fulfil its role as “the home of all noble human beings, of all who have permanently increased the sum of the mind’s delights and possessions” (Sainte-Beuve, 1910 p.135). By the second decade of the twenty-first-century the home has become incomprehensively crowded and the mind is more befuddled than delighted.

While I leave the contested beginnings of canon to the culture warriors, the ends of canon are in my scope. This becomes the question of what and why to leave out, and who gets to decide? For Bloom (1994) canon today is characterised by ‘key’ texts “struggling with one another for survival” and the reader’s attention (p.19). The vastness of the exercise in making the great ideas of humankind comprehensible and digestible means that, at some point, something has to give.

Highlighting its identity constructing function, Ricoeur (1977) stated that through canon-forming “a community recognises what is consistent with its own existence, what founds it” (p.35). Prior research on both Indonesian and Chinese strategic cultures (McElhatton, 2008a, McElhatton and Jackson, 2012) is complemented by Newmyer’s (2010) account of how Deng Xiaoping encouraged senior Peoples Liberation Army strategists to study the ancient Chinese military classics as he launched them on the course of modernisation and Deng’s comparison of the contemporary security environment to the world of the Warring States period when the classics were written.

The reference to, and perceived relevance of, these ancient military treatises represents the endurance of certain fundamental philosophical and political views that are reflected in the tradition and continue to mould regime behavior around the strategic environment (Newmyer, 2010, p.491). With this in mind, I return to the notion of a ‘military canon’ in *Chapter Six*. I conclude this chapter and my consideration of the leadership portion of the conceptual framework by examining the place of hermeneutics in this inquiry.

The ‘Philosopher of War’

‘Philosopher of war’ Carl von Clausewitz is one of the most enduring, if controversial, military thinkers of modern times (Keegan, 1993, Bassford, 1994, Van Creveld, 2000, Strachan, 2007). In Clausewitz’ *On War* (1832/1976) we have a “treasure of the human

spirit” (Van Creveld, 2000, p.118), one symbolic of the symbiotic relationship between my methodology and subject.

On War is an inherently interdisciplinary work, drawing from military history, political science, philosophy, and the sciences, human and natural (Strachan, 2007). As Aron (1976/1983), Hartmann (2001, 2002) and Niebisch (2011) have argued, Clausewitz develops the prototype of the German concept of humanities (the *Geisteswissenschaften* encountered in *Chapter Two*) that, nearly 100 years later, found scientific reputation with Wilhelm Dilthey’s works about hermeneutics. The common disassociation of Clausewitz with the broader corpus of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Enlightenment, Classicism and Romanticism literature is the reading of these texts in isolation from the military turmoil of the period and context in which their intellectual gestation took place (Krimmer and Simpson, 2011).

Through its repudiation of the ‘scientific strategy’ apparently suggested by Buelow and Jomini, and through the promulgation of the primacy in war of non-empirical concepts like ‘hatred’ and ‘chance’ (Ropp, 1962 pp.151-160), we find in *On War* an epistemological embrace of the hermeneutic. As Hartmann (2001) argues, when Clausewitz uses the word philosophy, he is arguing for the creation of a new model of science that is more proper to the nature of war than the natural or positivist sciences as they were then understood. As Strachan (2011) notes, this ‘new science’ of war is a habit of mind where the commander is conditioned to embrace chance, chaos and the unexpected as aides, rather than impediments, to decision making (ps.1294-5).

On another level, *On War* represents the unfinished struggle of a professional soldier to attain the broadening of intellectual perspective termed ‘horizon’ (Howard, 2002); it is a work that embodies the application of the dialectical methods of the hermeneutic circle to the study of complex phenomena (Handel, 2001). Hartmann (2001) argues that Clausewitz offers

hermeneutics as intellectual tools to assess war and develop strategies, not only in the classrooms of war academies but also in exercises and real war. Niebisch (2011) argues that in his inquiry into the use of intelligence by commanders, Clausewitz developed a hermeneutics based not on the identification of “truthful messages”, but on the identification of incorrect ones (p.66).

Clausewitz argues for an approach to strategy making that accord with the methods of hermeneutics and dialectics. This requires the strategist to adopt a holistic intellectual approach that must have already finished its reflection upon the final action (e.g. peace) before the first step (e.g. war) is made (Hartmann, 2001, p.37).

A key student of Clausewitz, French soldier and philosopher Raymond Aron (1967),¹⁹ drew from the Prussian that the study of war is ultimately about praxeology, the theory of practical activity and human conduct. This meant that every student of war had to deal with the problem of how theory translates into reality (Handel, 2001, p.52). For Clausewitz the attributes of a good soldier include “a sensitive and discriminating judgment...a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth”, and the importance of memory, imagination, an inquiring mind and a knowledge set that is “comprehensive rather than specialised” (Clausewitz, 1832/1976). Clausewitz’s conception of the attributes of the commander is best understood through his use of the term ‘geist’ (Strachan, 2007), the ‘spirit’ of human enquiry or wisdom. In this approach, military leadership is most effectively studied through attempting to discern the ontological, epistemological, and teleological views of great commanders (Connelly, 2002, p.1).

¹⁹ Aron’s doctoral thesis in the 1930s on the ‘philosophy of history’ drew both from Aristotle’s teleology and Dilthey’s hermeneutics (Ahonen, 1994) thus providing an intellectual thread between phronesis, hermeneutics, and the study of war by military leaders.

Lying at the heart of *On War*, an aspect not generally appreciated, is Clausewitz' preeminent enthusiasm for *Bildung* – the German concept of 'self-cultivation' – and the perfectibility of the individual, a key concern of the German Enlightenment (Paret, 1985, p.46).²⁰ He held strongly to a belief in the enduring importance of independence of thought, analytical skills, and critical self-reliance in commanders, something only a broadly based military education could foster. As Otte (2002) shows, the "refining of certain military leadership skills" and the "cultivation of mature judgement" through education were "crucial components of the Clausewitzian theory of war", with *On War* itself intended to serve as a sophisticated educational tool (ps. 28-9).

So, in my invocation of Clausewitz, I bring together three strands of the conceptual framework presented to this point. First, beginning with the Aristotelian *phronesis* and travelling to our time via the *praxeology* of Clausewitz and his students, a long intellectual thread is revealed that conceives of wisdom as something leaders can attain and that is focussed on practical ends. Secondly, to grapple with the complexity of a phenomenon like war, the method of strategic thinking is hermeneutic or interpretive. Finally in this conception, this wisdom is pursued through the critical reading in breadth and depth of key texts that represent the best thought on the military arts and sciences.

However, we are now faced with the horns of a dilemma. This comes from the inherent difficulty of many canonical works like *On War*. Handel (2001) typifies the view that Clausewitz' methodology is both the strength and weakness of his work, observing that professional military readers and scholars seldom have taken the time to cultivate a deep understanding of the text, preferring instead to either raid it for quotes that conveniently

²⁰ As Strachan (2012) points out, while contemporary thought often frames the modern-era German enthusiasm for both learning and militarism as a contradiction or disjunct, in fact the Prussian reformers of 1795-1813 would have been delighted that by 1914 a united Germany was "the world's model for higher education and one of its preeminent military powers" (p.149). This point is highlighted by many of the authors in Krimmer and Simpson (2011).

confirm preconceived ideas²¹ or approaching it second-hand through its many interpreters (ps.24-5).

This difficulty is exemplified by Clausewitz, but not confined to him and his work. While authors like Handel (2001) praise Sun Tzu for his more explicit, accessible approach (p.25), practitioners like Montgomery (1968) note that *The Art of War* is written in a manner that is “terse, sometimes obscure, [and] sometimes deceptively simple” (p.380). The dangers of this deceptive simplicity are illustrated by Phua’s (2007) analysis of the misuse, and misunderstanding of Sun Tzu thought in sections of the U.S. military.

So, on the one hand is the ideal that there are essential texts that are fonts of professional wisdom for the developing officer. On the other hand, the complexity and challenge that many of these texts present the average mind, particularly to the developing and inexperienced mind of a junior officer, make them, in reality, daunting and difficult to approach. This should be borne in mind when the findings are presented and considered.

²¹ Principle architect of the WWII invasions of Poland and France, Blumentritt observed that to give *On War* to the military was like “allowing a child to play with a razor blade”, (Handel, 2001, p.25).

CHAPTER FIVE: EDUCATING MILITARY LEADERSHIP

“By the very nature of things, skill in the profession of arms has to be learned mostly in theory by studying the science of war – since the opportunity of practice in the art does not come often to the general. For this reason the great captains have always been serious students of military history...T.E. Lawrence rightly said that we of the twentieth-century have two thousand years of experience behind us, and, if we still must fight, we have no excuse for not fighting well. My reading over the years has convinced me that nobody in this twentieth-century can become a great commander, a supreme practitioner of the art of war, unless he has first studied and pondered its science” (Montgomery, 1968 p.21).

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the research topic from a third perspective, that of professionalism.

In the conceptual framework outlined in *Chapter Two*, professionalism nestles within it the more discrete concepts of professional military education, and within that, professional reading. In this chapter, I move to a more contextualised approach than so far adopted by introducing professionalism in the military with particular reference to some of the key works from the civil-military relations literature of the 1960s and 1970s that defined the topic. I then briefly look at professional military education as a subset of professionalism, considering it from an androgical, or adult learning perspective.

Professionalism and the military

Whether or not, as I have discussed earlier, our modern world is any more volatile or protean now than at any other pivotal time in our history, the idea of change is embedded in modern conceptions of life (Rogerson, 2011). The idea of change is particularly prevalent in the workplace where changes in patterns of employment tenure, civil mobility, and evolutions in technology, markets, and organisations have led to changes in the way human development is conceptualised (Colardyn and Bjornavold, 2004).

The concept of ‘learning’ is complex, the research literature revealing a diversity of theoretical perspectives, and significant epistemological and theoretical differences between the disciplinary and cultural traditions within which each concept is constructed (Saljo,

2009). Unsurprisingly due to its centrality to the human condition, individual learning is one of the most philosophically considered topics, many historical concepts and theories still informing contemporary teaching practice (Bigge and Shermis, 2003). Organisational learning however is inherently intersubjective, complicated by the interaction of multiple internal and external forces and the perceptions, memories, perspectives, and practices of the organisation, and its competitors' personnel (Fear, 2003, p.163).

Mumford, et al (2000) have pointed out three fundamental contradictions in organisational life. The first is that, organisations must balance the tendency toward stability, brought about by prior investments, interdependencies among systems, and people's habits, with a need for change to cope with shifting environmental conditions. Secondly, although they might work together to bring about organisational goals, the individual units or divisions that comprise organisations may not agree on goals or strategies for coping with change. Finally, organisations must not only cope with objective performance demands, they must also recognise the individual needs of the people who comprise the organisations (Mumford et al., 2000, p.13).

Argyris and Schön (1996, pp.11-13) considered how organisational inquiry, that is the interplay of thinking and action to solve problems, leads to organisational knowledge, that is the ever-evolving body of knowledge that guides organisational practice. Asking how knowledge becomes organisational, they outlined how organisations function as 'holding environments for knowledge'. When an organisation is functioning in this way knowledge is held in, and accessed from three sources: the minds of individual members; the policies, records, histories, and other texts an organisation develops and accumulates; and in the "physical objects that members use as references and guideposts as they go about their business" (Argyris and Schön, 1996, p.12).

Much of the literature on organisational learning focusses on modern corporations, that is organisations with, relative to human history, a short history. As the first large-scale organisations in history militaries provide a “rich source” of information on organisational learning (Fear, 2003, p.165). For organisations with this more substantial developmental base, the questions on how knowledge becomes organisational can be considered from a more historically grounded perspective.

As noted, the professional development of its leaders has been an enduring concern of militaries since the early modern era. Kingseed (1999) has stated that, “after warfighting itself, the most demanding challenge confronting the military profession...is the preparation and training of young men and women for combat” (p.1054). Recruitment and retention of the right people for the modern strategic environment is a major concern of modern militaries. Wardynski, Lyle et al (2009) predicted that without substantive changes the “U.S. Army’s Officer Corps will be unequal to future demands” (p.v).

Wardynski et al. (2009) have interpreted this situation as being caused by a complex combination of factors, one of them an inability in the all-volunteer age to adequately compete with the private sector for the most talented potential future leaders. Whereas, in previous eras, the military was able to rely on the “lateral entry of specialised talent via conscription” (p.2), that option is all but closed in the current political environment in most Western nations.

Senior officers from the highest echelons of the U.S. and British militaries have cited “the erosion in leader development” (Dempsey, 2010, p.6) and “intellectual decay” (Newton et al., 2010, p.45) as a concern at the highest levels of militaries across the world. Unlike most large organisations militaries cannot buy talent to fill short-falls at its mid and upper-level ranks. The unique nature of the military profession means that once an armed service accesses a

cohort of officers, it must “live with them throughout a 30-year career span (Wardynski et al., 2010).

While it is evolving to embrace broader academic approaches, the study of leadership in the armed services is still primarily a study of military history and the biographies of great military leaders (Pape, 2009). As Keegan (1976) has noted, the study of ‘generals and generalship’, when done well, can yield remarkable psychological insights into human character (p.27). More often though, rather than being modes of inquiry and frameworks for thinking about problems (Cohen, 2005, p.575), these studies, seduced by a romanticised view of soldiers and soldiering (Desch, 2006, p.573), have a tendency to succumb to sycophancy, hero-worship and author/subject identity projection, all impediments to their use as tools for the development of the critical faculties.

Evetts (2003) characterises professions as the “structural, occupational and institutional arrangements” for managing work associated with risk. In her categorisation, professionals are “extensively engaged in dealing with risk, with risk assessment and, through the use of expert knowledge, enabling customers and clients to deal with uncertainty” (p.397).

Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) have argued that wisdom is “embedded” in the practices of many professions, military officers included (p.271). This wisdom, or as Kiszely (2007) would have it, the exercise of “good judgement” (p.15), is most manifest when, in the absence of specific orders or clear guiding protocol, the military leader is required to make decisions in “unpredictable and quickly changing situations” (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010, p.159). Schugurensky (2006) notes the Aristotelian idea that participation in deliberation and decision making has a highly pedagogical potential (p.169).

The concept of ‘professionalism’ has had a chequered history of use and contrasting, even contradictory, interpretations in the literature (Evetts, 2003, p.399). Moskos et al (2000a)

show that the concept of professionalism defines the evolution of officership from the ‘modern’ to the ‘late-modern’ and the ‘post-modern’ eras.²² Moskos (2000) identifies a dominant type of military professional in each of these periods. The modern era is typified by the “combat leader” as predominant role model; the late-modern period by the “manager/technician”. In contrast, the dominant role model for officership in the post-modern period posited by Moskos is the “soldier-statesman/soldier-scholar” type (ps.14-16). Plus ça change.

In contrast to Moskos (2000), Janowitz (1960) previously identified in armies typologies of the ‘Intellectual Officer’ and the ‘Military Intellectual’. For Janowitz the first was one who brought an intellectual dimension to their job, but where this intellectualism was held in check by the needs of the profession. In contrast the military intellectual was one whose attachments and identifications were primarily with intellectuals and intellectual activities. Janowitz thought the second were fundamentally unsuitable for higher command. I consider the typologies of Moskos and Janowitz in more detail in *Chapter Eight*.

Moskos (2000) and Nielsen (2012) acknowledge the influence of Morris Janowitz on the study of professionalism in the military. Citing the prescience of Janowitz, Pinch (2000) endorses his view that the dominant military professional model is produced by “the confluence of socialisation and the type of problem to be solved at any one time” (p.161). Paradoxically, this influence of change on the dominant model has contributed to the strengthening or continuity of a distinctive military identity (Janowitz, 1971, ps.44-46).

²² Moskos et al (2000a) delineate these three eras as: *Modern* from the introduction of the *levee en masse* citizen army during the 1793 French Revolution; *Late Modern* as a period roughly contemporaneous with the Cold War; and the *Post-Modern* dating from the end of the Cold War. The authors acknowledge that these three delineations are contestable, noting that the *Modern* era militarily is commonly ascribed to the post-Treaty of Westphalia period from 1648 when the modern nation-state and, by extension, modern armies, were established. Given the rapid development of military theory in the seventeenth-century, I adopt the earlier delineation for the *Modern* era (ps.1-2).

Janowitz (1971) saw the development of the military profession as a continuous struggle to be rational and scientific in the context of military requirements, describing the history of the modern military establishment as a struggle between heroic leaders who embodied traditionalism and glory, and military managers who were concerned with the scientific and rational conduct of war. For Janowitz, the essence of this struggle and its perennial nature was that, while soldiers need to be scientific and rational, they also need to be brave (p.45). Janowitz (1971) described this struggle as a tension between “militarism” – the vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions and thought associated with armies and war – and the “military way” or the evolving professionalisation of the military. Janowitz considered militarism – what I have characterised as ‘caste’ – as an impediment to military purposes (ps.44-46).

Jordan (1971) noted that while the origins and timing of the transformation of military officership from a trade to a profession are obscure, it was clear that by the latter part of the nineteenth-century it was well advanced in both Europe and America (p.213). The Napoleonic campaigns saw rapid promotion (to NCOs) for many private soldiers and so increased responsibility and need for them to take on the administrative duties normally devolved to officers (Lloyd, 1950, p.7).

Janowitz (1976/1991) described this change in relation to an interrelated set of structural changes within society and the military. While technological necessity and the growth in size of the military required that middle-class officers be introduced to fill the cadres of artillery, engineering and logistical specialists, changes to the social powerbase through political reform, seen most dramatically in Revolutionary France, imposed bureaucratic structures and controls upon an institution that had been the traditional preserve of the feudal-based landed aristocracy (ps.230-1). As Abrahamsson (1972) put it, “the historical process of professionalisation of the military involves its transformation from an ascriptively recruited,

usually temporarily employed and – in relation to contemporary standards – low or uneducated corps of officers to an achievement-recruited, permanently hired, and well-trained group of experts” (ps.151-2).

There were then four or five key factors influencing the professionalising of the military: the emergence of nation states; the creation of mass armies; the accumulation of industrial and technological resources through standardised automation and machine production; and new organisational forms and managerial innovations e.g. the division principle, central staffs, and total warfare organisations to integrate military and civilian defence (Abrahamsson, 1972, ps.151-2). Professional military education developed as a functional corollary to these changes (Kennedy and Neilson, 2002).

Janowitz (1971) listed the essential elements of a professional group as (a) a system of training, (b) a body of expert knowledge and skill practices, (c) group cohesion and solidarity, (d) a body of ethics and sense of responsibility and, (e) mechanisms of self-regulation (p.14). Jordan (1971) justified the application of the term profession to the military because it is bureaucratised, with a hierarchy of offices and a legally defined structure, and it is marked by its members commitment to, potentially, unlimited service, extending to the risk of life itself. Jordan noted that these characteristics have an important impact on military education (p.211).

These categorisations of the military profession largely conform to a normative view of the concept. From a normative perspective, “professional identity is associated with a sense of common experiences, understandings and expertise, shared ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions” (Evetts, 2003, p.400). This common identity is produced and transmitted through occupational and professional socialisation by means of members’ shared and common educational backgrounds, professional training and vocational experiences, and

by membership of professional bodies and associations which encourage practitioners to develop and maintain a shared culture of work. A result of this professional socialisation is that similarities in work practices and procedures, common ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions and shared ways of perceiving and interacting with client groups develop and become entrenched (Evetts, 2003, ps.400).

Evetts (2003) contrasts the perspective on professionalism as a normative value with the critical perspective of the 1970s and 1980s that viewed professionalism as an 'ideology' to maintain powerful, privileged, self-interested monopolies (p.401). I will not examine this perspective in detail here other than to note Abrahamsson's (1972) comment, particularly regarding the U.S. military, that "organisation and expertise are major factors underlying both [its] normative influence and its political power" (p.152).

I highlighted Grint's (2005) view of leadership as a social construction and how this aligned with the hermeneutic approach to leadership inquiry. This corresponds with Janowitz' view of social groupings like the military where social relations and context were always overlapping and inter-relating resulting in dynamic social organisations which never became more than partially integrated (Shields and Soeters, 2013, p.9).

As shown, specialist expertise is a key element of professionalism. Writing from a late-modern perspective, Jordan (1971) noted that military expertise had expanded to include a broader skill set than was traditionally required. These skills included: helping to define the nature of the nation's security tasks, especially their politico-military dimension; applying scientific and technological knowledge to military matters; and training, supplying, deploying and – if necessary – employing the fighting capabilities of military units in changing politico-military and technological environments (p.212). Jordan considered that only the third of these roles was traditional.

Partially validating this view, Abrahamsson (1972) points out that while military leaders have acted throughout history as advisors to kings and princes on matters of war and strategy, it has been predominantly from the twentieth-century that the officer corps as a whole – at least in the major world powers – has been professionally trained and educated to make political appraisals (p.155).

In one of a series of speeches that symbolically mark the beginning of the Cold War (Gaddis, 2005. ps.94-5), and therefore the transition to Moskos' (2000) late-modern era, Winston Churchill addressed the U.S. Army General Staff in April 1946. There he stated that the small pre-war U.S. Army's ability to raise, move and utilise its very large forces in WWII was down to, "professional attainment, based upon prolonged study and collective study at colleges, rank by rank, age by age – those are the...needs of the commands of the future armies and the secret of future victories" (Jordan, 1971, p.214). With this in mind I hone in further on my research focus by considering professional military education, particularly with regard to the formal, informal and non-formal modes of education that relate to professional reading.

Developing officers

Military education programmes encompass almost every adult education component from basic skills training through graduate-level higher education (Persyn and Polson, 2012, p.5). Militaries are both major consumers of, and contributors to, adult education theory and practice. They integrate adult learning principles and theory to increase organisational effectiveness and address their learners' educational needs, and influence adult education by assisting the civilian practitioners expand avenues through which to improve adult education practice (Persyn and Polson, 2012, p.6).

For the military, adult education is a process that stimulates individual growth, maturity, and learning in order to achieve organisational goals. The importance given to adult education is grounded in the belief that human capital is the most valuable military asset compared to technological capital, financial capital, and built capital, none of which reach their full potential without the full potential of human capital as embodied in the enlisted and officer cadres being fulfilled (Zacharakis and Werff, 2012, p.90). Despite the prevalence of the technological monism in some sections of the military noted in *Chapter Three*, the rapid historical development of weapons, transport, and communications technology has led to a new, or at least renewed, appreciation of human factors, including the benefits to militaries from the long-term education of their personnel (Lovell, 2010, p.31).

King (2010) asserts that many of the terms and concepts used in military education are commonly misused and misunderstood, with little consensus on the meaning of even the most common terms (p.25). This ‘what’ of education – what education *is* – is further complicated by debate over the second ‘what’ of education – what education *does*, or perhaps more correctly, what we want education to do. This second question has been an adult education dilemma since Aristotle first described the problems educators faced in Ancient Greece (Apps, 1973, p.1). These two ‘whats’ of education are complemented by a further point of debate, the situationalist question, or the ‘where’ of education (Schugurensky, 2006). The ‘whats’ and ‘where’ of adult education will be briefly considered, before narrowing in on professional reading in the military.

The ‘whats’ and ‘where’ of education

During my consideration of critical literacies, I referred to the taxonomies of *learning* as expounded by Bloom (1956), Ennis (1962, 1991, 1993), Biggs and Collis (1982), and Ackoff (1989). In this section I refer to taxonomies of *education*. While the perspectives of Anderson et al. (2005) or Beetham and Sharpe (2013) would suggest this is merely a semantic

distinction, I consider that there is an important difference to be considered. While the taxonomies of Bloom and his successors considered the ‘how’ of learning, the taxonomies of education considered here are focused on the “whats’ and ‘where’ of learning. The locus of learning is an important factor in professional reading.

Bearing in mind Schugurensky’s (2006) caveat that taxonomies, due to their rigidity, are generally incapable of capturing the complexities of learning processes (p.164), to further consider leadership development it will have to be done from a taxonomic perspective.

Rogers (2004) has argued that the benefit of educational taxonomies and typologies is that they provide tools for analysis and planning to educators, learners and organisations in helping them provide, encourage, or delineate responsibility for, a broader spectrum of educational opportunities than might traditionally have been acknowledged (p.261).

The taxonomic debate referred to by King (2010) can be illustrated by an examination of the simple educational model, often referred to as the ‘professional development framework’ (Edwards et al., 2006, Bentley et al., 2008) which sets out four developmental elements: training, experience, education and self-development (Rhode, 2012). The benefits of the model are twofold. First, as illustrated in *Figure Fourteen*, it lends itself to the application of evaluative continua to aid the holistic consideration of organisational learning packages (McElhatton, 2010). Second, its very simplicity makes it a powerful model to consider and categorise learning.

Acknowledging that many exceptions could be raised that prove the rule, the professional development framework allows for an evaluative consideration of individual developmental programs and activities in terms of their likely production of results in specified timeframes, within financial parameters and against organisational metrics. As Lovell (2010) points out,

instrumental approaches are an important, though not necessarily effective, element of education planning and procurement in the military (p.30).

Figure Fourteen: The professional development framework (McElhatton, 2010)

Broadly speaking, training and experience, as they are articulated in the framework, are the foundations of military professional development because their effects are immediately apparent (Masland and Radway, 1957). In contrast to the training and experiential development processes – e.g. practice training, performance management, goal setting, coaching, reward and discipline – intellectual development through education is more incremental and delayed, and thus slower to determine results from and harder to quantify (Guskey, 1994). Of all the elements, self-development, in the simple sense that the framework defines it, is the most underutilised and understudied as it depends, by definition, on large degrees of autonomy and, because it evolves incrementally, it is even more difficult to track and measure its effect or benefits (Madigan, 1998).

While the professional development framework presents a neat typology of knowledge and skills development, it is extremely problematic. First, as shown by Shugurensky (2006), this neatness of definition neither captures the complexity of the learning process nor does it adequately reflect the ‘whats’ and ‘where’ of education. Secondly, professional reading, particularly when driven by a reading list, does not neatly fit into the schema. I address this second point presently.

The framework differentiates clearly between the terms education and training. This would imply a significant difference in their modus, desired result and short and long-term benefit to the recipient. McCausland (2008) holds that, “while training is more concerned with teaching *what* to think and what the *answers* ought to be, education is all about teaching *how* to think and what the *questions* ought to be” (p.x). Somewhat complementary, Kiszely (2007) has it that training is “preparing people, individually or collectively, for given tasks in given circumstances”, while education is about developing “mental powers and understanding” (p.14). This equation of education with higher-order cognitive skills is emphasised by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff who assert that education generally “conveys general bodies of knowledge and develops habits of mind applicable to a broad spectrum of endeavours” (Gortney, 2011, p.129) and military education particularly “conveys the broad body of knowledge and develops the habits of mind essential to the military professional’s expertise in the art and science of war” (Gortney, 2011, p.132).

In these examples, the differentiation seems clear. However the typologies are not as clearly definable as these attempts to define them might suggest. First there is the equation of education with higher-order cognitive skills. This is challenged by research into the interrelationship of creative thinking and intuition in command, where the ability to make decisions quickly and under pressure is dependent on the prior internalisation of skills, knowledge and behaviours through training (Ilyichev, 2009). Furthermore, as Strachan

(2006) shows, training is “an enabling process, a form of empowerment, which creates self-confidence”, and is thus largely psychological or cognitive in form (p.216).

The equation is further undermined by a growing awareness since the end of the Cold War that increasing operational and technological demands on personnel means that training for any purpose will only be effective if the trainee is first adequately educated (Kime and Anderson, 1997, p. 3).

As Kiszely (2007) acknowledges, education also needs to be considered contextually or teleologically, i.e. in terms of its intended purpose. For the military, education is not pursued for its own sake, but for the purpose of developing the “capacity for good judgement” in their professional career, and thus has a training dimension (p.15). This is an illustration of the perspective that differentiates between ‘academic’ education and ‘vocational’ or professional education (Kime and Anderson, 1997), a distinction with its own historic and instrumental problems (Hodge, 2013). This prevailing imperative to break learning into neat typologies may have a cultural dimension. A consideration of the more nuanced Gallic approach is instructive.

For Bonnet (2011) the characteristics of officer education are “continuity, consistency, [and] permanent adjustment”, where the aim is to preserve “the essence of what constitutes the competence of a military commander” while still adjusting “constantly” to meet the needs of current engagements and tactical, operational and strategic reality (p.11). Beyond, what is termed in France, ‘military and athletic physical education and training’, or ‘basic training’, professional military education has been described by Bonnet (2011) as having three primary components: tactical training, academic education, and military culture (p.12). In Bonnet’s (2011) typology, tactical training is “the heart of an officer’s role” (p.11), and is self-explanatory. ‘Academic education’, a broadly focused pursuit, is concerned with giving

commanders, all the intellectual tools they need “to understand the contemporary world” (p.12).

What is termed ‘military culture’²³ here is, for the French Army at least, an abstract educational concept marking the nexus between academic education and tactical training which aims to enable officers to embed their actions in thought (Bonnet, 2011, p.12). The term can be interpreted as the intellectual essence of command, or as Murray (1999) represents it, “the ethos and professional attributes, both in terms of experience and intellectual study, that contribute to a common core understanding of the nature of war” within military organisations (p.134).²⁴

Thus, rather than being characterised in terms of distinct typologies, Masland and Radway (1957) suggested the professional development framework might be better understood through the addition of another continuum or spectrum which has ‘pure training’ – e.g. breaking down and cleaning a rifle – at one end, and something they labeled ‘pure education’ – that involving the highest levels of abstraction – at the other (p.51).

So, as seen in this section through some brief examples, the neat typologies commonly used in military education are problematic. I point this out because of the earlier stated need to understand what is meant by the term ‘professional reading’ I have sought to investigate. The self-development strand of the framework would appear the ideal locale for a consideration of the concept. However this strand carries strong connotations of autonomy and self-direction in the learner in accordance with androgogical theory (Hayden, 2007, p.224). A reading list as an organisational artifact, and one that may be imbued with greater or lesser degrees of direction, would sit uneasily there. The problem is also posed of how to categorise

²³ “Culture Militaire” is also the name of the French Army professional reading programme. I examine this in more detail in *Chapter Seven*.

²⁴ This is in marked contrast to the somewhat negative conception of ‘military culture’ as typified by Dunivin (1997) or Soeters et al (2006) which focus on the study of masculinity, discipline, professional ethos, ceremony and etiquette, and service or unit subculture .

the professional reading done as part of, say, a post-graduate paper. This recalls King's (2010) earlier point about the problems caused by ill-defined educational terms.

Livingstone's (2006) primary agency/knowledge structure framework is a taxonomic model through which professional military education can be considered in more detail. As in *Figure Fifteen*, the model cross-categorises the basic forms of learning from the perspective of both the primary agent – i.e. the learner or teacher – and the knowledge structure of the learning experience – i.e. whether it occurs in an institutional or in a situational setting (p.204).

		Primary Agency	
		Learner(s)	Teacher(s)
Knowledge Structure	Institutional	Nonformal education	Formal schooling
		Further education	Elder's teaching
	Situational	Self-directed learning	Informal education
		Collective informal learning	Informal training

Figure Fifteen: Livingstone's learning framework²⁵

Livingstone's taxonomy draws from both Critical Literacy Theory and related educational discourses that dominated the 1970s (Rogers, 2004, ps.2-3) and the current government policy-driven Lifelong Learning debate that particularly promotes non-formal and informal education as key means to enable economic competitiveness, employability, individual fulfilment and self-development (Colardyn and Bjornavold, 2004, p.69).

While definitions of the terms formal, non-formal, and informal in Livingstone's (2006) taxonomy are widely contested (Colley et al., 2002, Rogers, 2004, Golding et al., 2008),

²⁵ Livingstone's original matrix uses the term 'pre-established' for the upper half quadrants. I substitute the term 'institutional' for clarity.

theorists presenting often wildly conflicting representations of each term in terms of agency, or knowledge structure, the model still allows us to develop a more comprehensive and useful understanding of the nuances of learning.

Drawing from Rogers' (2004), Schugurensky's (2006, p.164) and Livingstone's (2006) definitions, formal education, or 'schooling' as Livingstone terms it, can be understood as that which is highly de-contextualised, not adapted to individual participants, and is an institutionalised, 'top-down' system, from pre-school to graduate studies, where a state or institutionally prescribed curriculum is delivered. The system is dependent on certified teachers and results in the award of grades or qualifications that provide pathways to the next level or to employment. Formal education has a large element of compulsion, overtly through law at primary and secondary levels, and covertly through societal expectations and labour market pressures at post-secondary.

Non-formal education is that which is partially de-contextualised and partly contextualised and consists of learning embedded in planned activities that are not explicitly designated as learning, but which contain an important learning element (Rogers, 2004, p.261). Non-formal education refers to all organised educational programmes that take place outside of the formal system, are usually short-term and voluntary, and are based on curriculums with varying degrees of flexibility or rigidity. Non-formal education is usually, but not always, dependent on teachers or instructors. Non-formal education does not normally demand prerequisites in terms of previous schooling or qualifications (Schugurensky, 2006, ps.164-5).

Informal education is generally agreed to be that which is highly contextualised, individualised, and small-scale; it is highly participatory (Rogers, 2004, p.261). Informal learning is defined as learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family, or leisure. It is sometimes referred to as experiential learning. Typically, it does not lead to

certification. While these aspects are not widely contested, the differing views on informal education relate to the degree of sensitivity of the learner to the acquisition of skills or knowledge and the presence of an instructor (Livingstone, 2006, p.206).

While informal learning is often categorised as non-intentional, incidental or random (Green et al., 2004, Golding et al., 2008), Livingstone (2006) disagrees, arguing the need for some degree of intentionality or consciousness of learning *of value* occurring for the term to have any real meaning and differentiation from the business of everyday life (p.206).

Schugurensky (2006) emphasises the non-dependence of the typology on institutional design or *organised* teaching and its non-curricular character. Crucially for the ‘where’ of education, Schugurensky is careful to emphasise that the concept is not situationally dependent; informal learning can occur in informal, formal and non-formal settings. Thus, informal learning is that which is not organised as a pedagogical activity by an educational institution and can occur both outside and within educational institutions (ps.165-6).

I began this section by considering a commonly used taxonomic perspective on education broadly writ. The professional development model could be described as sacrificing precision for simplicity, something that perhaps makes it a ‘sticky’ educational model (Heath and Heath, 2007). In contrast, the taxonomy of lifelong learning sacrifices simplicity for precision and the accommodation of nuance. It also employs terminology that is not endemic to our professional context and therefore provides a useful theoretical counterpoint to consider during my qualitative analysis.

The inherent problem with educational typologies is that they present the many shades of grey in simple black and white terms. Most educational programmes are not either formal, informal or non-formal, but exhibit various degrees of formality, informality, or non-formality depending on the particular characteristic of each programme that is being

examined (Rogers, 2004, p.125). Schugurensky (2006) argues that education should not be understood exclusively as a schooling process, but also as an experientially-based learning process that takes place in daily life (p.169), and by extension, in the course of one's professional duties.

CHAPTER SIX: PROFESSIONAL READING AND THE MILITARY

“All military laws and military theories which are in the nature of principles are the experience of past wars summed up by people in former days or in our own times. We should seriously study these lessons, paid for in blood, which are a heritage of past wars. That is one point. But there is another. We should put these conclusions to the test of our own experience, assimilating what is useful, rejecting what is useless, and adding what is specifically our own. The latter is very important, for otherwise we cannot direct a war. Reading is learning, but applying is also learning and the more important kind of learning at that”. Mao Zedong (1936)

Introduction

The final perspective through which to consider my research topic is that of professional military reading, the final component of the conceptual framework introduced in *Chapter Two*. I consider professional reading as an intellectual tradition in the military, through an introduction to the artefact of the professional military reading list and a consideration of professional reading in historical context.

Historical military figures from Napoleon, through George S. Patton and Sir Howard Kippenberger, to contemporary figures like former U.S. Marine Corps commandants Generals Hagee (2005) and Gray (Puryear, 2009) or former New Zealand Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Jerry Mateparae (Amner, 2006) stress the vital part professional reading plays in the development of command skills. Since the development of professional military education in Europe during the nineteenth-century, the reading by officers of key texts on military history, tactics, strategy etc. has been a central pillar of the war college programme.

Professional military education developed as a corollary to the emergence of a professional officer corps. In his study of the German officer-corps, Demeter (1965) put forward four principal drivers for the development of professional military education systems in Europe from the mid-seventeenth-century onwards. These were: a natural outcome of the division and specialisation of labour through social and economic evolution and development;

technological development in artillery and military engineering that required a standardized training in mathematics and the natural sciences; pressure from the traditional martial class, the landed gentry, to provide a free education for their progeny to compensate for that class's economic decline; and the rapid growth of an educationally benchmarked professionalism across society propelled by an ascendant, meritocratically-inclined and educationally hungry, middle-class (ps.66-72). By the 1960s the armed forces had become the world's largest educators (Jordan, 1970, p.214).

While recommended reading lists have long been part of officer induction manuals (Moss, 1917, Anon., 1942), Metz (2011) has suggested that the modern artefact of the professional military reading list begins with U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Earl Wheeler's provision of a reading list in 1963 (p.1). Like many of his generation of military leaders, a preeminent part of Wheeler's military education was based around the study of historical operations (Collins, 1978, p.ix). However, by the Cold War era, the rapid broadening of the scope of the formal curriculum to accommodate new operational and technological topics saw the reduction in time devoted to the in-depth study of, particularly, military history, and thus the need for informal means to supplement the formal instruction (Collins, 1978, ps.ix-x).

Globally, professional military reading lists are the most prominent resource used to guide leader self-development in the military services (Lemay, 2010). Many defence forces and/or their individual component services and units publish professional reading programmes and lists replete with recommendations for all stages of a soldier's career. These various lists recommend long-acknowledged classics from ancient China and Napoleonic Prussia, to recent releases on insurgency, peacekeeping and global warming. The lists recommend works from business writers and philosophers, and some promote the reading of fiction genres like sci-fi as aids to the development of critical and strategic thinking in the military professional.

Lieutenant General Mataparae's rationale for a reading list was that, "through reading we can fill an experiential vacuum... encourage our minds to be flexible...heighten our understanding of our profession and the circumstances we might face into the future" (Amner, 2006 p.3). The Canadian Forces (CF) rationale for developing their reading programme, *A Guide to Reading on Professionalism and Leadership* (Horn, 2006), was their feeling that the 'self-directed strand' of the 'professional development framework' was being neglected and that the promotion of a reading programme would be one way of further developing leadership skills supplementary and complementary to existing professional military education programmes.

The Australian Army sees their reading programme as a key tool for the long-term development of professional mastery by its soldiers through their development of intellectual tools to help understand and appreciate "war in all its manifestations and dimensions" (Hopkins, 2007a, p.1). For a former Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, the benefits of their reading programme are both intellectual and fiscal. "In an era of constrained resources, our professional reading programme is designed to provide Marines with an intellectual framework to study warfare and enhance their thinking and decision making skills" (Krulak, 1996a, p.12).

Carpenter (2004) has written about the communication aspect of command and the importance of words in the armoury of a commander, which he describes as "a fundamental factor for martial persuasion" (p.199). Carpenter (2004) particularly singles out General Macarthur's well-developed communication skills for consideration, the articulateness of this 'warrior-scholar' and his adroit use of his extensive vocabulary in written communiques and his memoirs (p.199) having been developed through his extensive and life-long professional reading.

Ulijn and Salager-Meyer (1998) argue that reading is one of the keys to both academic and professional success (p.80), Hopkins (2007b) claiming that reading is the core of military professionalism. Referencing research on leadership development for school principals, Blackwell (2003) has shown how reading and discussing the successes, failures, actions, limits and constraints on characters from classic literature can be used in leadership ‘renewal’ programmes (p.463).

Remarking on dramatic changes in U.S. Army thinking since the commencement of post-war stabilisation operations in Iraq, Brooks (2010) highlighted the innovations of a cohort of officers below or barely into generals’ rank who he said were leading “‘with two minds” – one “steeped in Army culture”, the other in some additional, often academic, culture (p.27). Brooks (2010) described how these autodidacts, or “dual-consciousness people” as he dubbed them, could be practitioners one month and then academic observers of themselves the next and were neither blinkered by the traditional Army mind-set nor so removed from it that their ideas were never tested by reality, as a pure academic theoretician’s might be (p.27).

Brooks (2010) highlighted the culture of learned debate, critical discourse and creative applied thinking that had developed in the U.S. Army in response to the early operational and strategic failures in Iraq as documented by Ricks (2006). This change was led by an emerging generation of iconoclastic “warrior-scholars” like Petraeus and H.R. McMaster who balanced operational and combat roles with academic publishing, the promotion of quality debate in professional journals, and the promotion of professional reading through tailored and intellectually provocative reading lists (Ricks, 2006, p.420). With this in mind, I make a brief historical survey of professional reading in the military.

The Ancient World

For Bobbitt (2002), war is a product as well as a shaper of culture, a *creative* act of civilisation (p.xxxi). While this may sit uncomfortably with our modern conception of war as a wholly destructive enterprise, it is worth reflecting that one marker of the transition from animal hominid to civilised human is the transition from mere *fighting* – the animal dimension – to *war-making* – the sole preserve of humanity (Bobbitt, 2002, p.xxxi). Macksey (1973) describes warfare as the “ultimate expression of man’s interminable struggle for food and space in addition to his yearning for security, power and self-justification” (p.i). Pioneering researcher on aggression in animals, Lorenz (1966) found it a “curious paradox” that the unique faculties of verbal speech and conceptual thought that enabled humans to evolve from the foraging condition of the animal – the condition of *inter-species* fighting – are the same faculties that encouraged and enabled the development of systematic *intra-species* fighting i.e. warfare (p.230).

Humans have been writing, and therefore reading, about war for as long as humans have been writing and reading. The earliest forms of these martial writings were poetic or prose narratives. The prose accounts, like those inscribed on the monuments of the great and dread empires of Egypt, Babylon, Maurya and Assyria, commemorate campaigns and battles and the feats of ‘great men’ and served to record and glorify events, historical or otherwise, and transmit to the people the laws of kings (Van Creveld, 2000). The poems, originally orally composed and transmitted, but eventually preserved through writing, while also commemorating the founding deeds of a people also served the secondary purpose of educating young warriors on the morals, values and conventions of their people and to inspire them to heroic deeds worthy of über-hero Achilles, wily Odysseus (Finley, 1955) or superhuman Gilgamesh.

While many works on the art of war (e.g., Jones, 1989) choose to begin with the Greeks of the early-mid first millennium BCE, organised military activity is much older, the first pictorial evidence being from the Standard of Ur dating from circa-3500 BCE (Macksey, 1973, p.3), the same period the development of the first picto-ideographic writing systems is seen (Martin, 1994, p.1). It is not for another two millennia that the first attempts to codify military thought are seen. The writing of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* circa-600 BCE bookends a thousand years of military organisation that ends with the writing of Vegetius' hugely influential in its day *De Re Militari* (Macksey, 1973, pp.14-28). Therefore, while military organisation, and the systemised approach to training that is implicit in this notion, stretches five and a half thousand years in posterity, military education, a notion I assert to be dependent on the presence of both reflexive and critical thought and the existence of a codified body of knowledge that can be disseminated, discussed and built upon, is only a phenomenon which can be traced from the mid-first millennium BCE.

Ancient China

A powerful form of martial writing developed in China during the Warring States period of c. 400-200 BCE. This form, written by experienced professional generals of the period, sought to preserve and impart to their martial successors the methods and stratagems they had efficaciously employed in the field. The most honoured of these texts was *The Art of War* by the general known to us as Sun Tzu. Honoured it was, but unique in its day it was not.

“The military wisdom of Sun Tzu would be valued and preserved not because he was the first great military mind of China but because the Chinese already boasted a rich military and intellectual tradition with sophistication enough to appreciate the genius of *The Art of War*” (Lynn 2003).

The power inherent in this and others in the ancient Chinese military canon is evident in how they were ‘published’. Unlike the poems or prose of Greece and the near East which were

‘public documents’ for wide social consumption, the musings of the Chinese generals, revealing as they did the victory secrets of the state, were held in state archives for elect consumption, only being made available to a wider Chinese audience at the end of the first millennium CE when they began to be widely studied for the annual imperial military examinations (Van Creveld, 2000). Once in the archives access to these texts was restricted to a small handful of elite scholars, military commanders, high officials and the emperor himself. Some works like T’ai Kung’s *Six Secret Teachings* were even more restricted, encouraging as they did military teachings that advocated and instructed on, revolution.

Sawyer (2004) relates how Chang Liang, the general who played a major role in establishing the Han Dynasty, felt that his engagement with the sole copy of *Three Strategies of Huang Shih-kung* had played such an important role in his success that it was too dangerous a work to leave for others, and so had it buried with him on his death. Such a dangerous text could not be long restrained by the dead hand of General Chang and quickly resurfaced with the help of some bibliophilic tomb raiders. The rulers of the Ch’in Dynasty, who Chang had helped defeat, also felt strongly about the instructive and combusive power of these military texts, and exempted them from their notorious book burnings (Sawyer, 2004).

Prior to unification under the Ch’in dynasty in 221 BCE, China was a land politically fractured, subject to horrific, epic warfare and social discord, yet bearing fruit to an enduringly rich philosophical, artistic and linguistic whole-culture that, unlike say the Celtic or Anglo-Saxon corpus in the British Isles, still forms the intellectual basis of modern Chinese life. This rich and ancient cultural tradition, its “nearly timeless written language” and “disparate intellectual threads”, serves as a counterpoint to the tortured political heritage of continuous conflict and measureless human suffering (Sawyer, 2004, p.ix). This was the era of the flowering and codification of Chinese culture known as the ‘hundred schools of thought’.

Two great institutions have held the Chinese state together for nearly four millennia – the writing system and the warrior-scholar ruling elite. An ancient system which, unlike its early contemporary Sumerian, still exists in daily use, Chinese writing has been described as “a gift from the past to the present”, one in which whole histories of thought are hidden in single characters (Wolf, 2007, p.48). As early as 1850 BCE written reports are found recording the direction of great public works by this elite (Fairbank, 1988, p.3). Chinese language is written using ideograms, literally the visual representation of an idea. Chinese ideograms, through millennia of evolution from their rudimentary origins, have a particularly multidimensional, ambiguous quality and, notably for ideograms representing complex ideas, lend themselves to multiple interpretations (R.L. Wing, 1988).

Like all feudal or caste-based societies, classical China was socially stratified. A class quite unique to classical China, though a form of it is seen in classical Greece, were the *Shih*, the warrior-scholars of the lower aristocracy, keepers of professional knowledge, oracular procedure, calligraphy, ritual and use of arms, tactics and stratagem. These broadly and deeply educated, though somewhat materially impoverished, men led a precarious existence wandering China in search of employment and intellectual succour in the numerous courts of the period (Eichhorn, 1969, p.71). They were adventurers in the minds and affairs of man. Crucially for our study *Shi*, a related term, is the “inherent power or dynamic of a situation or moment in time”, the art of music, letters, lovemaking, the martial arts, and the contemplative process itself (Minford, 2003).

At the nexus of the cultural refinement and political horror of the period developed a “contemplative literature” (Sawyer, 2004) that sought to fathom the chaotic order of the world. The way of thinking that permeated all these texts came from “the observation and contemplation of the forces at work in the environment, from the attunement of the microcosmic self to the energies of the macrocosm” (Minford, 2003, p.xxv). Rulers and

scholars studied and contemplated these books as they struggled with the complex problems of their day. The classical Chinese canon as produced by the Shih, including the great works of military thought, lend themselves particularly well as contemplative aids to reflect on the human constant. More than 2,300 of these works have survived the ravages of time (Pheng et al., 1995) with only a handful known outside China.

While they are very much products of their time and context, they were written in an ecumenical and immutable fashion, designed to provide advice to anyone at any time. It is the freshness of the language and the eternal relevance of the message that has given works like the *I Ching*, the *Tao Te Ching*, *Chuang-Tzu* and *Sun-Tzu Bing Fa* an enduring status in ‘the West’ since they were first introduced there from the eighteenth-century CE onwards. The compatibility of their teachings to modern business practices has been extensively commented on (see e.g., Low, 2001, Tung, 1994). The ubiquity of these texts, particularly of the writings of Sun Tzu, is constantly reinforced by their inclusion in contemporary military reading lists.

Classical Greece

Ferrill (1985) recounts how a changing tactical environment, combined with that curious proclivity for inquiry that stood the Greeks out from their classical contemporaries, led to the development of a true military science in the years during and after the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE). In the Athenian firmament particularly, the idea developed that their more complex ‘modern’ campaigning required a more intellectually based generalship, one where a sophisticated appreciation of tactics, logistics and people management skills mattered as much as the honour-based leadership of the heroic era (ps.162-6).

Ferrill (1985) has also described the phenomenon of the ‘professor of tactics’ in Greek society, tutors (with some military experience one would assume) who were available to

educate young candidates for generalship on the tactical theories of the day. The very existence of these ‘professors’, and the willingness of the well-off to pay for their services, demonstrates that Greek society increasingly saw war as an intellectual activity (Ferrill, 1985, pp.162-6). Unfortunately little is known about the quality or doctrinal foundation of these proto military academics other than the rather partisan and disparaging references made to them by Xenophon in *Constitution of the Spartans* and *Recollections of Socrates* (Ferrill, 1985, pp.165-6). What is known is that the Greeks favoured historical, as opposed to a more scientifically grounded, analytical approach to military instruction (Ferrill, 1985, p.164).

Xenophon’s contempt for ‘classroom warfare’ begins the debate, zero-sum for its more extreme adherents over the ages, between the educationally and the experientially inclined models of professional development that has raged until the modern day, as illustrated by the impassioned debate on officer development conducted within the Canadian Forces at the turn of the millennium (Horn, 2001, Beare, 2001). From the Peloponnesian War to the fall of the Western Empire some 800 years later, saw the beginnings of what has been described as a military canon, book-ended by the writings of Thucydides, Xenophon and Aeneas Tacticus in the fourth-century BCE and those of Vegetius in the fourth-century CE (Ferrill, 1985, p.164). While Homer’s heroic *Iliad* was still the principal inspiration of Alexander (Renault, 1975, p.28), the more temporal works of Xenophon were used for practical guidance by figures like Cicero and Scipio (Ferrill, 1985, p.164).

The Middle Ages and Renaissance

While Van Creveld (2000) is generally dismissive of the quality of military works produced during the Late Middle Ages, he does acknowledge the return to literacy in the period by the European aristocracy, particularly in their rediscovery of the military classics of Rome and Byzantium (ps.55-65). That the ideal of the “cultivated warrior” was cherished by the elite can be seen in cultural artefacts of the period like the sepulchre of Martin Vázquez de

Acuña in the cathedral of Sigüenza, Guadalajara, Spain, adorned with a statue of the warrior, killed in battle in 1486, clad in armour, but thoughtfully reading a book (Mackay, 2000, p.114).

Figure Sixteen: The tomb of Martín Vázquez de Acuña (Malaga, 2013)

Prior to the professionalisation of the military and the development of a coherent professional military education from the Enlightenment period on, an archetype can be discerned, the polymaths dubbed by later eras as ‘Renaissance Man’. The educated classes of the Renaissance and for another few centuries beyond tended to be broadly read and “widely acquainted with military and diplomatic affairs, if not directly from experience, then from extensive reading in ancient and modern works on statecraft” (Eden, 1991).

Two archetypes of the period are Montaigne and Montecuccoli. A moralist and philosopher of life (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, pp.178-180), Michel de Montaigne was the notable ‘reader’ of the French Renaissance whose *Essays* (1580/1958) still touch the imagination of

popular audiences today.²⁶ While often ignored by historians of philosophy (Solomon and Higgins, 1996, p.179), a scan of the military reference books at hand show that he is *always* ignored by historians of war. Understandably so, for most reference biographies of Montaigne choose only to highlight his scholarship, political diplomacy, and idiosyncratic worldview. However Montaigne, like his father, was a soldier of some minor distinction (Pop, 2001, Fleming, 2009) and his writings are replete with musings on war (Rapoport, 1964, Bonadeo, 1985, Hale, 1998, O'Neill, 2001).

Raimondo, Count Montecuccoli, shared with Turenne and Condé the first place among European soldiers of the seventeenth-century. His *Memorie della guerra* profoundly influenced the art of war for the next century (Keegan and Wheatcroft, 1996, ps.201-2). Among Montecuccoli's other achievements, Barker (1975) highlights his great literary output, describing him as a "studious warrior", the epitome of the science of generalship who sought to "correlate the wisdom of the printed word with the experience of battle" (p.2). A reader with catholic tastes, Barker (1975) found in his analysis of Montecuccoli's writings a broad range of reference points from Medieval and Renaissance texts, ancient Greece and Rome, contemporary scientific works, fellow military theorists,²⁷ historians and political-jurists from the period (p.55).

Under the influence of Machiavelli, the intellectual and literary roots of military thought in the period, and the increase in interest in the science and philosophy of war, lay firmly in the rediscovery or 'rebirth' of classical literature (Newark, 1988, ps.181-3). The military science in the period was evolving through the study of a combination of Greek and Roman classics²⁸

²⁶ For example the book and TV adaptation of De Botton (2000).

²⁷ Montecuccoli's military theory contemporaries include long-forgotten thinkers like Georg Basta, Adam Freitag, Buonaiuto Lorina, Hendrik Hondius, Johann Neumair, Francois de Noue, Henri de Rohan, Diego Ufano and Johann Wallhausen (Barker, 1975, ps.57-8).

²⁸ Barker (1975) lists these Greco-Roman influences as Aeneas Tacticus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Caesar, Rufus Curtius, Aelian Tacticus, Frontinus, Justinus (Trogus Pompeius), Onosander, Plutarch, Polybius, Publius Aemilianus Cornelius Scipio, Sallust and Vegetius (p.57).

and the new scientific literature and the exchange of ideas that came about through its dissemination (Barker, 1975, ps.55-8). From this time onward, after the foundation of military science as a discipline for serious study, military leaders strove with increasing fervour to understand their metier by means of a cognitive process – the applied and directed study of the writings of the great martial thinkers and practitioners. This marks the beginnings of professional military reading in the sense understood today.

The Enlightenment

The seventeenth-century, arguably the beginning of the ‘modern’ professional age, was a ferment of military innovation, from technological advancements in fortifications and weaponry, tactics and training (Montgomery, 1968, Jones, 1989). The proto-nations and their elites of the period adapted to this original ‘revolution in military affairs’ in different ways and at different speeds, depending on their particular socio-cultural, economic and strategic context (Lynn, 2003).

Whereas the Dutch Republic, in perpetual conflict with the Hapsburg Empire, could produce new styles of command and standards of military professionalism to rise to the challenges of the age, the socially stratified English Kingdom still clung to the old hierarchies of status rather than merit to produce its military leadership, and as a consequence was slower to adapt to the new realities. The innovations of Maurice of Nassau, stadtholder and captain-general of the Dutch Republic, and his contemporaries created a new paradigm where the military officer, aristocrat or commoner, “was now expected to be well read and educated, as well as skilled in the arts of war and command” (Manning, 2007 p.675).

The actualities of battle in the gunpowder age were a world away from the romantic ideal portrayed in art and literature. Commenting on a depiction of the eighteenth-century battle of Fontenoy by court painter Pierre Lenfant, John A. Lynn sardonically notes an image of

“control and glory”, where “parts of the field are obscured by smoke, but none by blood. No wounded writhe upon the ground; no gaps break the linear perfection of the infantry” (Lynn, 2003 p.114). The reality was very different, with human and inhuman noise, smoke, fire, movement, and sheer confusion contributing to an assault on the senses that made figuring out what was actually going on across the battlefield impossible for all, commanding general included.

Therefore, and in contradiction to much later thought, “experience in battle was thought to be insufficient because one person could observe only part of the action, and it was therefore necessary to read histories of warfare to supplement this incomplete knowledge and experience”. Learning, through engagement with military treatises, memoirs, the classics of the ancients, as well as contemporary works on mathematics and engineering came to be seen as “the nourishment of military virtue” (Manning, 2007 p.675).

In his consideration of how the ‘great captains’ of history learned the art of strategic decision making, Brodie (1973) isolated one possible important factor – professional reading.

“Meaningful parallels were usually not to be found in the leader’s own experience, though he may have found them in a creative reading of history – the kind of reading that enables one without effort and perhaps only half consciously, or even unconsciously, to recall some past instance that bears in some significant way on a present problem” (p.435). The historical context Brodie (1973) attaches this remark to - the mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries – is important to this study, for the age of Marlborough, Eugene, De Saxe, Frederick et al was, to Brodie’s eyes, marked by a paucity of *current* works of value on the higher military arts (pp.435-6).

Brodie’s low opinion of the military works of the Enlightenment is shared by writers like Van Creveld (2000) who, while admitting it to be a curious thing that the age of the Great

Captains could produce military theory of so little value, goes on to portray the theorists of the period as being so fixated on the ideas and works of the ancients that, despite their revolutionary action in the field, they could contribute little that was fundamentally new on the page (p.73). A curious thing indeed; but only if, like Brodie and Van Creveld, one focusses one's lens narrowly on the 'pure' military writing of the period, i.e. that focussing exclusively on tactical or operational concerns.

Lawrence (2009), building on the earlier research of Beckett (1991), Anglo (2000) and Fissel (2001), has provided a compelling challenge to this perspective, arguing that a sophisticated culture of military inquiry and instruction had developed among the aristocracy and landed gentry of pre-Civil War England. For those who had not benefitted experientially from the campaigns of Elizabeth I in Ireland, the Thirty Years War or the wars of the Dutch against the Spanish Empire, a range of up-to-date specialist tactical treatises from the continent were available in translation to provide answers to the practical problems of command.

The Enlightenment has been seen as marking the transition from the age of the self-taught 'gentleman' soldier, to the age of professionalism (Childs, 2000) marked by the emergence in the 1770s of the military academy and staff college, and, concurrently with this transition, an increase in the number of specialist military treatises, written by military specialists, for specialist military audiences (Van Creveld, 2000, p.93). Thus in this view, one result of increasing professionalisation is an increase in both the quantity and quality of military theory. An alternative interpretation is possible. This is that the increasing professionalisation, coupled with a varying quality and breadth of instruction at the PME institutions, and the increased circumscription as to the purpose of professional military education by the military authorities, led to a narrowing of the focus of military thought to the purely 'scientific' aspects of the martial endeavour.

The age of industry

The increasing professionalisation of the military in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is shadowed by its increasing ‘industrialisation’. The preeminent military thinker of the mid-eighteenth-century was the technological ‘early adopter’ and training innovator Maurice de Saxe (Macksey, 1973, p.87) who, through his practical innovations and his influential work, *Reveries upon the Art of War* (De Saxe, 1732/1985), was to have a great influence on two of the ‘Great Captains’ of the coming century, Frederick the Great of Prussia and Napoleon Bonaparte. While largely ignored by his immediate contemporaries, his promotion of the idea of “intelligent leadership” to produce high morale and a reasoned response from subordinates resonated with his intellectual heirs (Macksey, 1973, p.87).

Frederick’s contribution to professional reading was notable. Much like his ancient Chinese counterparts, his *Military Instructions for the Generals* (Frederick, 1747/1985), which outlined his philosophy of war and tactical and operational doctrine, was published in 1747 under standing orders in a limited edition of fifty copies. It remained secret until a copy was captured in 1760 and subsequently published (Macksey, 1973, p.94). Frederick’s system was drawn upon by the Count of Guibert for his 1772 *Essai Général de Tactique* which, in its advocacy for a popular citizen’s army, was to profoundly influence the leadership of the French Revolutionary, and Imperial, Armies (Jones, 1989, 316-7) and the American Revolutionary Army under Washington (Spaulding, 1924).

Napoleon casts a giant shadow over the period, the study of military history and leadership, and the activity of professional military reading. This famous maxim is self-explanatory: “read over and over again the campaigns of Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Gustavus, Turenne, Eugene and Frederick...this is the only way to become a great general and to master the secrets of the art of war” (Napoleon, 1827/1985). Napoleon’s reading of the classics, history and political theory, geography, travelogues, poetry, drama, and literature is well catalogued

by his many biographers. Durant and Durant (1975) document the influence of Plutarch's *Lives* on the young Napoleon, while Cronin (1994) notes the influence of Plato, Machiavelli, and Montaigne on his political thought, the reading research he conducted prior to campaigns and the portable library that travelled with him throughout his years of conquest.

In *Chapter One*, I explain how this research was prompted by earlier research into the reading habits of Major-General Kippenberger (McElhatton, 2008b). Cronin (1994) shows that, like Kippenberger and Patton, Napoleon was a habitual note-taker and annotator of texts and had great powers of memorisation and recall, all developed through years of concentrated self-directed study. His military ideas, codified into his *Maxims* (Napoleon, 1827/1985), were the battle-field companion of soldiers like Stonewall Jackson in the 'total' wars of the late nineteenth-century (Phillips, 1985, p.405).

If Napoleon casts his shadow over military history, then the contemporaries Antoine Jomini and Clausewitz cast their shadow over military theory. Himself a military writer of some renown, nineteenth-century Russian General Mikhail Dragomirov quipped that "it is well known that military history, when superficially studied, will furnish arguments in support of any theory or opinion" (Luvaas, 1965, p.91). He could easily have been referring to the works of Jomini and Clausewitz, the latter particularly, like his philosophical ancestor Sun Tzu, frequently misinterpreted or cherry-picked for justifying *bon mots*. I refer to a less-appreciated aspect of Clausewitz' impact on professional reading in due course.

Antoine-Henri Jomini was a Swiss military theorist who served under, and sought to interpret Napoleon. Very much a product of the Enlightenment who promoted a geometrical and scientific approach to war, Jomini's *Summary of the Art of War* published in 1838 became the premier military-educational text of the mid-nineteenth-century and greatly influenced U.S. Civil War generals. A twentieth-century editor of Jomini's work, Marine Corps General J. D.

Hittle (Jomini, 1958/1987) popularized the idea that ,“many a Civil War general went into battle with a sword in one hand and Jomini’s *Summary of the Art of War* in the other” (p.396).

In his 1958 edition of Jomini’s *Art of War*, Hittle highlights “the strange paradox of military history” whereby in the mid-nineteenth century Jomini’s name was “synonymous with military wisdom”, while the works of Clausewitz were virtually unknown to all but a “small group of leading military thinkers”, whereas, by the mid-twentieth-century, “the military world that today burns gun-powder at the altar of Clausewitzian doctrine has all but forgotten Jomini” (p.395). Over half a century later, a cursory scan of military journals articles and monographs shows that this is truer than ever.

While this may be due to the discrediting of the formalistic and schematic ‘scientific’ approach to war that Jomini championed, as Waldman (2012) has shown, there is much in Jomini that complements the Clausewitzian conception of war (p.348). Rather, it may be that Jomini is simply the victim of fashion, neglected because he *is* neglected, rather than because he *should* be. This has some bearing on our consideration of ‘canon’.

Between 1743 and 1908 also saw the foundation of modern British professional military education with the founding of the Royal Military Academy and the Royal Military College (Lloyd, 1950, p.8). This period was characterised by an ongoing battle between reformers and reactionaries for control over the administration of the British Army and the education of its officers, a masochistic struggle ultimately “tragic” (Skelly, 1971) for the soldiers and the officers who led them into the wars in the Crimea and South Africa.

When reform over the commissioning of officers finally came, albeit slowly, to the British army in the nineteenth-century, birth and wealth became no longer sufficient in themselves to secure a commission, and competitive examination, and the preparation for it, became

mandatory. While the reformers held sway, powerful reactionaries in the British military establishment fought against the meritocratic reforms in a manner that would long perpetuate the anti-intellectual image of the British officer class.

“Earl Grey was impelled to warn that too much learning weakened the mind and said that brain disease was decimating the military cadets of France. Sidney Herbert said he would hate to see an army of bookworms; he preferred the ‘fine fellow,’ so long as he knew his duties. General Sir William Codrington warned of the danger of getting a man whose mind is a complex dictionary instead of a man whose mind is created for energy and action” (Turner, 1956, ps.197-8).

Despite the prevalence of this educational Luddism²⁹, and the peculiar effect the regimental system has on British professional military education to this day, active autonomous reading by ambitious and able young British officers flourished. An 1850s guide, *The Pattern Military Officer*, recommended that officers engage deeply with key contemporary texts like Yate’s *Elementary Treatises in Tactics and Strategy*, Napier’s *History of the War in the Peninsula*, Wellington’s *Dispatches*, Maurice de Saxe’s *Reveries*, and Napoleon’s *Maxims*, as well as classical evergreens like Caesar’s *Commentaries*, Plutarch’s *Lives* and the *Histories* of Livy, Polybius and Xenophon (Turner, 1956, p.198), many of which were being collected and read by Kippenberger et al over seventy years later (Dietrich, 1989, McElhatton, 2008b).

After its success in the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, the German Army became the global centre of military innovation and German thinking on tactics, organisation, and doctrine embedded itself into other nations’ armies and academies (Luvaas, 1965, p.71). Much of this innovation, and its dissemination abroad, was facilitated by establishment of professional journals that gave soldiers everywhere a forum to publish technical and theoretical articles. The period was also notable for the “ferment of discussion” created by technological change. This professional discussion was assisted by the establishment of new military academies giving a new direction to doctrinal innovation, the expansion of the historical sections of

²⁹ Lloyd (1950) mischievously quotes a senior officer of the Napoleonic period who described a proposed regimental library as, “an unnecessary and objectionable institution” (p.8).

General Staffs and thus the solidifying of military history as a sub-discipline in its own right, and a period of intense revision of tactical manuals (Kennedy & Nielson, 2002).

An example of the enduring nature of some works of military literature, and how their lessons, influenced by changes in the international strategic and tactical environment, can be forgotten and then rediscovered by subsequent generations, can be seen in the work of Colonel C.E. Callwell. One of the few military works of any originality to come out of the British military in the late-nineteenth-century (Luvaas, 1965, p.81), Gray (1999) argues that Callwell's 1896 *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, is, along with the writings of Mao and T.E. Lawrence, a "first rank" and profound source for understanding the principles of irregular warfare (p.283). On publication, the work became the "textbook for imperial soldiers" (Gray, 1999, p.275), was quickly translated and published in France, then Britain's leading colonial rival (Luvaas, 1965, p.81), and was a much sought-after text by I.R.A. officers during Ireland's 1919-21 War of Independence (Clode, 2010).

Noting "the book's enduring relevance as a study of how the weak may often thwart the strong in [irregular] warfare" on its republication in the mid-1990s, Cohen (1996) found that, some dated tactical injunctions aside, the work was a thoughtful examination of "the perennial frustrations of colonial powers in dealing with their amorphous opponents" (p.143). Theoretical content aside, Clode (2010) highlights that the very structure of the book – its use of keynotes, extensive cross-indexing and glossaries – show that Callwell had created a work that was to be both studied and used as a practical handbook in the field.

The era of ideological warfare

Earlier in this section I noted that I would refer to a less-appreciated aspect of Clausewitz' impact on 'professional' reading. As will become apparent, the 'professionals' referred to will not completely conform with the model presented to this point.

The intellectual brilliance of *On War* can be best appreciated in contrast with the contemporaneous output of other military theorists, Jomini excepted. For example, MacDougall's (1858) *Theory of War*, while providing interesting historical insights into the operational concerns of its time, is purely an intellectual curiosity, with little or no contemporary relevance. While the continuing relevance of Clausewitz to the post-modern profession of arms is a topic of much debate (Meilinger, 2007, Gardner, 2009, Andersen, 2012, Waldman, 2012), his continuing *political* relevance through his influence on guerrilla, insurgency, and terrorism theory is hard to dispute.

To this point I have been primarily focussed on members of *legitimate* armed forces i.e. the mandated forces of a state (Taylor, 1988, ps.62-3). While professional officers *are* the subject of this inquiry, my ability to hone in on the focus of our inquiry, professional reading, has been somewhat hampered by the complex set of interrelating activities emerging officers engage in to develop as leaders.

Whichever education taxonomy it is considered through, isolating professional reading as a distinct factor in leadership development could be considered an exercise in making tangible the intangible. However, stepping back and remembering the primary or elemental function of a military leader - i.e. the exercise of authority over forces in the accomplishment of a mission (Snyder, 1993, p.11) – then I may be justified in expanding, with regard to the impact of professional reading, the literature regarding our subject group to include irregular, or non-professionally developed martial theorists and leaders, i.e. those who have developed and proven their military prowess without recourse to a formalised professional military education framework or programme.

Before I go further, a qualifying statement is required. In examining 'non-professionals', I am considering individuals who are or were, predominantly, or at some formative time in their

career, engaging in guerrilla, insurgency, or other politically inspired activities that can be labelled terroristic. Ethically, politically, historically, and emotionally, this is tricky ground. For one, the discourse surrounding the activities of non-professional or non-state actors is subjective, emotionally-charged, and infused with ideological or cultural bias (Steele, 1986) regardless of whether the topic is considered from a religious (Stern, 2003), ethnic (Harff and Gurr, 2004), philosophical (Elshtain, 2003), ideological (Bloom, 2007), or international law (Dershowitz, 2003) perspective. These considerations are not the purview of my research.

Bale (2012) has highlighted the dearth of research on the ways and means individuals and organisations who could variously be termed³⁰ irregular, clandestine, covert, illegitimate, terroristic etc., actually “acquire, analyse, share, and apply knowledge” (p.18). While this might be true regarding today’s activists, a clear insight is available into the dissemination of knowledge among the anarchists and revolutionary and guerrilla communists of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries.

White (2003) describes the international phenomenon of international terrorism as “historically connected” (p.112). Plotting a line from the Russian theorists on revolution of the late-nineteenth/early twentieth-centuries, through their Irish student Michael Collins, and on to the irregulars of the Middle East, White (2003) places the intellectual pivot of modern terrorism with its “primary architects” Carlos Marighella and Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, and its theoreticians Franz Fanon and Régis Debray (White, 2003, ps.112 & 131).

While this plotline comfortably (to our sensibilities) places the evolution of terrorist thought on the ideological fringes, it hides an uncomfortable reality; that is that much contemporary military thought shares an intellectual heritage with much of the radical thought that is of

³⁰ While Bale’s study is based on contemporary conflict and published in an emotionally and politically nuanced intellectual environment (e.g. subjects are all categorically labelled ‘terrorists’), his study focus, theoretical perspective and findings provide a useful lens through which to examine the acquisition of professional knowledge and expertise, by non-members of the profession, through non-prescribed or non-conventional means.

such concern to military thinkers today. As Taylor (1988) shows, it is possible to draw a plotline from Clausewitz to Lenin and Mao through to Che and Fanon on one hand (ps.61-7) and, by extension, to the Islamists and Salafis on the other.

As Macksey (1973) and Strachan (2007) show, Clausewitz' *On War* (1832/1976) developed within the same intellectual milieu that gave birth to the theoretical basis of revolutionary communism. In his analysis of 'What is War?' Clausewitz made two important assertions. The first was that "war...is an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will" (p.75). The second was that "war is a mere continuation of policy by other means" (p.87). These ideas greatly influenced Engels and Marx, and subsequently Lenin and Mao (Taylor, 1988, p.62) leading them to develop the theory and practice of guerrilla warfare that is influential to this day (Christenson et al., 1975).

Trotsky's lifelong intellectual development through reading highlights how development of theoretical military capability can develop outside of a conventional military organisation (Wolfe, 1966, ps.202-3). In early 1917, to prepare for the armed revolt in Russia that he knew was imminent, Lenin, "history's most influential student of Clausewitz" (Kaiser, 2009, p.668), threw himself into a study of military tactics, particularly *On War* and General Cluseret's *On Street Fighting* (Pearson, 1975, p.33), which he had translated into Russian back in 1905 (Wolfe, 1966, ps.326-7). Paul Gustave Cluseret was both a theorist and practitioner of urban guerrilla warfare, his experience in the Paris Commune helping him produce some of "the most insightful writing on the conduct of strategy and operations in industrial cities" (Evans, 2009, p.518).

Irish social revolutionary James Connolly was greatly influenced by Cluseret's writings, penning his own influential treatise *On Street Fighting* (Connolly, 1915/1978) in the year before he led the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin. Principle Republican strategist during the

Irish War of Independence 1919-21, Michael Collins' tactical education was primarily through his study of the writings of Russian anarchists (White, 2003, ps.69-70, & 85).

An early British theorist-practitioner was Tom Wintringham. Drawn to communism through idealistic convictions rather than through working-class roots like Connolly, the university-educated Wintringham developed his military theory in response to his experiences in WWI and his belief that warfare was changing in favour of guerrilla tactics undertaken by a citizen's army fighting in a "just cause". He raised, and led, the International Brigade that fought for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and, in response to the threat of Nazi invasion after Dunkirk, founded and trained the Local Defence Volunteers, which was to become the basis of the Home Guard (Bloom, 2007, p.232-3).

His books included a primer on the historical development of guerrilla warfare, *Weapons and Tactics* (1943/1973), the handbook *Guerrilla Warfare* (Levy, 1941), credited to his friend 'Yank' Levy, but generally agreed to have been written by Wintringham, and a variety of articles published in the magazine *Picture Post*. His communist background meant that he was held in great suspicion by British authorities during WWII and he had little influence on the training of British forces after 1940. However, as Bloom (2007) notes, his writings were read with great interest in Palestine, and translated into Hebrew, his ideas on the formation of secret cells put into deadly effect by Haganah and Irgun in their insurgency for the creation of Israel (p.233).

The foremost theoretician-practitioner of guerrilla warfare is Mao Tse-tung (Christenson et al, 1975, p.146). His thoughts on professional reading are quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Mao's thought developed in the political hothouse of late-Imperial China where students, intellectuals and leftists were simultaneously embracing and reacting to Western theory in response to a century of constant economic, social and regime upheaval

(Christenson et al, 1975, ps.148-9). Mao's theory of guerrilla warfare developed from the Chinese communists' need to grow military strength and mass support from a position of weakness. For Mao, guerrilla warfare was as much an intellectual and psychological enterprise as it was tactical.

Osanka (1971) describes the intellectual dimension of guerrilla warfare and its dependence on propaganda, psychological warfare, and a cadre of trained and ideologically literate, or indoctrinated, fighters, leaders and organisers. Kellen (1971) notes that, like guerrilla warfare, psychological warfare is an "ancient art" and is the adjunct of all application of force. This intellectual dimension of warfare uses the employment of forms of deterrence, coercion, compellance to forestall the use of actual force; psychological warfare is emotional, verbal, uses trickery, subversion and deception, blandishments and inducements, is primarily psychologically based and therefore to a large degree an intellectual exercise (p.417-8).

The advent of the nuclear age changed the pattern of international relations and altered the threat of general war, creating the conditions for more 'limited' forms of war. These limited wars were no longer 'traditional' and often saw the employment of nonprofessional or irregular forces (Janowitz, 1971, ps.14-5). From an English-speaking perspective, the defining 'limited' and guerrilla war of the Cold War era is the second Viet Nam war, one that was long, misunderstood, and bitterly debated (Grey and Doyle, 1992).

In describing the development of the theory and practice that guided the Viet Nam Communist Party's conduct of both the conventional and guerrilla portions of the war against, first France, and then the American-supported South Vietnamese regime, Kolko (2001) highlights the intellectual development of the central cadre of highly educated individuals who led the movement and directed its military strategy. Committed Marxists,

their years in jail³¹ had given them time to refine their strategic thinking through individual study and group discussion (ps.44-5). The Party's leaders, including Vo Nguyen Giap, a French-trained history professor (Fall, 1961, p.34), were not merely military and political administrators but also intellectuals "with an exceptionally nuanced curiosity" about a variety of topics, including military strategy, which they read and wrote about tirelessly (Kolko, 2001, ps.48-9).

Intellectualism was a common driver in twentieth-century guerrilla and revolutionary forces. In Cuba, Fidel Castro³² a lawyer, and Ernesto 'Che' Guevara a medical doctor, are prime examples. Petras (1998) claims that Guevara was a revolutionary theorist even when he was engaged in armed combat. In the words of Guevara's associate and fellow guerrilla war theorist Régis Debray (1975), Guevara was "both a man who analysed and wrote and a man of action and adventure" (p.142).

McLaren (1999) has claimed for a strong pedagogical foundation to Guevara's revolutionary praxis, situating Guevara within a redemptive model of educational leadership.³³ McLaren (2001) sees Guevara's pedagogy as essentially based on the transformative power for the individual through the development of a revolutionary consciousness and sensibility defined as becoming intellectually, morally and socially active (p.123). In *Guerrilla Warfare* (1969) Guevara sets out his basic principles for a programme of training and education for recruits to a revolutionary cadre, with what could be termed 'revolutionary literacy' featuring large on the syllabus.

³¹ While prisons are often dubbed 'universities of crime' for their criminal inmates, they have long been 'political universities' for revolutionary and terrorist cadres, places of study, debate and intellectual training and development. Notable examples include The Maze in Northern Ireland (English, 2003) and the Egyptian prisons where Muslim Brotherhood activists like Sayeed Qutb taught revolutionary doctrine.

³² Shortly after Castro overthrew the Batista government in Cuba in 1959, a newspaper reported on Castro's 'revolutionary reading list', *The Prince* being a notable feature (Karolidis et al., 1999, p.128).

³³ Peter McLaren is a leading figure in the Critical Literacy Theory discussed in *Chapter Four*.

“Reading should be encouraged at all times, with an effort to promote books that are worthwhile and that enlarge the recruit’s faculty to encounter the world of letters and great national problems. Further reading will follow as a vocation” (Guevara, 1969, ps.115-6).

Where the responsibility and freedom to determine which books are ‘worthwhile’ – with each individual or with the organisational leadership – is left to the reader to judge, collective experience of ideologically intense communities since the advent of mass printing (Karolides et al., 1999) would suggest that, in practice, reading choice would likely be heavily prescribed from ‘above’. Despite the popularity of Guevara’s theories, Petras (1998) has argued that Guevara’s tactical and strategic theories for armed guerrilla struggle are historically limited in their utility and relevance (ps.9-10).³⁴ Fairbairn (1974) believes Guevara mistakenly derived and proselytised universal or generic ‘laws’ from non-replicable local or specific conditions (p.263).

Earlier, the view was put that from an English-speaking perspective, the defining ‘limited’ and guerrilla war of the Cold War era was the second Viet Nam war. However, from a theoretical, professional reading perspective, the more definitive example might be the Algerian War, 1954-1962, Horne’s (1977) classic account being a common feature of modern military reading lists (Crane, 2007, p.391). Wolf (1971) stated that the war was important, not just for its tactical and political lessons, but because it also gave rise to two influential theories on revolutionary war (p.242).

The first was the theory of colonial revolutions developed by Dr. Frantz Fanon, propagandist and “diplomat” for the Algerian liberation movement (Wolf, 1971, p.243). Fanon’s military theory was hugely influential among the young intellectuals of the various African national liberation movements (Adam, 1993). As Oppenheimer (1970) points out, the tragedy of both Fanon and Debray’s intellectual journeys is that, what were initially challenging ideas that

³⁴ Petras believes Guevara’s true intellectual legacy rests in his general analysis of politics and his reflections on political action and economic structures.

aimed to promote thought became antithetical to this when they and their followers increasingly adopted rigidly doctrinaire modes of thought, accentuated by an anti-intellectual cult of violence underpinned by narrowly prescribed, ‘politically correct’ reading (p.52-6). There is an irony here in Clausewitz, a liberally educated autodidact, contributing to an intellectual culture of narrow dogmatism.

The second theory developed in Algeria is much the more important one in relation to our research, one that has contemporary resonance and takes us back to our professional subjects. Wolf (1971) describes how, in response to their defeat in Viet Nam a group of French officers developed a ‘theory of revolutionary war’ or *guerre revolutionnaire*, drawing from the writings of Mao and France’s long experience of colonial warfare or ‘small wars’ in Algeria, Indochina, and Africa (ps.242-4). An important member of this circle of theorist-practitioners was David Galula who, by the late 1950s, had led an extraordinary military career that had taken him to every theatre of war “that a military theorist of his time needed to be” (Marlowe, 2010, p.iii).

In her timely biography, Marlowe (2010) shows how between 1960 and 1963, Galula, who died, still young, in 1967, participated in the first American investigations into counter-insurgency theory under the auspices of President Kennedy. This part of his life saw Galula write *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (1964), a major work among the “voluminous literature” on the subject produced during this period (Marlowe, 2010, p.iv). For a variety of reasons, this body of literature in English and French was, by the 1980s onward, forgotten by all but a few military historians. That was until its rediscovery in the wake of the early post-conquest failures in Iraq by the cadre of American “two-minded” warrior-scholars described by Brooks (2010) at the beginning of this chapter.

Worldwide, militaries are immersed in reading and writing about counter-insurgency (Gumz, 2009). Outside of specialist forces, this phenomenon has only been widespread since the mid-2000s. As Nagl (2007) notes, in Iraq the U.S. Army found itself unready to fight an insurgency because of its early unwillingness to internalise and build upon the lessons of Viet Nam, and its blind insistence on focussing its force development for conventional warfare. Despite its experiences in the wars in Central America in the 1970s and 1980s, no counter-insurgency doctrine had been published since then, and thus, American soldiers were not educated or trained to conduct counter-insurgency campaigns (ps.xiii-xiv). Belatedly recognising this omission by the time the insurgency in Iraq was taking shape, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps set out to remedy the situation through the rapid development of what became the U.S. Army *Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency* (Crane, 2007).

Overseen by Petraeus, the field manual was developed by a team of academics and war veterans who drew from the literature on counter-insurgency including the ‘forgotten’ 1950s and 1960s literature just noted (Nagl, 2007, ps.xv-xix). In his introduction to the Chicago University Press edition of the manual, Nagl (2007) states that, of the many books that informed the writing of the manual, “none was as important as” Galula’s (p.xix). An important feature of the manual is that, for the first time in a U.S. Army doctrine manual, it features an annotated bibliography listing both classic and contemporary texts on counterinsurgency. Nagl (2007) stated that this inclusion of predominantly “non-military” texts is evidence of the military’s acceptance of its need to “learn and adapt” (ps.xviii-xix)

Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency was published in December 2006 to extraordinary international media attention, its leading contributors like Conrad Crane, David Kilcullen and John Nagl achieving near-celebrity status. It was downloaded over 1.5 million times in its first month of publication and was subsequently republished in 2007 in a civilian version. Its impact on professional reading and discourse went beyond the regular military. It was widely

reviewed on Jihadi websites and copies have been found in Taliban training camps in Pakistan (Nagl, 2007, p.xvii).

Through its nearly ninety years of existence, Al Ikhwan El Muslimin, the Society of Muslim Brothers (MB), has been a powerful force in Arab society. The Brothers have been the font of a potent and evolving ideology; the effective opposition to repressive, largely secular, regimes and the vanguard of Islamic revivalism. The MB is the founding movement of political Islam (Massoulie, 1999, p.32), an international fraternity of like-thinking minds and still the most influential Islamist organisation in the Middle East (Abdo, 2000, p.71).

The movement's leadership considers the MB, having provided the others with their ideological basis, to be "the Mother" of all Islamist groups (Novikov, 2004). For Salafists, the Muslim Brotherhood is a cornerstone organization. They articulated the original philosophy on which all subsequent Salafi-Jihadist activism is based. An understanding of this movement and its message is fundamental to an understanding of the current and future ebbs of the affairs of the near East and its geopolitical progeny.

The Muslim Brotherhood wears many faces and talks in many tongues. In the eloquent words of Jewish American writer Robert D. Kaplan, "like the Egyptian landscape, whose pigments are dulled by the dust from the surrounding desert and the mud of the Nile, the Brotherhood is concealed in layer upon layer of ambiguity and historical complexity" (Kaplan, 1996, p.108). In the Middle East, where government attitude ranges from wary tolerance to overt hostility, the Brotherhood is a "*fluid mass movement*" whose loose structure and generalist embrace of a range of Islamist thought and expression has helped it survive successive waves of official repression (Ruthven, 2000, p.318). In the West, the Brotherhood is a shadowy creature, working through fronts and proxies among the Arab diaspora to further its long term

objective (Economist, 2006): the purifying of Muslim society and the Islamification of non-Muslim ones.

The parallel with aspects of communist activism has been widely acknowledged. Despite the Brotherhood's early battles against the Egyptian communists (Ali, 2002, ps.97-8) and its antithetical opposition to any form of secular thought, the movements founder Hassan Al-Banna was strongly influenced by left-wing revolutionary thought and the Bolshevik notions around the use of propaganda (Stern, 2003, p.45). The Brotherhood has certainly displayed the resilience that twentieth-century communist groups did.

The intellectual roots of the armed offshoots of the Brotherhood were hinted at in the discovery of a well-thumbed copy of *On War* in an Al Qaeda safe house in Afghanistan after U.S. post September 11 counter-attack. What was most of interest was not so much that jihadis were reading it, but that what they were reading – *On War's* exhortations on courage – were not the 'Clausewitzian' points that are usually concentrated on by Western readers (Strachan and Herberg-Rothe, 2007, p.1).

In this section on professional reading in the era of ideology I have predominantly focussed on the 'professional reading' of irregular, or non-professionally developed martial theorists and leaders who built formidable and enduring military institutions and directed effective campaigns against professional soldiers. I justify this deviation by noting that, while irregular, these paramilitaries, guerrillas, militias, warlords and terrorists, may well be as Ignatieff (1999) dubbed them, "the new architects of postmodern war" (p.5).

I conclude this survey with a brief consideration of professional reading in two military contexts which have a direct bearing on our quantitative and qualitative findings. The first, on Soviet professional reading, is important, highlighting as it does the existence of a rich written intellectual oeuvre that receives scant attention in the reading lists I have analysed.

The second case, on the Canadian Forces, has been chosen because it highlights the debate within the caste/professional model.

Soviet professional reading

As Whiting (1976) observed, until 1963 and the appearance of the full translation into English by strategic scholar Harriet F. Scott of Russian strategist Marshal Sokolovsky's *Soviet Military Strategy*, the study by outsiders of Soviet military literature was limited, students depending on Western academics' secondary source interpretation of Soviet doctrine (p.78). *Soviet Military Strategy*, the product of the collective endeavour of fifteen senior Soviet officers working under Chief of the Soviet General Staff Sokolovsky (p.78), introduced 'Western' defence scholars and practitioners directly to the literature of an "intensely professional defence community" (Gray, 1992, p.38).

The interdisciplinary nature of the study of military affairs was particularly emphasised in the post-WWII writings of Soviet theorists, Savkin (1972) noting that the development of practical recommendations from an investigation of war required a unification of disciplinary effort, military science occupying the 'borders' between the humanities, social and natural sciences (p.1). Kipp (2011) summarises this intellectual endeavour where a culture of doctrinal discourse developed through intense formal and non-formal military education including the provision of the *Officer's Library* series of works on tactics, operational art and strategy (p.81). Interestingly, a work that was to become a required reading for officers in the early 1990s, Aleksandr Svechin's 1927 *Strategy*, had long only been available to select readers through closed reading collections (Kipp, 2011, p.78).

The elite military journal known in Russia as *Voennaia mysl'*, or *Military Thought*, was founded in 1918 and remained classified for nearly 70 years. Since its declassification the journal has become a unique source of information for scholars on the development of

Russian military theory, tactics and strategy. A journal of the now Russian Defence Ministry, it published contributions from senior military personnel and leading lecturers from Soviet, and now Russian, military universities and colleges.

The Soviet military was the first to foresee the transformative impact of the information technology revolution on war. Soviet military leaders in the 1970s theorised about the implications of precision-guided munitions and classified them as part of an emerging "military-technical revolution." Russian strategic culture, which, according to Adamsky (2010), inclines toward a holistic examination of issues and therefore tends to promote the big picture over technical details, undoubtedly helped Soviet military leaders conceptualise new operational methods based on precision-guided munitions; improved command-and-control capabilities; and advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems, despite the fact that the Soviet Union lacked the capability to produce the needed armaments to realise those methods in practice.

The Soviets were more successful than the U.S. and Israeli militaries in conceiving the military-technical revolution because they placed the emerging technology firmly within the context of Soviet deep battle theory, in which the Red Army executed incursions by armoured forces, supported by airpower, deep into enemy rear positions to disrupt command and control, hamper logistics, and destroy enemy forces in massive encirclements. The Red Army implemented this innovative operational theory of war in the drive to Berlin from 1943 to 1945, the greatest land campaign in the history of war. Deep battle theory gave Soviet military leaders a historical and cultural lens through which to examine the application of new technologies on the modern battlefield, which facilitated their ability to incorporate precision-guided munitions and advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems into a new operational theory of warfare in the 1970s (Mansoor, 2011).

The Canadian Forces

The importance of the maintenance of an intellectual culture in an armed service is illustrated by the traumatic experience of the Canadian Forces (CF) in the 1990s. Long relying on experience as the preferred, if not exclusive, organisational learning tool, by the end of the Cold War the CF had developed an anti-intellectual culture which saw scholarship among officers as anathema to the CF 'warrior culture' (Horn, 2011). As Pinch (2000) relates, a "warrior syndrome", perpetuated within a "dysfunctional form of tribalism", was developed in response to, and to counter the effect of, the integration and unification of the armed forces in the 1960s and 1970s (p.161).

Rocked by a series of scandals in the 1990s relating to their peacekeeping mission in Somalia, the CF lost the trust of the government and wider public and exposed "an apparent lack of ethical behaviour and leadership as well as an inability to adapt to, or cope with, significant changes in society and military affairs" (Horn, 2011, p.3). Among other findings, the external inquiry into the affair recommended an overhaul of officer education and development in CF under the guidance of a new generation of leadership (Inquiry, 1997).

After a searching and highly critical internal debate about past organisational learning failings in the CF (see e.g., Grodzinski, 2002, Hope, 2002), particularly with regard to leaderships' role as learning facilitators, the 2000s saw the CF dramatically revitalise its professional development framework, particularly the 'self-directed' strand. A suite of professional reading programmes including *A Guide to Reading on Professionalism and Leadership* was created to further develop leadership skills supplementary and complementary to existing professional military education programmes (Horn, 2006). Judging by the publicly discernible research, writing, publishing, and knowledge diffusion culture now in the CF, it

appears that leadership has shaped CF's inner environment to make a context more conducive to learning than previously existed (Vera and Crossan, 2004).

Summary

This survey of professional military reading historically has been necessarily brief and deliberately selective. A focus on the ancient world was taken to emphasise the enduring philosophical impact of these works. The Medieval, Renaissance and Enlightenment autodidacts were touched on to show the influence of professional reading prior to the establishment of formal military education structures. Through pressures on space, professional reading in the naval and aeronautic services has largely been omitted.

In the examination of canon in *Chapter Four*, I noted that a focus of my research would be to determine whether there was a discernible canon of core military texts. This review of professional reading historically has raised some pointers for discussion, particularly with regard to the enduring influence of the military theorists.

In this literature review section of the thesis I used the conceptual framework to examine the research topic from four perspectives. These were:

- the modern warrior-leader, a product of both past and present, in pursuit of the skill essential for command: the ability to make wise decisions
- the development of the intellectual component of military leadership through reading
- professionalism and professional military education, and
- professional military reading.

In *Chapters Seven to Nine* I present my research findings from the analysis of the military reading lists and research conversations with military leaders and defence academics.

CHAPTER SEVEN: READING THE READING LISTS

In *Chapter Two*, I note that I modelled the seemingly diverse contexts confronting me during the data gathering stage of the research – e.g. military history, professionalism, or technological change – into a single conceptual framework that I could use to aid the data analysis, and then relate that analysis back towards the key focus (i.e. professional reading and its role in developing military leaders). In the following three chapters, I consider the framework and its elements against my research data, testing the validity of its conceptual foundation, highlighting the key findings, and drawing towards the conclusions I outline in *Chapter Twelve*.

In this first findings chapter I outline the findings derived from the documentary analysis of the artefact of the professional military reading lists. The findings include those from: the analysis of the construction of the lists by topic and textual content; the analysis of the lists to identify the existence of core texts across service and national boundaries; the analysis of dominant genres and authorial provenance for the core texts; and the consideration of selected individual reading lists to determine what they can tell us about differing structural and cultural approaches to professional reading in the military.

Development of the reading lists

I have analysed 67 professional military reading lists (see *Annex One*) across services and countries (including non-Anglo Europe, Asia & Latin America). I use the term ‘reading list’ broadly because the artefacts gathered range in substance from simple lists of recommended readings unsupported by annotation, to sophisticated reading programmes supported by extensive supporting information and resources. This second category, exemplified by the U.S. Marine Corps’ reading programme and the French Armée de Terre *Culture Militaire*

website, is the rarest I have found, the majority of lists opting for a middle ground of annotated listings.

Figure Seventeen: New Zealand Army reading list

The lists also vary in terms of their target audience. Some, for example the *New Zealand Army Professional Reading List* and the Australian *Chief of Army's Reading List*, are aimed at all ranks to assist general career development and progression. Other lists, for example the Singapore Armed Forces *SAF Professional Reading Programme*, are aimed at commissioned and warrant officers. Where an all-ranks list has been examined, the analysis has generally concentrated on the aspects of the lists relating to commissioned and warrant officers.

Figure Eighteen: Canadian Forces and Netherlands Institute for Military History reading lists

With some exceptions, the lists are supported by endorsing statements from sponsoring authorities. In the case of all-service lists this is a statement from the service chief, for example the Dutch Commander of the Armed Forces; sub-service, institute or joint-forces lists are typically endorsed by the appropriate commander. These statements are generally earnest in tone, promoting the positive benefits of professional reading to self and service and encouraging, or in some cases actually mandating the engagement with the works on each list. Broad positivity aside, analysis of the endorsing statements reveals the purpose and utility of the reading lists. These are:

- To enhance professional military knowledge in breadth and depth - this is the most prominent goal for the majority of lists and can be interpreted as a means of supplementing formal training and education programmes through the provision of an informal curriculum.
- To enhance general knowledge – though much less common in the lists I have studied, the enhancement of non-military knowledge is found both within larger lists and in niche purpose lists. These typically seek to enhance broader disciplinary knowledge, for example ethics, law, political science or non-military history, or to familiarise personnel with popular culture works on psychology, leadership, economics, personal development etc. The purpose and utility of these lists or list components seems ephemeral. They appear to be largely driven by fads and bestseller lists.
- To prepare for a posting or campaign – these represent military reading lists at their most specifically utilitarian and provide sets of readings to assist personnel gain a broad understanding pre-deployment of the culture, history and characteristics of a particular theatre. My case studies will examine one such list, the *Brave Rifles Reading List*, later in this chapter.

- To prepare for a course or promotion – career progression through course attendance and professional examination is more entrenched in the military than in other professions. While many of the lists examined have an unstated objective of assisting officers prepare for course and/or promotion, some are specifically prepared by military education institutions as preparatory readings. Because all officers would be expected to aspire to entry into these institutions, for example the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, these have been included in our analysis.
- To educate civilians on the military – there are both overt and covert aspects to this purpose. Overtly the lists show that they are also meant for the use of civilian defence personnel for their professional development. Covertly, I have learned through discussions with list developers that some lists have an additional objective of educating politicians, policy-makers, and people of influence on the role and *value* of particular services. This is important in the age of the all-volunteer force where few politicians will have given military service, particularly for services like air forces whose technological nature and ‘distant’ operational role make an appreciation of their ‘worth’ less obvious for the uninitiated.

Construction of the reading lists

Wavell (1953) listed the subjects he believed should be studied by an officer “desirous of perfecting himself in the military profession”. His reading ‘curriculum’ covered: military history; geography; mathematics; engineering; law; administration; political economy; foreign languages; science; and current affairs (p.143). If, as the findings are suggesting, a reading list can act as an informal curriculum to augment formal education programmes and ‘fill their gaps’, then it is of interest to see how closely (or not) they match with Wavell’s ideal self-development programme, with sixty years of change acknowledged.

Of the 67 reading lists analysed, 26 were structured by subject. These varied in the extent that they met Wavell's broad educational aspirations. As highlighted in *Table Two*, five dominant subjects were covered by a majority of the structured lists. These subjects can be broadly termed as strategy, doctrine, military operations, military history, and leadership and command.

My documentary analysis suggests that, when considered from a curriculum perspective, these subjects are emphasised because the scope of the writings on each topic mean that they can only be covered in either breadth *or* depth in formal military education programmes, not both. Their fundamental importance for the development of professional military wisdom necessitates they be mastered through the provision of an informal curriculum of study. It can be inferred that the lesser emphasis given to subjects like administration and logistics, law, and intelligence is due to their being adequately covered through formal education and on-job training.

Table Two: Reading list topic analysis

			Administration	Law	Military History	Current Affairs						
Strategy	Doctrine	Warfare	Administration	Law	Military History	Current Affairs	Intelligence & Security		Leadership & command	Society & culture	Fiction	
Historical strategy and doctrine	Contemporary strategy & doctrine	Air power concepts			History & analysis	Contemporary issues			Command & leadership & management			
		Theory of war and conflicts		Ethics	Military History	Future security environment		Psychology	Command; Biographies Leadership theory; Leadership doctrine			Professionalism
	Theory, doctrine and tactics				Military history		Low intensity conflict and peacekeeping		Leadership, memoirs and biography	Society		
The art of war		Science and war						Man and war		Society and war		
					History Military history	Contemporary history Current areas of conflict		Military psychology	Management philosophy & leadership		Classic literature of the world	Values & ethics of the profession
Strategy		Campaign history; Specialist skills			Military history				Leaders and leadership			
Strategy		General warfare						Experience of war				
Theory of war	Policy, strategy, tactics	Battles, campaigns & wars	Organisational management		Units at war		Logistics and intelligence	Experience of war; Psychology of war	Leadership; Biographies & autobiogs			
National security		Military operations	Organisation and management			Security and regional studies			Leadership			
National security decision making	Strategy and policy	Military operations										
	Keynote works	Fighting arms							Leadership & campaigning			
Classical strategy; Contemporary strategy	Primers										Thought provoking	Political military relations
Strategy, policy, conflict, utility of force, instruments of power,	Classical thought and principles of war; Concepts and doctrines	Components of fighting power; Operational art and campaigning		Law & ethics	Lest we forget				Higher command	Media Understanding others		
Philosophy of war & strategic thought	Doctrinal development	Technology Pre-mech warfare; Mechanised warfare;				Contemporary issues for soldiers			Personalities			

		Low intensity conflict										
	Doctrine Tactics Techniques and Procedures (TTPS)	Counter insurgency history & theory; Lessons learned; Urban combat		Ethical dimensions of combat				Psychological dimensions of combat		Culture & history of others		
Strategy; Theory	General studies; Tactics	Air power; Sea power; Specific wars	Logistics		Military history			Men in battle	Command Leadership		Literature of war	
					Service history and culture	Contemporary issues			Leader of leaders;			
		Counter insurgency						Human factors		Culture & history		
	The military classics; Doctrine	Nature and practice of war; Fortifications; Revolutionary & low intensity and unconventional warfare; Military technology	Economics of national security; Logistics; Training & education Staff		Military history			The face of battle	Memoires & biographies; Command leadership & generalship		Literature of war	Profession of arms
									Leadership & management		PD	
Strategy	Tactics and doctrine	Science technology & industry; Campaigns operations and battles			General histories				Leadership			Core values
The art of war & strategy	The military classics	Unconventional warfare; Technology info	Logistics	Ethics	General military history	Contemporary			Command & leadership			
The art of war	Tactics				Military history				memoires			
			Management & the army enterprise		History	Global perspective			Strategic leadership			
	Future capabilities; Military transition	Support			Military history & heritage			Quality of life	Profess & leadership	Cultural awareness		Teamwork discipline standards & safety

Table Three: Reading lists construction analysis matrix

	Judgment statements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
A1	Accessible Works	List is totally dominated by accessible and popular press works	List is mostly dominated by accessible and popular press works	List is modestly dominated by accessible and popular press works	List balances evenly accessibility and challenge	List is modestly dominated by works of complexity and challenge	List is mostly dominated by complex and challenging works	List is totally dominated by complex and challenging works	Works of Complexity and Challenge	A7
T1	Narrative and Discursive	List is totally dominated by narrative and discursive works	List is mostly dominated by narrative and discursive works	List is modestly dominated by narrative and discursive works	List balances evenly narrative and discursive texts with conceptual and theoretical	List is modestly dominated by conceptual and theoretical works	List is mostly dominated by conceptual and theoretical works	List is totally dominated by conceptual and theoretical works	Conceptual and Theoretical	T7
C1	Contemporary text content	List is totally dominated by texts written about the post-modern era	List is mostly dominated by texts written about the post-modern era	List is modestly dominated by texts written about the post-modern era	List balances evenly a mix of post-Modern texts with texts from or about the late-modern era and before	List is modestly dominated by texts from or about the late-modern era and before	List is mostly dominated by texts from or about the late-modern era and before	List is totally dominated by texts from or about the late-modern era and before	Classic text content	C7
D1	Narrow Domains of Learning	List is totally dominated by works of military history, theory and biography	List is mostly dominated by works of military history, theory and biography	List is modestly dominated by works of military history, theory and biography	List balances evenly traditional military domains and broader disciplines	List is modestly dominated by broader disciplinary works	List is mostly dominated by broader disciplinary works	List is totally dominated by broader disciplinary works	Broad Domains of Learning	D7

My next consideration was to determine how the lists were constructed through a qualitative analysis of their textual content. My interest was to make four criterion-based judgements for each list:

- their relative accessibility to an ‘average’ reader
- their relative reliance on narrative and discursive works
- their inclusion of texts from, or about, the late-modern era³⁵ and before
- their inclusion of works from non-traditionally military domains of learning.

To do this I developed and refined a series of judgement statements for each criterion as shown in *Table Three*. The matrix uses a rating scale to score against each criterion judgement on a range of 1-7 representing a continuum of qualitative statements relative to each criterion. The criteria were assigned the codes A, T, C and D.

The judgements were arrived at hermeneutically: the assessment of the quantity of books on each list and a qualitative ascription of their relationship to the judgement statements required a deep familiarity, or submersion a la Hall (1977), with the broader body of literature; familiarity with the audience targets of the various publishing imprints; and hard and soft copy access to the text of non-familiar works so that judgements could be made.

Cumulatively this involved: prior learning and textual familiarity; close and speed-reading of hard and soft copies of non-familiar texts from the lists; reading and evaluation of book reviews and bibliographies; and research trips to libraries and special collections relevant to the research.

Criterion A required a holistic judgement to be made regarding the relative accessibility of the books on each list to an average reader. This took into account a determination of

³⁵ In line with Moskos’ delineation referred to in *Chapter Five*, the term late-modern has been used here to refer to the period roughly contemporaneous with the Cold War, the beginning of the post-modern period being marked by the First Gulf War.

accessibility in relation to the predominant linguistic and scholastic character of the books in each list (i.e. whether the balance favoured books written with a general or an academic audience in mind). While the evaluation of this criterion depended on a large degree of subjective judgement, it was underpinned by my grounding in adult literacy theory and practice, particularly the body of knowledge relating to the ‘reading age’ of adults.

Criterion T required a holistic judgement to be made regarding the relative dominance of each list by narrative and discursive works as opposed to works focusing on more conceptual and theoretical concerns. It is important to distinguish between the qualitative difference being judged here and in Criterion A. While the former required judgement on linguistic and scholastic characteristics, Criterion T focused on stylistic approaches. That is the extent to which the author(s) was more inclined towards a narrative or discursive approach to the topic matter at hand or whether a more detached theoretical approach was adopted.

It must be stressed that the approach to the judgement of Criteria A and T was not taken from a value-laden perspective. Normatively I appreciated the tension inherent in an exercise that sought both to challenge *and* engage. Too much challenge could realistically discourage engagement by segments of the target audience, particularly those who needed to be encouraged to ‘read up’ professionally, not enough challenge could alienate more advanced or adventurous readers and stereotype the list or programme in their minds as a ‘remedial’ artefact.

Criteria C and D involved comparatively straightforward assessments of list content.

Criterion C determined the relative dominance of lists by books written about the post-modern era. Criterion D determined the relative dominance of the lists by more ‘pure’ military domains of learning. However, Criterion C has a catch built in that impacts the development of conclusions from its findings. This is that the term ‘from or about the late-

modern era and before’ potentially includes works that have been ‘road-tested’ over time, and therefore can be potentially canonical, as well as recent texts with a historical focus, but of such recent vintage as not to have indeterminate longevity.

Figure Nineteen: Reading list construction analysis

The analysis of the reading lists against *Table Three's* seven scale criterion referencing is presented in *Figure Nineteen*. For Criterion A the analysis indicates that the construction emphasis is on providing balance between accessibility and challenge, albeit with some bias towards works that push the prospective reader.

Criterion T analysis indicates that while the construction emphasis is on providing a balance of narrative and conceptual works, the lists tend towards favouring the narrative and discursive style of presentation.

The finding from the Criterion C analysis is less clear. Ostensibly, it appears to indicate a favouring of texts from or about the late-modern era and before. This would support the argument regarding the immutability of lessons from the past. However, drilling further into

the data, a trend in the newest reading lists analysed can be discerned that sees more metaphorical shelf-space given over to texts relating to the post-Cold War interregnum and the twenty-first-century wars following September 11. It can be predicted that this trend will continue as the vantage of time sees the writing, or maturing, of texts, for example on the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns, that are less reportage and ‘political’ and more analytical and objective (and thus instructive).

For Criterion D it is indicated that the reading lists strongly gravitate towards works directly related to the military profession. This supports the conception of the reading lists as ‘shadow curriculums’ that complement the formal professional military education programmes by encouraging broader and deeper engagement with topics that cannot be adequately covered in formal programmes and also need long emersion in to grasp.

So far, the analysis has provided strong findings towards an understanding of the construction and utility of the reading lists. I will now focus on the content of the lists to determine whether a list of key texts is discernable.

Identification of core texts

The analysis of the lists involved: quantifying the texts identified by the 67 lists; assigning each text a code designating a typological categorisation; assigning each text a code designating author provenance; ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across all the lists; ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across the lists from the U.S.; and ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across the lists from outside the U.S.

While they also recommend journal articles, doctrinal manuals, government publications, films etc. as recommended ‘readings’, the military reading lists in our study primarily focus on recommending ‘books’ for their audiences’ attention. Prompted by the idea of canon as a

set of key ‘books’, my selection was thus narrowed down by excluding from the study all texts that were not books as traditionally understood. Edited collections were included and academic monographs, text books, and manuals were excluded. Then, using both deductive and inductive approaches to content analysis (Harris et al., 2011), the texts within each list either explicitly or implicitly contributing to set of key texts for the military were isolated and logged. This process was in some cases aided and in some cases impeded by the variety of structural approaches each list compiler has taken.

The most sophisticated lists, some backed up by the hyperlinking power of the Internet, categorise texts by themes and sub-themes or suitability for rank or career path and provide synopsis or reviews to guide the reader. The most sophisticated provide tutorials and resources to assist the audience’s critical reading skills. The reading list produced by France’s foremost military academy, L’École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr, is an example. *Culture Militaire* (Grandchamp, 2007) is divided into four macro-sections – ‘the art of war’, ‘society and war’, ‘man and war’, and ‘science and war’ – themselves further sub-divided into further micro-topics. Sub-divisions like ‘command style’, ‘typology and analysis of leadership’, and ‘biographies’ gave a clear steer to the authors on which texts were being recommended for their relevance to the development of command and leadership skills.

At the other extremes were reading lists which did little more than list an often concise range of texts which the compiler felt were the key works all military professionals should read. This type of list is exemplified by that published by a former Director of the UK Defence Academy. With the rationale that “reading military history...is an essential contributor to the development of sound judgement, intuition and wisdom in military decision making”, General Kiszely (2006) listed ten key books, seven of which can be deduced from his commentary to relate directly to the development of command and leadership skills.

This qualitative approach to the content analysis using combinations of reasoning styles was followed until 585 individual texts were identified and catalogued. Two further processes were applied before the frequency of appearance across the lists by individual books was calculated. The first process involved assigning each text a code designating a *typological categorisation*; the second, assigning each text a code designating *author provenance*. In the first process, seven typologies were defined to create a meta-category to classify each text. This process sought to provide data that would explain which typological vehicle was most favoured by the militaries for understanding and developing command and leadership skills. The final process involved assigning each text a code designating author provenance. When considering and categorising books the reading lists recommend, it was considered that author provenance would be a factor of importance when evaluating the particular books the lists, through inclusion, invested authority in. The notion of ‘authority’ in this sense relates to a text which remains ‘key’ out of consideration for its continued relevance in contemporary debates (Kubik, 1997, p.7).

To better understand any oblique factors that may have influenced the seeming authority of one text over another, an analysis of the author biographies of the 585 command and leadership related books on the reading lists under consideration was completed to determine author provenance, something which might be of little importance to a lay person, but potentially decisive in a ‘tight’ profession like the military for signalling authority or otherwise.

This analysis determined that the military profession was, varyingly, recommending to its members works from authors, who were at time of publication, from eight determinable categories: 1 – Serving military professionals writing non-fiction; 2 – Retired military professionals writing non-fiction; 3 – Public sector civilian diplomatic/defence/security

professionals writing non-fiction; 4 – Academics from inside the military environment writing non-fiction; 5 – Academics from outside the military environment writing non-fiction; 6 – Popular authors of non-fiction; 7 – Fiction authors with a military background; and 8 – Fiction authors with a non-military background. Of the seven categories, only categories 1, 3 and 4 may need further definition.

For Category 1 the term ‘serving’ is applied strictly when related to an officer or soldier below the rank of General officer. For authors above the rank of General officer their category was determined on a case-by-case temporal basis. For example, while Field Marshal Sir William Slim was, on publication of *Defeat into Victory* (1956), Governor General of Australia, and so more a political than a military figure, his titles, duties, responsibilities and public demeanour of the time place him squarely within those upper echelons of the military of the WWII-era and before, who never truly retired from service. On the other hand, works by contemporary General officers that feature on military reading lists like, for example Anthony Zinni’s *Leading the Charge* (2009), are by military leaders with post-retirement careers actively within the public and private corporate sectors, and so fall within Category 2.

Category 3 is largely a U.S. group who shift from academia to government and back and exert an influence on U.S. defence thinking to a degree their UK academic counterparts can only dream of. Eliot Cohen, whose *Supreme Command* (2002) is highly valued by militaries outside the U.S., has been a Professor of Strategic Studies at John Hopkins University and an official in both the U.S. State Department and Department of Defense.

Category 4 applies to two distinct, yet related, groups of academics. The first, exemplified by British military historian Sir Michael Howard, sees military officers smoothly transition to an academic role that feeds back into, and directly shapes and influences the institutional military thought of the governing elite. The second group, oddly more important as our

findings will reveal, are those civilian theorists, exemplified by John Keegan, who have never entered or engaged in military service, yet have devoted their careers to both understanding the phenomenon of war and engaging with, tutoring, and observing the warrior caste (see, e.g., Introduction to, in Keegan, 1976).

Once the coding was complete the frequency of appearance across the lists by individual books was calculated. Of the 585 texts identified as contributing to the leadership education of the military, a majority were texts that appeared only on one list once. However, it became clear that a set of key texts appeared to be beginning to form, a significant number of texts appearing in multiple lists, across nations and service lines. Three separate tables were compiled: *Table Four* ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across all the lists; *Table Five* ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across the lists from the U.S.; and, *Table Six*, ranking the texts according to the frequency of their appearance across the lists from outside the U.S. Listing in the tables was restricted to texts which had appeared on a minimum of four different reading lists. A four-list filter was chosen after the initial data analysis showed a more coherent and representative list emerging than that when a three-list filter was used.

Table Four: List of key texts global

<i>Key texts recommended in professional military reading lists (N=585)</i>	f
Ω = Pre-WWII ♠ = Anglo-American authorship	
The Art of War – Sun Tzu Ω	23
The Face of Battle – John Keegan ♠	22
The Art of War – Carl von Clausewitz Ω	16
Defeat into Victory – William Slim ♠	15
The Challenge of Command: Reading for Military Excellence – Roger Nye ♠	13
We Were Soldiers Once and Young – Harold Moore & James Galloway ♠	13
The Mask of Command – John Keegan ♠	13
Masters of War – Michael Handel ♠	12
Supreme Command – Eliot Cohen ♠	11
Command in War – Martin Van Creveld	10
The Killer Angels – Michael Shaara ♠	9
Company Commander – Charles McDonald ♠	9
Dereliction of Duty – H.R. McMaster ♠	9
Battle Studies – Ardant Du Picq Ω	9
This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness – T.R. Fehrenbach ♠	9
Band of Brothers – Steven Ambrose ♠	8

Acts of War – Richard Holmes ♠	8
Thinking in Time: Uses of History for Decision Makers – R. Neustadt & E. May ♠	8
In Defence of Duffer’s Drift – Ernest Dunlop Swinton Ω♠	8
Leadership: The Warrior’s Art – Christopher Kolenda ♠	7
Panzer Leader – Hans Guderian	7
Diplomacy – Henry Kissinger ♠	7
The Prince – Niccolo Machiavelli Ω	7
Small Unit Leadership: A Common-sense Approach – Dandridge Malone ♠	7
Once an Eagle – Anton Myrer ♠	7
The Forgotten Soldier – Guy Sajer	7
History of the Peloponnesian War – Thucydides Ω	7
The World is Flat – Thomas Friedman ♠	7
Red Badge of Courage – Stephen Crane Ω♠	6
On The Psychology of Military Incompetence – Norman Dixon ♠	6
Leadership Without Easy Answers – Ronald Heifetz ♠	6
Follow Me: The Human Element in Leadership - Aubrey Newman ♠	6
One Hundred Days: Memoir of the Falklands Battle Group Commander - Sandy Woodward ♠	6
Caesar’s War Commentaries - Julius Caesar Ω	6
Into the Storm: A Study in Command – Tom Clancy & Frederick Franks ♠	5
Knight’s Cross: A Life of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel - David Fraser ♠	5
The General’s War – Michael Gordon & Bernard Trainor ♠	5
Starship Troopers – Robert Heinlein ♠	5
Platoon Leader: A Memoir of Command in Battle – James McDonough ♠	5
The Anatomy of Courage – Lord Moran ♠	5
War As I Knew It – George S. Patton ♠	5
My American Journey – Colin Powell & Joseph Persico ♠	5
Infantry Attacks – Erwin Rommel Ω	5
Hope is Not a Method – Gordon Sullivan & Michael Harper ♠	5
It Doesn’t Take a Hero – Norman Schwarzkopf & Peter Petre ♠	5
George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century - Mark Stoler ♠	5
Good to Great – Jim Collins ♠	5
Battle Leadership – Adolf von Schell Ω	5
Fields of Fire – James Webb ♠	5
All Quiet on the Western Front – Erich Maria Remarque Ω	5
Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground – Robert D. Kaplan ♠	5
The Soldier and the State – Samuel Huntington ♠	5
On Killing – David Grossman ♠	5
Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking – Malcolm Gladwell ♠	5
Eisenhower: Soldier and President – Steven Ambrose ♠	4
On Becoming a Leader – Warren Bennis ♠	4
The Military Maxims of Napoleon – Napoleon Bonaparte Ω	4
The Starfish and the Spider – Ori Brafman & Rod Beckstrom ♠	4
Ender’s Game – Orson Scott Card ♠	4
Seven Habits of Highly Effective People – Stephen Covey ♠	4
A Genius for War: A Life of General George S. Patton – Carlo D’Este ♠	4
The Instruction of Frederick the Great for His Generals – Frederick the Great Ω	4
The Generalship of Alexander the Great – J.F.C. Fuller ♠	4
With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa – Eugene B. Sledge ♠	4
Personal Memoirs – Ulysses S. Grant Ω♠	4
Commander in Chief – Eric Larrabee ♠	4
The Soldier’s Load and the Mobility of a Nation – S.L.A. Marshall ♠	4
Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War – S.L.A. Marshall ♠	4
Reveries – Maurice, Comte De Saxe Ω	4
Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character – Jonathan Shay ♠	4
Lexus and the Olive Tree – Thomas Friedman ♠	4

Table Five: List of key texts US

<i>Key texts recommended in U.S. military reading lists (N=416)</i>	f
The Art of War – Sun Tzu	13
The Face of Battle – John Keegan	13
The Challenge of Command: Reading for Military Excellence – Roger Nye	10
We Were Soldiers Once and Young – Harold Moore & James Galloway	10
The Art of War – Carl von Clausewitz	9
This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness – T.R. Fehrenbach	9
Company Commander – Charles McDonald	7
Once an Eagle – Anton Myrer	7
Thinking in Time: Uses of History for Decision Makers – Richard Neustadt & Ernest May	7
The World is Flat – Thomas Friedman	7
Defeat into Victory – William Slim	6
The Killer Angels – Michael Shaara	6
The Forgotten Soldier - Guy Sajer	6
History of the Peloponnesian War - Thucydides	6
Band of Brothers – Steven Ambrose	6
The Mask of Command – John Keegan	5
Dereliction of Duty – H.R. McMaster	5
Acts of War - Richard Holmes	5
George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century - Mark Stoler	5
In Defence of Duffer's Drift – Ernest Dunlop Swinton	5
Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground – Robert D. Kaplan	5
Diplomacy – Henry Kissinger	5
Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking – Malcolm Gladwell	5
Battle Studies - Ardant Du Picq	4
Panzer Leader - Hans Guderian	4
Good to Great – Jim Collins	4
Battle Leadership – Adolf von Schell	4
Seven Habits of Highly Effective People – Stephen Covey	4
Starship Troopers – Robert Heinlein	4
Platoon Leader: A Memoir of Command in Battle – James McDonough	4
The Anatomy of Courage – Lord Moran	4
War As I Knew It – George S. Patton	4
Commander in Chief – Eric Larrabee	4
Follow Me: The Human Element in Leadership - Aubrey Newman	4
Infantry Attacks – Erwin Rommel	4
Supreme Command - Eliot Cohen	4
The Soldier and the State – Samuel Huntington	4
With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa – Eugene B. Sledge	4
Fields of Fire – James Webb	4
All Quiet on the Western Front – Erich Maria Remarque	4
Lexus and the Olive Tree – Thomas Friedman	4
Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character – Jonathon Shay	4

Table Six: List of key texts Non-US

<i>Key texts recommended in non-U.S. military reading lists (N=258)</i>	f
The Art of War – Sun Tzu	10
The Face of Battle – John Keegan	9
Defeat into Victory – William Slim	9
Masters of War – Michael Handel	9
The Mask of Command – John Keegan	8
The Art of War – Carl von Clausewitz	7
Supreme Command - Eliot Cohen	7
Command in War – Martin Van Creveld	7
The Prince – Niccolo Machiavelli	5
Small Unit Leadership: A Common-sense Approach – Dandridge Malone	5
On The Psychology of Military Incompetence – Norman Dixon	5

Battle Studies - Ardant Du Picq	5
Into the Storm: A Study in Command – Tom Clancy & Frederick Franks	4
Dereliction of Duty – H.R. McMaster	4
Hope is Not a Method – Gordon Sullivan & Michael Harper	4
Leadership: The Warrior’s Art – Christopher Kolenda	4
On Killing – David Grossman	4

The relative homogeneity of all three tables is striking. Subtle differences apart, the non-appearance of fictional works in *Table Six* being a notable distinction, all three tables reflect a continuity of key recommended texts across national and service boundaries. The ‘vintage’ of the texts being presented is interesting, with 15 of the 71 texts listed, approximately 21% of the whole, written before the outbreak of World War II. Three of the most frequently recommended of these, Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* (c. 400 BCE/1910), Thucydides *History of the Peloponnesian War* (c.395 BCE/1972) and Caesar’s *Commentaries* (c.50 BCE/2008) have been educating military leaders across the world for over two millennia. This proportion of vintage texts is consistently maintained across all three tables indicating that historical works, pre-dating the digital revolution, are universally accepted by the world’s militaries as having contemporary authority and relevance. This would appear to indicate a shift in contemporary military thinking about the immutability of lessons from military history.

The military view of the hierarchical distribution of leadership can be considered through the typological categorization of the texts in *Table Four* as illustrated in *Figure Twenty*.

It may sound self-evident but, as *Figure Twenty-one* illustrates, leadership in the military is taught from within the context of the military. This may be unique because, as scholars like Adair (2002) highlight, while the modern world of commerce and business looks to the military for leadership lessons, the military itself, some small concession to external disciplines notwithstanding, is, with some exceptions, largely self-referential in its conception of leading, leadership and led.

Figure Twenty: Recommended leadership texts by book category

Figure Twenty-one: Most recommended leadership text authors by author provenance

Author provenance and ‘authority’ for military audiences are directly related. Quantitatively and qualitatively, militaries recommend to their internal audiences texts by serving and

retired military leaders, and civilian academics working within military/defence institutions, by a factor of over 3:1 against all other authors including ‘pure’ civilian academics, popular authors, and journalists.

As indicated in *Table Four*, 56 out of 71 of the texts on the global list are by Anglo-American authors. This dominance indicates that (a) English is the current military lingua franca and all writers of interest or perceived worth are publishing in English, and (b) the cultural dominance of the U.S. and the lack of funds for/interest in translation services have led to a disinterest or devaluing of the importance of ideas and texts from other cultures including within the West, for example France.

I will conclude this chapter by presenting a brief analysis of three reading lists. These have been chosen both to highlight the variety of utilitarian and teleological approaches used in developing individual lists, and the particular cultural perspectives that can be gleaned from these.

Case studies

The Irish Army Professional Reading Programme

This programme is maintained by the Infantry School of the Irish Military College. Beyond the expected generic benefits, the stated aims of the programme include:

- an increase in the understanding of military operations / activities that the Defence Forces *does not conduct regularly* [italics added]
- a greater understanding of the ethos of various military organisations
- the development of sources of information that will assist in preparatory study and research in advance of career courses.

The first point is key, reflecting as it does a perceivable tension between the long military heritage that the Irish Defence Forces sprang from, and their non-participation in WWII and

constitutionally quasi-neutral confinement to give ‘aid to the civil power’ and provide support for U.N authorised peace-keeping deployments. The *Irish Army Professional Reading Programme* is thus a curious artefact. While it provides readings relevant to the professional development of an Irish soldier, this feels more instinctively orientated towards service within the old Imperial order.

The conventional warfare of WWI and WWII dominates the readings, which while rich in the campaigns that many tens of thousands of Irish participated in, are understandably short on war from a politically Republic of Ireland perspective. Interestingly, some of the campaign studies and specialist readings are of limited spectrum and technology actions like Falklands War study which suggest the Irish Defence Forces are focused on the intellectual preparation for niche, low intensity warfare.

Curiously, considering twentieth-century Irish history, while the list reflects the guerrilla years of pre-independence and Civil War, the literature on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism is absent from the reading programme. While this may officially be due to the responsibility of the civil power, the Garda Síochána, for law and order in Ireland, a disjoint can also be perceived between the stated root of the modern defence force in the Irish Republican Army of the independence struggle, and its actual origin as a trained and quarter-mastered off-spring of its British parent.

Overall, the list sets out a solid and ‘traditionalist’ reading programme, sticking to a set of readings that explore the ‘content’ of military leadership. This is done from a predominantly Anglo-American perspective.

Brave Rifles Reading List for Operation Iraqi Freedom

Analysis of the *Brave Rifles*³⁶ list has been important for two reasons. First, it was the first list I encountered that had been developed to prepare regimental leaders for a particular campaign. Secondly, its developer, the then Col. H.R. McMaster was interviewed for this thesis, his opus *Dereliction of Duty* features prominently on reading lists across services and nations, and commentators like Ricks (2006) highlight his intelligence and exemplary command record.

The purpose of the list is concisely articulated in its introduction:

“While the fundamentals of cavalry combat operations clearly apply to fighting in Iraq, counterinsurgency operations demand that leaders possess a very broad base of knowledge and understand how military operations affect the political situation. Religious, ethnic, and social dynamics make the situation in Iraq particularly complex. Leaders must understand those dynamics and how our presence and actions affect them...This reading list is meant to guide self-study...The knowledge gained from reading, thinking about, and discussing this material will permit leaders to better prepare their troopers for combat and assist leaders in taking the initiative when they encounter complex situations”.

What follows is a thoroughly considered and balanced multi-disciplinary reading programme, studded with online, downloadable content that either mandates or recommends book, doctrinal, journal and multimedia readings on:

- Doctrine, TTPs³⁷ and lessons learned
- Counterinsurgency history and theory
- Arab and Islamic culture and history
- Iraqi culture and history
- Iraq ethnicities and sects
- Insurgency, counterinsurgency, and ethnic/sectarian violence in Iraq

³⁶ The U.S. Army's 3rd Cavalry Regiment – the ‘Brave Rifles’ – is one of that nation’s most distinguished combat units. The Wikipedia entry on ‘the Brave Rifles’ gives a potted history of their history from ‘antebellum’ to contemporary Iraq. – http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3d_Armored_Cavalry_Regiment#Occupation_of_Iraq [accessed 10 January 2013].

³⁷ Tactics, techniques and procedures.

- Urban combat
- Psychological and ethical dimensions of combat.

The annotated commentary on the selections is critical, promoting the strengths and weaknesses of some selections³⁸ and making honest commentary on the failings of the Iraqi campaign to date and the real dangers and dilemmas facing the combat soldier in Iraq.

The *Brave Rifles Reading List* is an artefact worthy of a specific study in its own right, primarily to determine if there was a correlation between the implementation of the list in 2004 and the exemplary performance of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in North-Western Iraq in 2005 as documented by Ricks (2006, 419-424). For this study, the list is instructive through its provision of a mix of textual sources, and its mix of immediately utilitarian context specific works, and ones with a broader applicability.

Culture Militaire

The *Culture Militaire* website is maintained by the Écoles de Saint Cyr Coëtquidan, the French military education facility that comprises of the French military academy (École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr), the inter-services military school, and the military school of the technical and administrative corps. The site hosts a sophisticated reading programme particularly notable for its model of, to my eyes, structural brilliance, distilling the total military curriculum down to four main headings: the art of war; science and war; man and war; and society and war.

These main headings are further broken down into further layers of sub-headings which give a reading focus that is both granular and holistic. The overall effect is of the presentation of a single, unitary ‘house of learning’ held together by separate but inter-dependent pillars of knowledge. This effect conveys parallels between how knowledge is conceived by the

³⁸ One entry states, “the author portrays the Arabs too stereotypically and may over generalise”.

modern ‘tribe of the war god’ and that of indigenous peoples reconsidering their traditional, pre-Western conceptions of the lived phenomena (Tangihaere and Twiname, 2011).

Figure Twenty-two: Culture Militaire website

The *Culture Militaire* list, more precisely a reading programme, is highlighted because of its approach to content, and because of the resources allocated to it. Regarding content, and considering the long, rich and formally preeminent tradition of French military thought, what was surprising on first examination was the prominence given to works of Anglophone origin and their abundant availability in French translation.

However, no quarter is given to the Anglophone militaries’ openness to include readings from the business-management and pop-culture literatures. The reading ethos of the programme is encapsulated in De Gaulle’s aphorism, “Au fond des victoires d’Alexandre, on retrouve toujours Aristote”, or “Deep in the victories of Alexander one always finds Aristotle” (Pedley, 1996, p.79). The readings recommended comprise a deeply academic programme of study designed to produce intellectual officers grounded in military, political, legal and economic thought.

From a resourcing perspective, the list is only comparable among those studied to that of the U.S. Marine Corps in the dedicated support it provides to the act and teleology of professional reading. Utilising and leveraging off the androgogical opportunities provided by a web-based programme, the list is supported by extensive commentary and instructionally designed reading support guides for many of the key texts. As in the Marine Corps programme, the combination of digital technology and dedicated resourcing is creating an evolving, interactive reading programme that is both accessible and challenging.

Summary

This exploration of the artefact of the professional military reading list has been conducted quantitatively and qualitatively to derive findings and meaning towards the answering of my research questions. As artefacts they provide indicative data on the respective militaries' approach to, and support of, professional reading.

The findings have given insights into:

- the purpose and utility of the lists
- their disciplinary focus and role as a shadow curriculum
- their construction in relation to accessibility for the reader, textual and authorial provenance, and cultural influences
- the existence of a set of common texts recommended by militaries globally, and
- the variety of approaches to designing and supporting the reading lists.

However, this data presents an interpretive or hermeneutic challenge. This is whether I can rely on the 'espoused' nature of the lists as indicated by the data, or whether I need to enquire more deeply into the 'theory in use' of professional reading in the military. This requires an exploration of the key themes of the research, and the components of the conceptual framework, with my interview subjects. I do this in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONVERSATIONS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

In this chapter I present the first of two chapters of qualitative findings derived from an analysis of interviews and personal correspondence conducted between 2009 and 2013. In both chapters I present my findings using illustrative quotations from the interviews selected to represent the different opinions and perspectives that I encountered.

In the literature review, I used the conceptual framework to examine the research topic from four perspectives. I bring interviewee viewpoints to two of these perspectives in each of the following two chapters. In this chapter these viewpoints focus on the modern warrior-leader and professionalism and professional military education. In *Chapter Nine* they focus on the development of, and support for, the intellectual component of military leadership through professional reading, and the narrower question of canon.

To provide context on the provenance and authority of the interviewees at the point I interviewed or corresponded with them, I introduce each one by footnote the first time they appear in the text. A full list of interviewees is in *Annex Two*. Direct quotations were not used from a small number of interviews. This was a stylistic decision, all interviews contributing to the overall thematic analysis.

The professional context

In outlining my methodological approach I illustrated the data gathering process as an interpretive interaction with the cultural texts of my locus, military leaders. It became clear when I began to engage in our enquiry ‘conversation’ that, to get to the heart of our topic – the role of professional reading in the development of military leaders – it would be necessary to gain an understanding of the broader contexts our phenomenon nestled in.

In the literature review I encountered much debate about the eternal nature of war versus the evolving conduct of war and how the competing understandings of this shaped doctrine, policy and thus the content and disposition of professional military education.

“War is between people...conflict is generated between people and is executed by people...The other drive has been the technologists who say, ‘there’s got to be a silver bullet somewhere here...we are eventually going to create a process that is going to [create] a totally transparent battlefield, everything will be apparent...you won’t even need to make a decision, it will present itself to you and you just need to push one button and [the solution] will occur’...[that] has never been the case” (Jones, 2011).³⁹

This belief, that techno-centric conceptions of future war require careful considerations of both change and continuity, resonated strongly in my conversations.

“I think there was a feeling...at a particular point in time that you can solve everything. I think we have come past that now...every technology alters how you conduct warfare, but it doesn’t alter the fact of war itself...[though] how you conduct it may vary” (Alagappa, 2010).⁴⁰

Despite the emphasis given to political and military history in military education, the interviewees showed concern that the importance of both of the forces of continuity and change were not properly appreciated by the profession.

“When I think of all the frustrations we’ve had in recent conflicts and problems with strategies...strategies that were disconnected with reality, it is in large measure due to neglect of the enduring nature of war. We thought these situations were somehow novel or unprecedented” (McMaster, 2012).⁴¹

An interview theme with implications for military education related to changing conceptions of the role of the military. This was fuelled by a belief, predominantly in ‘the West’ that the end of the Cold War had brought in an era where mass conventional war would largely be replaced by a ‘Long War’ of state against non-state actors, thus signalling a need to ‘rethink’ the military’s role.

³⁹ Lt-General Rhys Jones, Chief of Defence Force, New Zealand.

⁴⁰ Retired officer, Professor Muthiah Alagappa, East-West Centre.

⁴¹ Maj-General H.R. McMaster, U.S. Army.

“Fighting in the deep [Malaysian] jungle was the military’s responsibility. But in terms of actual policing operations...there were paramilitary forces that were developed which were not strictly police, not strictly armed forces, but [something] in between... it raises this fundamental question, what does it mean to be a military officer. What is the military profession all about? This needs some fundamental rethinking” (Alagappa, 2010).

As was seen in the examination of the reading lists, while the literature relating to conventional, large-scale warfare, particularly of WWII, is still relatively dominant, the increasing prominence given to literature from the ‘unconventional’ conflicts of decolonisation, insurgency, ideologically inspired guerrilla warfare, and peacekeeping in land-forces reading lists suggests that this conception of change in the purpose or focus of modern militaries has more than a speculative foundation to it. However, this sense of a changing distinction between purely military and civilian/political affairs, and the impact this would have on officer education, is not universally shared by other services.

“This is fundamentally an Army ‘truism’ that ignores Navies’ long history of diplomatic and constabulary work. The Fishery Protection Squadron of the Royal Navy is its oldest formed squadron. The [Royal Australian Navy] has been doing such operations ‘less than war’ for over a hundred years. What has happened is that the USA in particular, but much of Western Europe, has relatively recently emerged from a historically relatively simple Cold War paradigm into complex environment that calls for a multitude of approaches to a multitude of problems” (Goldrick, 2013).⁴²

As will become more apparent, this theme, suggesting barriers to learning both between services and nations and across time and context, occurred frequently. A strong sense of concern, confusion even, about the future direction of the military profession(s) permeated my conversations.

The intellectual component

Through my engagement with the literature, contemporary and historical, military leadership seemed to be a phenomenon that co-resided in the physical, emotional and intellectual

⁴² Rear Admiral James Goldrick, Royal Australian Navy.

realms. My enquiry sought to gain a better understanding of the intellectual dimension of military leadership and from there some conception of how this developed.

“War throughout its history has been complex. Unless you are intellectual enough to be able to handle the complexity and understand the social environment or the wider environment, you are not going to be able to be a good strategic or higher level leader...even at the lower level, increasingly more so in modern operations where junior leadership is placed in very complex environments, such as insurgency operations. But needing to be able to cope with complexity and having the intellectual ability to cope with uncertainty and greyness becomes quite important. I define that as street nous” (Jones, 2011).

This is an almost Clausewitzian conception of military intellect, the ability to cut through the metaphorical fog of war, and a conception primarily centred around the ‘sharp end’ of the military function – the conduct of war. The reference to “street nous” was striking, the etymology of the term seeming to acknowledge the ‘practical wisdom’ essential to effective command. The articulation of the object or purpose – essence almost – of this practical wisdom had something of an immutable quality to it; one could be describing command in both the ancient and the post-modern worlds.

“Even in...much simpler times when we were talking about conventional wars, understanding what the battlefield was often more about understanding the complexities of decision cycles, understanding the enemy, and how that’s going to dictate [or] shape the battlefield. It is often defined as a war of wills between commanders. It might not have been as simple as that but it is the ability to think through and understand not just the next step but what is going to happen as consequentials and whether we are ready for that” (Jones, 2011).

However, this is primarily a ‘war leadership’ depiction of the intellectual dimension of military leadership. Outside of the combat arena, officers fulfil a variety of roles that could variously be described as managers, organisers, bureaucrats, advisors, knowledge holders and educators. Is there a particularly *martial* aspect to these non-combat intellectual contexts?

“The three main intellectual components required of an officer are, first and foremost, a keen sense of perception. Second, good all-round knowledge...not necessarily to be an expert in every area, but to have sound, broad knowledge. Finally, good

communication skills...officers are leaders of [people]...they influence through communication” (Ghazali, 2011).⁴³

This description could easily be applied to leaders and managers in any organisational context. Throughout the research the martial or warrior ideal of command juxtaposed the everyday of the modern military professional manager.

“The peace time environment is more managing. [In wartime, command] is to drive [subordinates], inspire them, motivate them to get the best from whatever we do” (Alatiff, 2011).⁴⁴

The dual roles of commander and manager were articulated by the interviewees through the all-encompassing notion of leadership.

Leadership

Much of the older literature I have encountered examined military leadership through trait, heroic, and what would currently be termed authentic or charismatic lenses (i.e. those conceptions that emphasised the relative importance of the presence of certain innate qualities). While the contemporary literature has shown the need to concentrate on the *learned* conceptions of leadership – contingent, situational etc. – the notion of the naturally talented military leader is persistent. For example:

“There are two types of leaders. One is a born leader, the other one is a developed leader. Like soccer players. One is a born soccer player, the other one he has to train so hard to become a soccer player” (Alatiff, 2011).

In this paradigm, leadership development is understood in more experiential terms, the individual’s leadership skills developing over time relative both to the presenting context and the degree of innate talent present.

“You are at the tactical level when you are new...[a] young officer...The moment you have engaged into tactical situations, you’ve got experience...only then can you move into operational thinking...you understand what people on the ground need to do...you are able to come up with [effective] plans that can be executed by the people

⁴³ Lt-Col Professor Ahmed Ghazali, National Defence University, Malaysia.

⁴⁴ Lt-General Mohd Alatiff, Vice Chancellor, National Defence University, Malaysia.

on the ground. This experience cannot be bought anywhere. It is also difficult to be taught” (Zakaria, 2011).⁴⁵

Thus, from this perspective, leaders develop ‘on-the-job’, through ‘hands-on’ learning, their various experiences – combat being the ultimate teacher – providing them with the consummate skills they need for effective command.

“I think that the British Army traditionally [and] a lot of other armies that are doing a lot of hands-on warfare of various sorts...and they would tend to say the practical business, the warrior business is what is essential. That to have command is more important than to have studied” (Strachan, 2009).⁴⁶

I have referenced Janowitz’ (1960) conception of the ‘military intellectual’ and the ‘intellectual officer’ and noted his distinction between officers who brought an intellectual dimension to their job, but where this intellectualism was held in check by the needs of the profession, and the military intellectual whose attachments and identifications were primarily with intellectuals and intellectual activities. Janowitz thought the second fundamentally unsuitable for higher command. Janowitz’ notion will be considered in more depth presently, but his model does have some application at this point.

“The problem which Janowitz is touching upon is that of the balance between practical experience and theoretical development. The problem is in fact more acute for the Navy than the Army because the time taken to develop a major ship commander is somewhat longer than that for an equivalent unit commander on land - the U.S. Navy has suggested two years more for destroyer command than battalion command” (Goldrick, 2013).

The conception then of the pedagogical foundations and function of professional military education needs scrutiny, if only in the narrow context of developing individuals for command responsibilities. If command skills develop in a purely experiential fashion then both the institutional and some situational quadrants of Livingstone’s *Learning Framework* would surely be superfluous.

⁴⁵ Colonel Mohd Zakaria, Commandant, Royal Military College, Malaysia.

⁴⁶ Professor Hew Strachan, University of Oxford.

“You can’t teach leadership, but you can learn it. I can’t sit in a classroom and teach you leadership. I can tell you all the theories...the different types of leadership models... junior leadership versus senior...but you’ve actually got to experience it until you are able to build up that repertoire...and understand it as well. You can’t really understand it unless you do it. Education has its role of providing the basis of an understanding of what needs to be achieved but the actual achievement of it needs to be coupled with practical experience” (Jones, 2011).

So here, the formal educational experience serves to deliver the ‘underpinning knowledge’ of leadership; not so much a theoretical *foundation* – in this articulation the base leadership is built upon is experience – as a complementary, though optional, veneer. What then of the situational modes of leadership development, the role of professional reading being our topical focus?

“There are books that we selected that will give [cadets] exposure but actually in the military, it is only combat that really shapes your leadership, where your leadership is tested... the *real* test is [combat]” (Alatiff, 2011).

To this point, the idea has been presented that war is an inherently complex activity, the military professional must have a sophisticated intellect to grapple with it, and that the development of this intellect is primarily done experientially. It has yet then to be determined the purpose of or worth of military education, whether institutional, situational, teacher-centric or learner-centric.

“In this army, we have emphasised small ‘e’ education; we actually need to have people who can think. We need to have people who can analyse the circumstance, put it into a perspective, and quite often say, “Hey, this is totally different to what I was briefed about, how do I put this into the perspective of what has to be achieved? How do I understand what is the right thing to do?” We actually do need an intellectual commander, someone who has the intellect to able to think through an issue. And it is different to educated. It is intellectual. But often education leads to that intellect in the end” (Jones, 2011).

There are three interrelated ideas to be teased out from this and further considered. The first begs an examination of the very conception of ‘education’. Second is the question of what it is to be ‘intellectual’ in a military context and how this relates to conceptions of intellectualism in civilian spheres. The third is whether the ultimate purpose of the

professional developmental activities we label education are there primarily to cultivate *thinking* skills. I will examine these questions in some depth before continuing to a direct consideration of self-development, professional military reading, the reading lists themselves and canon.

The nature of education

The differing conceptions of ‘education’ developed as a fundamental component of my investigation into the role of professional reading in the development of military leaders and leadership. These conceptions – broadly, the question of what education *is* versus what education *does* and the related question of what it is to be educated – guided, though did not explicitly form, the direction of our questioning.

While my critique of the *Professional Development Framework* model noted that it was too simplistic a model to capture the nuances of the different forms of learning, I did note its utility for broad-brush evaluative considerations of the efficacy of the various learning activities, programmes or modes. The ‘observable progress’ continuum was a particularly useful means of considering the rate of impact of particular initiatives.

“You can observe the application of training and also you can see the [impact of] experience as [officers] grow up” (Alatiff, 2011).

Thus, broadly-termed, ‘training’ and ‘experience’ have been the traditional mainstays of military education for millennia for the simple reason that their impact on individuals and groups is quickly, even immediately, apparent. However the traditional emphasis on training in a soldier’s formative years may be educationally unsound.

“At the very junior level, you are operating machinery, the tactics are reasonably drilled. The technical concepts are reasonably simple. So there is a lot more investment into the technical side, the training side. But at the same time it has been proven educationally that that is the time where you actually want to diversify [soldiers’] thinking. So there is the dilemma. Most [military] education programs do tend to do the technical training first and the broader education last” (Jones, 2011).

I will consider the role of military education regarding the development of ‘thinking skills’ in due course. For now, this representation is noteworthy, highlighting as it does the importance of a ‘blended’ learning approach to education or instructional learning; finding the right mix or blend of educational modes to achieve both learner and organisational needs and goals. Livingstone’s learning framework division by ‘knowledge structure’ saw learning as either ‘institutional’ or ‘situational’, with the experiential form of learning in the learner-centric, situational quadrant of the framework.

“When I was teaching tactics, there was another instructor who was very theoretical. I was sitting in one of his classes he said, nothing beats good book-learning. He turned to me and said, “Isn’t that right?” I kind of mumbled my way out of that one. Afterwards I kept thinking, well, it isn’t. Good book-learning combined with experience is the best way” (Jones, 2011).

While the educational blend presented here does not on the surface appear problematic, the discussion of book-learning in an *instructional* context highlights the need to define what is meant by book learning; a one-way engagement where the reader is a passive or rote ‘consumer’ of the text, or a two-way exchange, where the reader is actively engaged in an ‘intellectual conversation’ with the text. This question will remain an on-going theme and is particularly pertinent to the consideration of what is meant by self-directed learning.

Livingstone placed what might be considered the ‘purest’ form of self-directed learning in the situational zone.

“You will see self-directed learning especially in peace time. When [officers] are young... they are still saying, “Oh, I have these courses to do,” so self-directed learning is less [evident]. But when they are major, they say, “Oh, I’m going to start college,” they know how to plan, if I’m not going to do this staff appointment, I can go for a tertiary education. Every time you do a tertiary education it has something to do with self-directed learning. There is a drive [to learn]” (Alatiff, 2011).

Articulated like this, self-directed learning is framed as something that occurs post-formal schooling as the adult learner matures into their career and begins to ‘strategically’ plan their future career progression. Associated as it is with institutional learning, this conception would

conform with Livingstone's classifications *non-formal* and/or *further education* rather than self-directed learning per se. This confusion is not merely an academic issue in that developing coherent policy for something that is not consistently understood or defined might surely be an exercise in imprecision.

“Only about a third of our officers get caught within the formal Joint PME continuum and have the benefit of the insights that can be gained and which serve as a foundation for further learning. On the other hand, although a certain amount of credentialism is apparent, there is a strong culture of self-development through external and part time degree programmes within the officer corps. Where this culture needs to develop is to make very clear at what point course work should stop and either self-directed reading or formal research work should start” (Goldrick, 2013).

So, getting the educational ‘mix’ right to support career-long officer development is a concern of senior military educators. The insights so far have provided some initial indications on the military approach to the ‘what’ of education. Leaving aside the issue of credentialism for the time being, it has been shown that while the literature review rejected the *Professional Development Framework* model for its too simplistic representation of the various forms of learning, it does provide a closer representation of how the military actually conceives, and thus provides, professional development than Livingstone's does.

What education does

Having considered what education *is*, we move to the related question of what education *does* or, what is the point of it? So, what are the broad outcomes that military education may be seeking to achieve?

“[Cadets] must develop good academic values, good leadership values and good ethical values” (Arafin, 2011).⁴⁷

This values-based conception suggests the educational goal is as much about building character as it is about equipping the young officers with specific skills and that it should help

⁴⁷ Lt-Colonel Arafin, National Defence University, Malaysia.

them exercise ethical judgment and understand and develop personal and command responsibilities. It is therefore, in this conception, to inculcate the officer into the profession.

In contrast, Masland and Radway (1957) argued that a major function of formal military education was to inculcate a sense of intellectual curiosity among young officers and enable them to be able to continue their development under their “own steam” (ps.509-510). I discussed this with my interviewees.

“Nothing can replace diligent independent study. The aim of education at all levels is precisely to provide students with the tools needed to engage in such study” (Van Creveld, 2012).⁴⁸

So formal education, rather than being an end in itself, is here, a means to an end; that end being the development of a self-directed learner.

“During my time, I didn’t have funding from the army to pursue my tertiary education. So I funded my own. Even if I had to do distance learning I did it. Why? To stay relevant and keep ahead. It costs but it pays. If I see where I am now, when I was a major, whatever I spent to do my [professional development]...it has paid back” (Alatiff, 2011).

As shown through the literature review, achieving one’s military education – i.e. through successful attendance at service staff or defence colleges and gaining the esteem of one’s peers and superiors – has historically been a notable, though not primary, part of career progression, particularly in the land forces.

“Professional military education is a must for promotions. If you have not achieved your appropriate military [education] it doesn't matter what you've done, you will not be promoted. It's that simple”(Arvizo, 2010).⁴⁹

Despite the earlier claims to the primacy of experience as the prerequisite for leadership development, and historically there is much evidence to back this up, our interaction with the modern military indicated a shift from experience to educational attainment as the lingua franca of career progression. Once something becomes a tradable commodity in the career

⁴⁸ Professor Martin van Creveld, Tel Aviv University.

⁴⁹ Major Ian Arvizo, U.S. Marine Corps.

marketplace, its perception as a good, its intrinsic value in other words, will change. So, in some quarters a drive to study forms part of a ‘virtuous’ cycle of learning and credentialisation – one driven by a sense that it actually makes a difference to one’s ability to command. However there is career pragmatism to consider.

“There are two types of officer. The majority type does things just to tick a box...they do what they have to do. For the minority, reading, training, writing are all part of being a [professional] officer” (Idris et al., 2011).⁵⁰

So, for some officers the ‘what’ of education is to do a better job, to be a better officer, while for others it is something to be obtained solely to advance one’s career.

“[Professional military education] provides that core knowledge required of military personnel because if not provided to them, very few would venture out and get it themselves” (Horn, 2012).⁵¹

This introduces the ‘what’ of education as the transmitter of the core knowledge necessary to do the job. What is this core knowledge? In the previous chapter, during the consideration of the reading lists as possible ‘shadow curricula’, a range of broad military-related fields of knowledge were identified that the list designers appeared to broadly concur that a thorough grounding in was essential for a rounded professional development.

“[Professional military education]...needs to embrace good economic, social, political and cultural history, as well as a host of other technological, financial and social matters. Obviously, one size does not fit all and the idea of a single [Professional military education]... path is nonsense, both in Joint terms and for the individual Services” (Goldrick, 2013).

This advocates for a broader thematic content for programmes than one might assume would be the focus of *military* education, particularly when the already substantial body of military knowledge that the lists reveal is considered. Throughout the research, this broader form of education, commonly referred to as ‘the liberal arts’ model was consistently mentioned as an

⁵⁰ Group interview with Lt-Colonel Kamal Idris and colleagues, National Defence University, Malaysia.

⁵¹ Colonel Bernd Horn, Canadian Forces.

ideal for the development of the intellectual skills young officers needed to progress to senior command.

“[A liberal] education is essential and that it should include one subject about which the student knows little or nothing, Chinese philosophy for example. The objective would be to make students think "out of the box." I also argued [in *The Training of Officers*] that there is no point in such a course unless it is given not by some mediocrity but by the very best available experts” (Van Creveld, 2012).

So, while we have seen the point of education as the transmitter of core knowledge, we then find a range of ideas on what that knowledge should be; purely military or, taken to its logical conclusion, such an open-ended range of options that the military education becomes indistinguishable from the education available to any undergraduate student. The knowledge then becomes secondary to the process followed to assimilate and comprehend the knowledge.

“In [some armies] they have got this reference book [the field manual]. This is question, this is the action, this is [another] question, this is the action for that. But when you come to something that is not in the manual what do you do? That’s the question. What this is trying to do is to fill [the young officer] with every single detail of how to act” (Zakaria, 2011).

Here we encounter the importance of study as an interpretive rather than merely imitative exercise, the difference between doctrinal – i.e. established procedures to a complex operation - and dogmatic – i.e. stubbornly held beliefs – approaches to professional knowledge.

“I would say you cannot template. If you template with this in totality, the exact thing, the exact action, the exact moment that you template it into another area, another place, you will never be successful. You’ve got to reinvent things and what matters is that the learning process must [stick to] general principles. Once you master general principles, you have something to guide you” (Zakaria, 2011).

So, rather than encouraging slavish adherence to procedure, the aim of military education is to produce officers who can adapt their professional knowledge to the exigencies of the

circumstances at hand. The ‘what’ of education here is commonly expressed as the need to develop ‘thinking’ skills.

“The process of thinking develops as your experience grows...but if it happens to be that you do not have the opportunity to go through [active deployment]...then to become a high ranking officer... you must become an open minded person” (Zakaria, 2011).

This notion of open-mindedness takes us back to the ‘liberal arts’ model just mentioned.

Through the conceptual framework I framed the idea of *Critical Literacy* as an important leadership attribute. My field research included engagement with the Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM), a recent innovation from the previous British-influenced service college and senior staff college professional military education model, the ‘national defence university’ a milestone in the development of professional military education since the academic innovations in nineteenth-century Prussia.

Their modus operandi is, within a standard undergraduate model, to blend credentialised academic study with basic cadet training, the resulting graduate earning an officer commission. This ‘liberal’ model would appear to encapsulate all of the education ‘whats’ so far mentioned.

“There are pros and cons, it is currently trial and error...inside academia it is very liberal thinking. Inside the military [the thinking] is very illiberal...you must have discipline, military discipline” (Arafin, 2011).

While this dichotomy seems rather archaic, the disciplinarian notion residing more comfortably in conscript or authoritarian military cultures rather than the professional volunteer culture predominant in the developed world, there does seem to be a tension between the military ethos and the principle of command on one hand, and the spirit of free inquiry on the other.

“We have two cultures trying to work together...the military culture and civilian cultures. These are two almost conflicting cultures. Civilian academic culture is a

culture of inquiry, challenge, pushing the knowledge frontier. Nothing is absolute, nothing is fact. Whereas the military culture is...do what you are told, obey your superiors...how do you reconcile these cultures and which is the default culture?" (Ghazali, 2011).

This question regarding mechanism through which to reconcile the tension articulated above may reside in Janowitz' (1960) identification of an 'elite nucleus' within the military (ps.150-172).⁵²

"You have got to look at the military as a profession and what their functions are. You cannot have too many people who are freethinkers. Then the system will not work. I think you have to balance those two. And that's a big challenge" (Alagappa, 2010).

As with Janowitz (1960), this suggests that the system can cope with, and thrives on, a certain 'healthy' percentage of 'mavericks' and independent thinkers, but, above that 'golden mean',⁵³ there is chaos, below it, mediocrity.

Colin Gray (2009) has argued that a key flaw in professional military education is that the strategic dimension of war is not formally taught until much later in an officer's career, at which point it may be too late for the education to have any impact. I put this to the interviewees.

"The problem is the habit of the mind has been formed by this stage...their thinking is formed by the tactical way of doing things. But it is a dilemma because your brain basically has its pattern of thinking by the time you are in your mid to late twenties and even early thirties. It is very hard to change your systems of thinking beyond that" (Jones, 2011).

This lends weight to the potential of a professional reading programme to act as a 'shadow curriculum', providing exposure to strategic thinking well before the career stage it is usually formally introduced.

"What we are able to do now...is give [soldiers] a broad range of experiences, in the force itself, but also core time to attend graduate programmes, which I think are

⁵² While Janowitz' study was confined to the American military, a cross-cultural review of literature during this research suggests that many of his insights lend themselves to semi-universal application.

⁵³ In Aristotle this is the desirable middle between two extremes. In the *Eudemian Ethics* he discusses the golden mean in relation to the military policy of Sparta (Aristotle, c.330 BCE/2011).

critical to really teach officers how to think, ask the right questions” (McMaster, 2012).

So, there would seem to be broad evidence that one of the prime ‘whats’ of military education is to develop thinking skills in the officer corps. However:

“I think we are actually approaching this from the wrong angle. The objective is not necessarily to teach people to think. The objective is to teach people how to decide. Thinking is the enabler to decisions” (Jones, 2011).

Differentiating as it does speculation from praxis, this distinction provides us with a lens through which to consider the differing conceptions of ‘intellectual’; the academic and the professional conceptions symbolised by the distinct forms of wisdom *sophia* and *phronesis* we encountered in *Chapter Three*.

“[Military education] should be about reaching practical ends...but there’s no way to teach that. Clausewitz said about military theory that it is not to accompany you to the battlefield, but is really to help you think about the decisions you have to make and to help you think about the situation your forces are in relative to the enemy, the terrain. What some people lack is the ability to ask the right questions at the outset. ‘What is the nature of the conflict?’ To take that through is what I’ve seen missing in some of our recent experiences” (McMaster, 2012).

So far in this chapter, I have considered the professional context and intellectual component of officership and military leadership. In this section, I used Livingstone’s (2006) learning framework to enquire into the military conception of education. I then asked what the purpose of military education was. To this we saw education as professional inculcation, development of life-long learners, individual career development, knowledge building, development of ‘thinkers’, and finally, development of ‘doers’. Now that I have asked what education *is* and what education *does*, in the final section of this chapter, I will ask ‘what is it to be educated?’

What it is to be educated

Earlier in this chapter we encountered *credentialism*, the self-perpetuating practice of requiring ever-higher formal qualifications for jobs that could be equally done through applying skills acquired through experience or self-directed learning.

“One should never confuse "credentialisation" with education. One does not need a host of "letters" behind one's name...to achieve education or to be "educated." It is the process of education that is important - the deep professional reading, engaging in discourse and writing, with the subsequent criticism and debate that it entails that counts. In many ways, taking programs makes the process a bit easier since there are now benchmarks and exigencies that require an individual to undertake those activities. However, I know many a brilliant individual who do not have post-graduate degrees but achieved their brilliance through a sharp intellect and inquiring mind” (Horn, 2012).

A reoccurring theme throughout our literature review and interviews was the debate about and tension between the use and understanding of the terms ‘intellectual’, ‘educated’ and ‘credentialed’, particularly regarding the points where they overlap or intersect, and the points at which they differ.

“In the military system, there is not much incentive to [reward self-directed learning]. So people have to be motivated by themselves. I think even now this opportunity to do Masters Degrees and so forth...is a good thing, but I think people do it just for the sake of doing it. It is not really education in the broad sense of the term”. (Alagappa, 2010).

This illustrates a dilemma in personal development in organisational contexts. Educational development needs to be both encouraged *and* measured (particularly where there are budgetary allocations). Self-directed learning is so incremental it is difficult to measure; formal and non-formal learning can be measured through the passing of papers or courses, or the attainment of qualifications. Does this indicate whether a person is educated?

Earlier in this chapter I referred to Janowitz and his conception of the intellectual officer and the military intellectual. This typology was of particular interest in the literature review stage of my research. However, when I discussed this typology during the interviews, it did not

resonate with our audience. In contrast the term ‘warrior-scholar’ was both understood and embraced.

“The warrior-scholar – marrying the two of those implies that there is a potential relationship between experience and study...I think that is more evident in the U.S. army than I think in the British army...to take two obvious examples are images of Generals Petraeus and Mattis. They would both suggest here are people who see it important to continue reading while they are commanding...that it is a priority” (Strachan, 2009).

In our conceptual framework, I characterised the ‘modern warrior’ as a fusion of caste and professionalism, continuity and change. The resonance of warrior scholar as a typology might be because military history provides rich and varied historical exemplars of the term.

“You put Patton and Kippenberger in certain situations because they have studied military history in depth, they know the sorts of question to ask of the situation that is in front of them, and it’s sufficiently intuitive by then that they are also capable of doing that quickly without prevarication which would seem to be perhaps a classic symptom of the educated mind, you know, that you are still asking the questions rather than coming out with the answers” (Strachan, 2009).

The ‘educated mind’ is here a synonym for ‘academic’. Thus, while ‘education’, may be understood in its formal, non-formal, informal and self-directed modes, in much of the discussions on what it meant to be truly educated in a useful military sense, the formal and non-formal, credentialed forms were repeatedly portrayed as the least beneficial in the military context.

“That small ‘e’ education is a stepping stone to having the intellectual commander who can work through complexities. The best commanders throughout history have been able to handle complexity, understand what is the key thing to do, sort out the information they need, or the decisions they need to make or the guidance they need to [achieve their mission]” (Jones, 2011).

But this aversion to the academically trained officer raises an issue for our warrior-scholar model. While the historical exemplars were, at least partially, autodidacts who pursued their scholarship independently through self-directed learning, in the contemporary context, the

term warrior-scholar is often used to refer to combat soldiers who have also engaged in post-graduate academic research at doctoral level.

“At the moment in the British Army there is a presumption that if you're studying for a PhD that means you can't be working hard enough on your day job. That is still the ethos, not the ethos that says it is a good thing to have done a PhD...as Petraeus or as some other senior American officers have done. The day when an officer who has done a further degree like that gets to the top of the [British] Army will be the day that the message really gets home” (Strachan, 2009).

Despite the relative homogeneity of the books included in the global reading lists, there were variations in the underlying ethos of certain lists that could be interpreted in terms of cultural differences or preferences. Cultural differences even within the Anglo-Saxon world might be at play here too. However it may simply be a reflection of differing resource capacities.

“This is not to say that the best officers cannot ride both horses, but there is a minimum of practical time required to make an officer suitable for higher command...and it is good fun anyway and what people generally joined for, however bright they are. That time certainly is generally such that it is not compatible with full alignment with the academic career path. If officers are to be sent to do PhDs, they need to do them in the minimum time and probably accept that it will be straight back to the operational ‘coalface’ as soon as they have finished” (Goldrick, 2013).

Cultural differences and resource constraints aside, a discernible trend emerged throughout my conversations where, increasingly, soldiers pursue (or aspire to pursue) higher research degrees with the intention of staying in the core activities of the military. This is in sharp contrast to the more prevalent path in the past of officers pursuing higher education and then leaving their service.

“I began my career as a regular commissioned officer...I did my officer training, a two-year program very similar to that at Sandhurst. And then I did telecommunications courses, and Staff College...and then I sort of transitioned to an academic career. While still in the [military] I did my Masters and my PhD...and then I left the armed forces to go into the academic world” (Alagappa, 2010).

So far we have seen, on one hand, a lauding of officers who take the time and effort to develop themselves intellectually through rigorous academic study, and on the other an institutional antipathy towards purer academic pursuits by individual officers. We have

already seen the primacy of the intellectual component of command emphasised by senior practitioners. We are missing a key element or perception.

“The reality is that the academic culture and outlook is one of contemplation and analysis without regard to time or circumstances, rather than analysis and decision in relation to sometimes complex and ambiguous problems within tight deadlines. Too great an immersion in the academic life can militate against being able to manage the host of big and small decisions that commanders are required to make – sometimes minute by minute” (Goldrick, 2013).

Or, to put it more bluntly:

“These military intellectuals are useful to the military but we cannot rely upon their leadership skill, their war-fighting skill” (Ghazali, 2011).

Returning to Janowitz’ model, this is precisely the point he was making; that there was a perception that people who were inclined towards or attracted to academic pursuits had a natural tendency to have less facility in the skills vital for successful command – rapid decision making, seeing ‘the big picture’ etc.

“My view is that [the army] do encourage people to [study]. They do encourage this idea of the military scholar, but there is a limit and there is a high reliance on practicality. Now, from the navy side...they actually definitely have had some very good scholars. But I think there’s a reluctance to actually put them into the senior positions, the most senior positions because they seem to be not practical. There’s a navy tradition which is it would rather have people who go to sea and live on a ship who understand the navy, the fleet, and the water rather than have someone who reads about it and who actually understands much more”(Gilbert, 2010).⁵⁴

There is also the issue of the time needed to devote to academic pursuits and what that time is substituted for.

“The problem with officers who devote too much time to academic development is that they can become ‘underdone’ in relation to the practical requirements of their profession. An ‘underdone’ captain at sea could make, even in peacetime, errors that result in death or injury to many” (Goldrick, 2013).

So, there appears to be a seemingly unresolvable tension here. On the one hand intellectual development is seen as a necessary good and the engagement in credentialed academic

⁵⁴ Dr. Gregory Gilbert, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra.

programmes is a known, respected and measurable way to do this. On the other hand, resourcing constraints, concern that time at study is time that could be better spent in experiential development, and a, perhaps irrational, fear that academic study fosters intellectual habits anathema to command, and a resistance to credentialism combine to create a climate that sees diligent independent study of the profession of arms, in combination with professional mentoring and experience, as the gold standard of command development.

“I struggle all the time with this dilemma. Generals and Flag Officers raise this argument all the time. Moreover, they feel that once they reach the general or flag officer rank they automatically have achieved whatever education they require to do the job and feel they have earned a post-graduate degree experientially. Yet, if you asked them what was the last book they read; or the last conference where they undertook discourse or debate...and not on a policy issue...or wrote...not signed off with their name on a piece a subordinate wrote for them but actually put it together themselves...something intellectual or substantive, you'd find they would be blowing you goldfish bubbles” (Horn, 2012).

Summary

In this chapter my interviewees have provided viewpoints on the modern warrior-leader and professionalism and professional military education. This has provided perspectives on:

- the professional context and intellectual component of officership and military leadership;
- the military conception of education and its purpose
- what it means to be educated in a military context, particularly as it related to differences in understanding of intellectual versus academic sensibilities.

Having done this, the next chapter has the interviewees provide perspectives on the development of, and support for, the intellectual component of military leadership through professional reading, and the narrower question of canon.

CHAPTER NINE: CONVERSATIONS ON PROFESSIONAL READING

Promoting self-directed learning

In *Chapter Seven*, I asked whether I could rely on the ‘espoused’ nature of the professional reading lists as indicated by the data, or whether I need to enquire more deeply into the ‘theory in use’ of professional reading in the military. This required inquiring how the military conceived of, and thus put policies in place for, professional development, particularly as it related to professional mentoring and its role in professional reading.

Related to this inquiry was a need to gain perspectives on the espoused notion of ‘self-development’, and the degree to which it is in reality an autonomous activity or autodidactic activity or something dependent on interaction with others, the main question being whether the primary agent in the learning experience is the learner or the ‘teacher’.

“The commander who is making [professional development] decisions needs to actually spend time thinking about the subordinates...to think ‘what does that person need?’ [We need to] nurture our subordinates. For me that is one of the key things that I think is the [key] responsibility of all commanders”(Jones, 2011).

The interviews presented a picture of self-development in the military that jarred with the educational models encountered in the literature. Rather than the picture gained from adult education theory where the learner is the more active and motivated party, I was presented with a more inverted picture.

“I encourage that small ‘e’ education...encourage commanders at every level to coach and mentor their subordinates and say, okay, I’ve got...three platoon commanders...all different in terms of what professional development they need and how to do that. This guy...might need to focus the leadership aspects...this other guy might need to focus a little bit more on tactical aspects and so how you focus that professional education and at the more senior level, how do you know, what the lieutenant colonels need or what the brigadiers need in order to broaden their education” (Jones).

On the surface we see here the ‘life-long’ aspect of professional development, with elder guidance and mentoring occurring at all stages of an officer’s career. The subtext however is of self-development as a highly directed, paternalistic activity where mentors are responsible for the development their subordinates, rather than this being the responsibility of the subordinates themselves. Though I am interested in professional reading it was important to locate it in the broader self-developmental context.

“[Development is achieved] through practical experience, or some of it through education and reading, some of it through postings, or courses, or interaction with other people that they meet” (Jones, 2011).

How does the mentor determine or gauge the impact of the informal learning activities on their charges?

“It is very difficult to quantify. When I was commanding officer, we have this officer’s day. Every week I’ll have this officer [and] I will throw him a book on leadership. But the problem they would see is if they are at the younger stage they lack experience. They will be reading something but the problem that they face is how to apply the knowledge” (Alatiff, 2011).

The sense here is that the success or impact of the informal learning activities depends greatly on the ‘raw material’ the mentor has to work with, i.e. learners with greater or lesser degrees of prior learning or experience. There is a flip-side to this, which would ask whether the superiors themselves were adequately prepared for their mentoring role.

“Petraeus, I’m told, will deliberately carve out time. When he was in Baghdad he’d carve out time in the morning when he was not to be disturbed. He was reflecting. General Mattis came to me and asked, “How do I carve out time for my officers to reflect?” My response was if you set an example that says this is important then at least you’ve taken guys to the well, whether they drink from it is another matter” (Strachan, 2009).

So, considering that the importance of self-directed learning has been long-stated in the professional literature, are the habits of life-long self-directed learning firmly established among senior command itself?

“It varies. It’s almost an individual basis. Self-development has been something that everyone says should be done. They’ve done that for 30-35 or more years. Unless the individual has actually set aside their time to do it themselves, there hasn’t been a formal acknowledgement that this has to be done as part of the process. Having said that, when they go into senior staff then obviously, they have to do it and they don’t recognize that you can’t actually get 20 years of reading done in one year”. (Gilbert, 2010).

This suggests that, even if a leader has been deficient regarding self-development earlier in their career, a corrective will kick in as they rise through the hierarchy and the ‘hands-on’ aspect diminishes in favour of the more intellectually demanding strategic requirements of organisational management and planning.

“If you asked them what was the last book they read? The response, we’re far too busy. That would be because they focus on the day-to-day, on in-baskets and insist on signing off on everything. They miss their role as strategic leaders who should be doing that deep professional reading and taking time to be introspective. But they are not. There are exceptions, but they are the few and far between. The military is still very experiential and to a degree anti-intellectual, although most are smart enough to know you no longer say that out loud. The mantra now is “education is good...but how much do we actually need?” (Horn, 2012).

While my initial research question was inspired by the developmental activities of some exceptional leaders, the literature review introduced a significant corpus of work on ineffective, deficient, and even ‘bad’ and ‘toxic’, military leaders in history. I frequently encountered examples of what could be termed ‘elder dependency’, where the self-development culture in a particular formation or unit waxes and wanes due to the particular disposition – good, bad, or indifferent - of its leader at any particular time.

“We used to have a General who, through his own initiative, not [Army] policy, imposed us to read and write reviews and submit these to him...he enforced compulsory reading...but as he left it died off” (Idris et al., 2011).

Thus, unlike training, experience or education, broadly termed, which will be guided and governed by high-level policy, in many cases, development through activities like professional reading is left to the personal initiative or inclination of individual commanders.

“What happens at the moment within the U.K. in terms of what I suppose you might call directed reading for officers is that it's almost entirely in the hands of the regimental commanding officer. So if you are serving as a lieutenant or a captain in the army you may well be encouraged to do some reading, think around a particular problem by a particularly zealous and enthusiastic commanding officer” (Strachan, 2009).

A key phrase to consider here is ‘directed reading’. The elephant in the room to this point is something that has been raised by peers, reviewers, and interviewees throughout my research.

The original objective was to explore *self*-directed learning through professional reading.

This approach became problematic. A lot of the professional reading activities I have encountered are mandated, either through superior-to-subordinate direction, or through professional reading programmes – the U.S. Marine Corps’ is a prime example – that have an engagement expectation built in. Without this benevolent coercion, how healthy is the self-directed learning ethos among the officer corps?

“There’s a long tradition of [self-development through reading in the military] and obviously there should not be the expectation that the institution is going to do everything for you...officers should take responsibility for their own education, their preparation for command” (McMaster, 2012).

This is the ideal, the learner embracing the role of primary agent for their professional, and career, development. However:

“No one publicly argues that education is bad. However, all will tell you they are so busy that there is little time on their own to do the reading, take courses, write, etc. Therefore, if it isn't provided as a formal military course or requirement for promotion, it's probably not going to happen. We espouse all of that rhetoric as well, and again, every general and flag officer I know will say ‘Absolutely, education is good; we need to be a learning organization; we should promote life-long learning and self-development, but, we're all just too busy’” (Horn, 2012).

The tyranny of time, the pressure that operational tempo places on an officer’s ability, or *perception* of their ability, to engage with self-directed learning was raised as a significant factor for me to consider.

“The time isn't there and in most officers the inclination isn't there either. You’ve talked about Patton and Kippenberger. Clearly there are officers in all armies today

who read independently and critically. But I think it has always been a minority”. (Strachan, 2009).

This would suggest that the issue does not relate so much to the fact that much activity that is labelled self-directed is clearly not, rather that the military needs to mandate activities that, *ideally*, should naturally occur professionally. Should self-directed learning have the same degree of high-level policy support as training and formal education activities?

“I think that is the way unfortunately. I think there’s room [for] some sort of doctrine at the army level on how to organise and conduct self-study...we could really benefit from something like that” (McMaster, 2012).

Should such policy ensure that Masland and Radway’s (1957) ideal of formal education creating a culture of life-long learning is explicitly embedded into primary training and education programmes for young recruits and junior officers?

“The problem with teaching soft skills related to self-development is students tend not to appreciate it there and then...maybe ten or twenty years down the line...you can’t really assess the impact of teaching [the skills and importance of] self-development, or how much is absorbed by the student” (Zaidi, 2011).⁵⁵

Now that the promotion of self-directed learning institutionally and by mentors has been broadly considered, professional reading itself can be examined. The interviews will be used to reflect on the historical and contemporary phenomena of professional reading, its benefits to self and organisation, and some of the issues and barriers, over and above those we have already encountered, associated with its promotion.

Professional reading

During the literature review I encountered certain hagiographic biographies of historical military leaders like Washington and Napoleon which conveyed the impression that they sprang fully-formed onto the strategic stage, their inherent military genius the product of

⁵⁵ Captain Ahmed Zaidi, National Defence University, Malaysia.

nature, not nurture. I solicited professional opinion on the veracity of this 'born leader' model.

"This is how military officers prepared themselves for duty during the eighteenth-century. George Washington was basically self-educated as a military leader...he had practical experience in the French and Indian Wars, but he read every military text he could get his hands on...that's how he prepared himself for command and military responsibilities" (McMaster, 2012).

So, historically, was professional reading a substitute for a lack of a formal military education?

"You know the Kippenberger [and] Patton analogy in part depends on the fact that there is a long period of peace when both those officers are thinking "I'm missing my profession". Not much I can do. Patton's dealing with an army that's cut right back and [he] really has only a very limited experience of war anyway. So he's anxious to improve himself just as Kippenberger was in that same situation. It's a substitute and a conscious method of setting about the preparation for doing this business". (Strachan, 2009).

How relevant are these historical examples to the contemporary environment? In

Washington's case, North America, both pre- and immediately post-Revolution,⁵⁶ simply did not have a professional military education system of any sort. This is no longer the case in the vast majority of developed nations. While there may be contemporary parallels between the constrained economic conditions of today and those which impacted on military budgets, and therefore education, during the Great Depression, the exponential growth in educational opportunities over the past three decades would make it difficult to argue that officers today are as limited in their developmental opportunities as Kippenberger and, to a lesser degree, Patton. So what is the contemporary relevance of professional reading?

"Professional reading opens up the mind. It provides factual knowledge that assists in planning and dealing with reality. It provides previous examples of what happened, what can happen, what worked, what didn't work - in essence, a vicarious experience. It can furnish alternate courses of action and /or solutions to problem sets. In the process it can help develop and hone your critical and creative thinking" (Horn, 2012).

⁵⁶ The U.S. Military Academy at West Point was not formally established until 1802 (Hearn, 2006, p.24).

This notion of vicarious experience is interesting, introducing as it does a link between the tactile idea of experience and the contrasting self-absorbed activity of reading.

“Very few get to experience combat or the infinite different situations that one may face in war and conflict. Operations, particularly mistakes therein, are unforgiving. As such, one must try to prepare oneself, especially senior commanders and leaders, as much as possible prior to being tested in the furnace of battle. Military history can assist with preparing individuals. It provides vicarious experience. It provides a preview of what can be expected and the types of problems a leader or commander may face. This assists with mental and physical preparation” (Horn, 2012).

This suggests that, despite the emphasis on the primacy of experiential learning in the development of military leaders, the opportunity to gain the defining experience of military leadership – combat – is limited for most officers and so they must seek this experience through the experience of others. While this need for vicarious experience is unlikely to have been an issue in the U.S. services over the past decade, all-out war has been the exception rather than the rule for the standing armies of most developed nations since the end of WWII. This vicarious experience can also include lessons on dealing and working with other people; the sort of skills necessary in coalition warfare or strategic command.

“Life-long professional reading can be a vital factor in the development of leaders, but it is also true that some do pretty well who never open a book in their lives; the people who I term ‘naturally wise’. Nevertheless, these officers tend to reach a ceiling at the equivalent of fleet command and are generally less comfortable in the higher staff and political environments. But it is the development of the sensibility which comes from systematic reading and continual reflection that really helps” (Goldrick, 2013).

As was shown in the examination of the reading lists in *Chapter Seven*, biographies of individual leaders are a popular vehicle for the consideration of leadership and the military arts. However:

“The danger of biographies is that you try and model yourself on another person. I think that is wrong because every individual is their own individual. And their own experiences, their own analysis, thinking things through, to come up with their own character and broaden their own professional competency”(Jones, 2011).

So rather than being imitative, engaging with the experience of others through military literature is almost an exercise of building other leaders' skillsets into one's own tactical, operational or strategic repertoire.

“[Military literature] provides examples how others overcame problems, which provides a ‘data-bank’ of possible solutions that an individual can draw on when faced with a similar type of problem or issue. It is a critical tool for self-development that provides insight and knowledge into operations that clearing in-baskets and keeping up with the day-to-day bureaucracy in a headquarters can never accomplish” (Horn, 2012).

So far I have primarily been concerned with the impact of professional reading at an individual level. Despite the popular trope of the ‘loneliness of command’, one that belongs before the telecommunications age and, more correctly, in the age when political and military command was unified in one person, decision-making in pluralist societies and their organs of state, is actually a collective activity. How important is a culture of organisational professional reading for operational and strategic planning?

“It is absolutely critical. Very rarely are we faced with situations that are completely unprecedented. Afghanistan is a perfect example. All of the Coalition countries acted as if we encountered counter-insurgency and asymmetric tactics for the first time. Had people been better read they would have been far less surprised how things panned out” (Horn, 2012).

This reference to counter-insurgency as a professional reading topic⁵⁷ lines up with an observation made during my examination of some ‘historic’ – i.e. pre-1990s – reading lists I collected during the research. Examining their evolution over time highlights the shifting trends and ‘fashions’ in strategic studies and the fragility of the historical memory of institutions.

The literature highlights that many of the military leader-readers I thought exemplary, were also notable authors in one form or another, usually in the context of their time as educators

⁵⁷ A key example is the work of French officer and theorist David Galula, briefly a ‘key author’ in the post-colonial 1960s, largely forgotten by the 1980s and ‘90s, and again relevant in the 2000s; Galula (1964) and Marlowe (2010).

in professional military education institutions and commands. The post-facto authorship of publicly available memoirs and other, sometimes self-serving, products of retirement was not so much of interest. Rather, I was interested in the development of papers, manuals, and memos for an internal audience that showed thought leadership and critical literacy in situ.

“The writing element is key, as it forces you to discipline your thoughts and sharpen your ability to make a compelling argument. When you publish, you surrender the ability to refute something you said or simply explain it away as a misunderstanding. It's in print, now you have to have the courage, intellect and ability to defend it. In total, these skills, as well as the vicarious experience and factual knowledge you build provides you with a great foundation when it comes to ‘tactical and strategic intellect’” (Horn, 2012).

The possible link between active reading, ‘creative’ writing, and the development of tactical and strategic ‘intellect’ is worthy of further investigation.

In the literature review, Van Creveld’s (1990) *The Training of Officers* provided an important, if somewhat cynical, perspective on professional military education. With the passing of two decades and on-going enhancements to the academic status of professional military education institutions, we asked the author whether he considered the academic quality of military education had improved generally or regionally, and whether this had had a positive or negative impact on the quality of command.

“Hard to say. I argued [in *The Training of Officers*] that organisation is at least as important as content and the quality of the instruction. I have not checked out every college around the world. However, I have yet to hear of one that is really selective or that regards teaching at such a college as part of an officer's fast track” (Van Creveld, 2012).

This suggests that the historical experience encountered in the literature of officers ‘making their name’ through their stints as lecturers at staff colleges is not necessarily a career-enhancing experience. Like the link between reading, writing and command intellect, this point will have to remain in reserve for further study.

The interviews have largely confirmed that professional reading *is* a fundamental constituent of professional development. This then suggests the not-so-mischievous question, ‘does the average officer know how to read?’ Is ‘how to read a book’ – on-line or traditionally – a key skill that needs to be taught and re-taught to professionals?

“People do need to be taught how to read and, if the book is not in a narrative form, how to break it, how to get the content out of it quickly...read the whole book if you’re compelled by the material, but how to get value out of a book quickly is a valuable skill” (McMaster, 2012).

I have highlighted the growing literature on the future of reading due to the changing format and physical nature of texts and the impact of this change on how we read and how our brain functions.

“There has been some research on [the impact of the digital age on reading]...it doesn’t matter how much people force me to try and read electronic versions...if I really enjoy a book, I will sit down with a hardcopy. But people I know who are 20 years younger don’t do that; they’re the opposite...they would rather try and find the electronic version than read the hardcopy. Now it shouldn’t be a problem if they actually know how to read, and do research, and understand what they’re looking at” (Gilbert, 2010).

So, in theory, reading as a skilled activity should not be impacted by the format of the text being read. However, in reality, the Internet paradigm appears to be impacting the reading skills of military professionals.

“The problem is the piecemeal information that’s online and the small penny packets of information as opposed to actually understanding the full depths of the subject. That’s one of the things we have all the time with [the] history questions that come through. People ask pretty basic questions and I think ‘why can’t they just look in the official history and get the statistics?’ The answer is because they’re not used to reading a book and they’ve looked online and it’s got four different answers. But the statistics depends on what website you go online; they’re all different. So then no one knows how to actually check a raw reference. It becomes too confusing for them and they come back to us and ask that question” (Gilbert, 2010).

To this point, I have presented interview findings on the promotion of self-directed learning institutionally and by mentors, professional reading as a historical and contemporary phenomenon, its benefits to self and organisation, and some of the issues and barriers

associated with its promotion. It now remains to see how the interviews made sense of the reading lists themselves and the notion of canon in its military context.

Reading lists

In *Chapter Seven* I presented my findings from the quantitative analysis of the reading lists.

While the lists are typically accompanied by glowing endorsements of the benefits and importance of professional reading, and the utility and pedagogical function of the lists themselves, these understandable reinforcements or justifications required further verification. I asked my interviewees about the prime utility of the lists.

“Reading lists are of value as they provide the solution to the “you don’t know what you don’t know” piece. For those who are interested in learning more about the profession of arms or specific topics, the reading lists make it easy to find a starting point. This removes one potential barrier and makes it easier for people to spend their reading time in a worthwhile manner” (Horn, 2012).

In the earlier part of this chapter I highlighted the impression that the formal professional military education curriculum was now too crowded to adequately cover all the topics essential to an education in “breadth and depth”. Were the reading lists acting as ‘shadow curricula’, assisting officers ‘round out’ their professional military education, particularly in subjects or topics that may not be currently in vogue?

“Concur. It also allows us to explore venues that might not have been covered, whether geopolitically, politically, socially or historically. But again, it is dependent on individuals actually taking the time to do so” (Horn, 2012).

If the reading lists can act as a shadow curriculum then how its construction, its pedagogical design, is approached should be an important consideration.

“A reading list is a good idea, but needs to be very carefully constructed and continually revised. In particular, ‘vital’ texts need to be restricted as far as possible. A fundamental problem of many such efforts is that the lists are too long and give no idea of priority. Most people are quite slow readers and this needs to be recognised” (Goldrick, 2013).

So, ideally a list should be a ‘living document’ under constant revision and be designed with consideration of the audience’s aptitude and prior-reading. The sense that, if the lists are to be truly effective learning tools, they must be more than just a long list of worthy tomes came through as a strong theme.

“You need context, purpose and then guidance on how to engage with the material, how to read purposefully, how to relate what you’re reading to your duties and responsibilities as an officer... That kind of explanation can be important and necessary for these [reading] programmes... Often [the lists are] not even annotated, just a list of books... That can be overwhelming. People aren’t sure how they actually engage the [books] first of all and then how do they apply it, why is it worthwhile to do this” (McMaster, 2012).

In my initial collection and analysis of the lists, I encountered a number of lists that, rather than being a judicious selection of key and/or relevant texts, presented what could reasonably be considered a whole life-time’s reading.

“Keep it manageable... it’s tempting to put several hundred books on the list but when your average person looks at that list and gets overwhelmed, they don’t even know where to start” (Arvizo, 2010).

The manageability factor was probably the most consistent theme regarding list design during the research. One renowned defence academic spoken to during the early stages of the data collection laughingly recalled engaging in an aborted exercise to develop a service reading list. Working with service seniors and academic colleagues to agree on a list of key works, the list grew to 300+ ‘indispensable’ texts before the enterprise ground to an unwieldy halt.

Developing an effective, manageable reading list should therefore require the development of some basic guiding criteria for selection of the texts that eventually make the final list. My research has highlighted the influence the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) reading programme, in content if not entirely in conception, has had on the development of other lists. Their guiding criteria, when articulated, was succinct and reflected the amount of thought that had gone into being clear on the *raison d’être* of their list.

“An emphasis on war-fighting, based in history, based on serious literature with permanence, but to be achievable, and have a broad context. That's five or six, fairly wide brush standards for it” (Arvizo, 2010).

As was noted in *Chapter Seven*, the U.S. Army's 3rd Cavalry Regiment – the ‘Brave Rifles’ – is one of that nation's most distinguished combat units. In my discussions with the USMC, I (and they) were unable to ascertain the effectiveness of their reading programme beyond any vague qualitative measure. The *Brave Rifles Reading List*, produced for a specific purpose – deployment to Western Iraq – however, it presented a more focused locus of inquiry.

“[The reading list] wasn't designed to give them the answer to particular tactical situations or problems. It was really to allow them to ask the right questions and to be able to learn effectively once they were in that environment in Iraq and Afghanistan. It did serve that purpose. It sensitised them to the fact that we were fighting to achieve political outcomes, and that the population was central to the effort...the basic observations you need soldiers to be able to make in those circumstances and to have that context. I think that's what [the reading list] did for us” (McMaster, 2012).

So far the utility and construction of the reading lists has been considered. But, outside an active deployment exercise like the Brave Rifles case where a niche, targeted programme of reading could be developed and monitored, the integration and use of generic reading lists in the everyday professional development of officers is still not clear.

“I've been supportive of reading lists...but my preference is for someone to actually take that reading list and say, here's the reading list. In your professional development for this year I think you need to read that one, that one, that one. And here are three other books that aren't on there. Or I want you to read these two things here, but I'm also going to send you on that particular course or send you away on a two month posting to this organisation. Ideally it would be useful to tailor reading lists for individuals, which we can't do in military organizations that are large” (Jones, 2011).

With the general development, use and utility of the lists themselves considered, attention will now be turned to the component parts of the lists – individual books by individual authors – considering them through the varied lens of canon.

The canon

Through my analysis of the professional reading lists, I sought to identify whether a canon of key military texts – some of them timeless classics that spoke to all ages, and that all officers regardless of rank should read and re-read – existed as a relevant, enduring concept for military professionals. I socialised this idea in my professional conversations using as prompts individual books and authors that lay claim to having made the greatest contribution to military knowledge over time – Sun Tzu, Thucydides, Machiavelli, Clausewitz, Mahan, Corbett et al.

“Clausewitz, and of course there are others that you might expect, like Sun Tzu and Gray’s ‘Modern Strategy’, Liddell Hart ‘Strategy’, Brody’s ‘War and Politics’...there are ones that recur, year after year, on reading lists, in our directives, in our syllabi...but then there are all the contemporary things too. History is one of what we call the enduring themes of the War College, so we look for those classic old authors whose thoughts and words are still meaningful to today’s society” (Shope, 2011).⁵⁸

In contrast to the more clean-cut inferences drawn from the analysis of the reading lists, which itself has revealed the absence of some of these classics from our lists, my conversations on canon generally elicited “Yes, but...” responses, particularly from the ‘sharp end’ of the profession. These qualified reactions to this line of inquiry were from four perspectives: military history as the bedrock of a military reading programme; ‘mission relevance’ as a determiner of a key text; seniority of rank/function as a determiner of key text; and the ‘forgotten canon’ of works undervalued in a land warfare dominated joint educational environment.

At the commencement of this research, my prior research, literature review, participation in programmes that had professional military education accreditation, and general engagement with the military history corpus had fixed an impression that military history – whether in tactical, operational, or strategic focus; ancient, medieval or modern – was the foundation

⁵⁸ Virginia Shope, Research, Instruction, and Access Services Chief, U.S. Army War College Library.

upon which an officer's education would be built. The immutability of historical lessons for the modern professional had some support.

“I believe if you're going to [try to] learn from history, why would you only learn from the last 300 years? Why wouldn't you learn from 10,000 years?” (Gilbert, 2010).

The literature review conveyed a sense that *military* history in particular was the foundation that professional military education should be built upon because a study of it helps reveal the hidden constants in warfare. However, whether professional military education should be restricted to a study of military history was challenged.

“It needs to be much more than military history – it needs to be good economic, social, political and cultural history and it needs to be continually updated and revised as our understanding of the past evolves. Too many professional military education references are outdated historical works overtaken since by more comprehensive and systematic research and analysis” (Goldrick, 2013).

Other conversations challenged even the need for a *historical* grounding to professional military education; sociology, anthropology, and psychology reoccurring as key disciplinary foundations for a programme of study (Chan, 2011).⁵⁹ An important feedback on the idea of canon was ‘mission relevance’ as a determiner of a key text.

“The classics by Clausewitz, Jomini, Mahan, Huntington, etc. are all important. They provide some insight into the enduring tenets of conflict and military civilian relations that assist in putting the complexities of the profession of arms in war and peace into context for all rank levels. However, one must also target specific and contemporary works based on the type of conflict one is anticipating or involved in” (Horn, 2012).

As Gray (2012, p.56) has pointed out, the primary value of a canonical work like *On War* to a military professional is not the intellectual challenge it presents in deciphering what Clausewitz meant in his own time, but rather how guidance can be drawn from the work to assist in conceptualising the problems of our own day.

⁵⁹ Lt-Colonel Kim-Yin Chan (retired), SAF-NTU Academy, Singapore.

“I think that the value of a good acquaintance with Sun Tzu and Clausewitz cannot be overrated. Perhaps one would like to add Thomas Schelling. However, this does not belong to the academy level but to the staff college level” (Van Creveld, 2012).

Seniority, ideally, would imply that the rank had been gained through a variety of meritocratic measures including a degree of intellectual sophistication. However, the reality for many senior officers is that some of the ‘key’ works are difficult to grapple with.

“There were certain books that have to be on the list even though a lot of people don’t read them. People refer to them all the time. Every time they do an essay on naval strategy, they refer to Mahan; but he’s a very difficult person to read” (Gilbert, 2010).

Chapter Seven appeared to reveal a distinctive, if mutable, military canon. While my conversations have, to this point, endorsed the *idea* of canon, cross-referencing our tables from the analysis of the reading lists against the classics repeatedly cited in the interviews shows up a diverging opinion on the *content* of that canon. This prompts the question of what purpose does canon serve and is to merely state that something is a ‘classic’ enough to warrant its mandate as a ‘must-read’.

“I am not comfortable that ‘canon’ is appropriately identified or explained. Many more caveats need to accompany the various works and much more time needs to be spent reading the works themselves as well as trying to understand the purposes for which they were written. Clausewitz is a particular victim of the selective quotation and out of context syndromes, as is Corbett in the maritime domain” (Goldrick, 2013).

The dominance of the reading lists I have examined by land-warfare classics give the impression that the canon on and from the other services is slight and that, in comparison to land-based forces, naval professionals, for example, do not tend to commit their professional wisdom and experience to paper.

“Oh yes? Sorry, don’t agree. I can provide a very long list of thoughtful memoirs and commentaries from the Royal and Australian Navies in WWII, for example...from very, very senior officers...[and] more junior professional commanders...I’d point the bone in a different direction – too many outside the naval service don’t make sufficient effort to look at what is available” (Goldrick, 2013).

Mirroring the ‘culture wars’ debate in literary studies discussed in *Chapter Four*, this prompts the idea of the military canon to be considered through its overt or orthodox form, and through its forgotten or ‘hidden’ form.

The ‘hidden’ canon

In *Chapter Six*, with Sun Tzu’s injunction to ‘know thy enemy’ in mind, I considered the importance of, and possible issues with, engaging with the literature from ‘the other side’. My analysis of the reading lists showed the predominance of literature from the Anglophone world on the reading lists we studied, even those from non-Anglophone countries.

At the beginning of this research, spurred by engagement with a key text from the guerrilla warfare canon by Indonesian General Nasution (McElhatton, 2008a), one of the questions I was curious to address was whether there were ‘hidden’ veins of indigenous military canon that remained unknown or little known, to ‘Western’ scholars. My engagement with Malaysian officers allowed me to explore this question of a hidden canon. When the armed forces of the then newly emergent nations in S.E. Asia were educating their officers, was there an indigenous literature or more culturally compatible literature that supplanted the previous hegemonic literature of the colonising power?

“We were only exposed to the American and British literature and literature from other sources only if it was translated” (Ghazali, 2011).

After a half-century of independence would an indigenous literature have developed or be nascent?

“Most of the reading material still comes from foreign sources. I’m not sure if there are any indigenous books and materials except at the very tactical level” (Alagappa, 2010).

Outside of the purely military, it might be expected that economic growth, the burgeoning university system in the region and a rapidly growing, educated middle class would see the development of an indigenous literature of relevance to professional military education.

“Most books and theoretical models come from outside. Not much good management theory for example comes from [Malaysia]...Before you can have your theory accepted you must produce a book. Before you can teach something you need a book. So, for the theory component, it still comes from the U.S. or U.K.” (Arafin, 2011).

My analysis of the reading lists across services and countries revealed the dominance by texts with an Anglo-Saxon provenance. As seen in *Chapter Seven*, An examination of the Canadian Forces (CF) reading lists provided an opportunity to test this, the CF being relatively unique in the West in having two national languages English *and* French, both with strong traditions of martial thought. From that perspective, I posed the idea that much important military theory, experience, and wisdom is closed off from the Anglophone world through Anglo-centricity and a consequent underfunding of translation activity.

“Availability of material is always an issue, the biggest piece being you don’t know what you don’t know. Knowing what foreign works, particularly in French, are of value is probably the greatest impediment. CF senior officers are by decree required to be bilingual so the actual reading part is not a problem. Having said that, I would be happy if they simply actually read the English work available” (Horn, 2012).

While some palpable sense emerged that the cultural dominance of the U.S. and the lack of funds for, or interest in, translation services have led to a disinterest or devaluing of the importance of ideas/texts from other cultures – including those *within* the West e.g. France – it was also hard to escape the reality of the linguistic dominance of English in military capital internationally.

“Unfortunately there is no doubt about the dominance of English. We may not like it, but there you are. In today’s world, an officer who does not know English well enough to read a book and write a review of it might as well be blind, deaf and dumb. Dumb above all, I suppose” (Van Creveld, 2012).

Could it be that English *is* the current military lingua franca and all writers of interest or worth must publish in English to gain both legitimacy and an audience for their ideas?

Fiction

During my initial encounters with the reading lists, I was interested in the inclusion of works of fiction in the lists. While fiction can easily be understood as an enabler or catalyst for further reading – e.g. reading military themed comic books when younger can be a precursor to a deep later engagement with military history (Zaidi, 2011) – the value of fiction in and of itself might not be so apparent, especially when precious time might be better spent engaging with more ‘serious’ texts?

“Although totally dependent on the quality of the “fiction” it can help with creativity and arguably vicarious experience. Also, it can assist with knowledge attainment - often novels will describe the functioning of certain technologies or equipment, as well as terrain and geopolitical realities. It also helps with understanding human behaviour...to a degree” (Horn, 2012).

Some of the works of fiction⁶⁰ have been on lists like the U.S. Marine Corps’ for over a decade. Strongly encouraging consecutive cohorts of soldiers to engage with the same specific works might reasonably result in some cultural or psychological impact, some shift in thinking.

“I think it's a very subtle influence. I can't say that this book or that book's changed how the Marine Corps thinks overnight. One of the books you'll hear staff NCOs refer to is *A Message to Garcia*...when telling a Marine to go get something done...*Gates of Fire* also has had a strong influence. I noticed the Spartan concept has been adopted by several units to the point where even now one of them referred to the wives as the Spartan women. That was a moment of pride for them...that [their wives were] their strength” (Arvizo, 2010).

So, these cultural memes and emotive common reference points aside, is professional development through active engagement with works of fiction a common endeavour or one likely to develop?

⁶⁰ While *Message to Garcia* is not strictly a fiction title – it belongs more strictly to the ‘inspirational literature’ bucket – it has a fictive quality that leads the author to bracket it as fiction.

“We have a small collection and I would say we have the things that you might expect, like ‘Red Badge of Courage’, and we’ve got the Clancy novels...sometimes people will donate their fiction as they leave the barracks, so if I think it is appropriate I will put it in the collection. There is a random volume of poetry or two here or there. But that is very small. We don’t necessarily list [works of fiction] in our bibliographies. I wouldn’t expect to see fiction or a novel on one [the U.S. Army War College] reading lists...it is not that fiction isn’t used as a teaching tool but it is not something that is we would list. Occasionally [faculty] access [fiction] for academic work, but rarely” (Shope, 2011).

Engagement with the same text by a large body of professionals might be expected to evince some form of collective cultural change over time, particularly if the text is written, like most good fiction is, with the aim of arousing emotions over and above the information-imparting role non-fiction might confine itself to.

Coda

Overall my conversations served to emphasise the importance of quality educational administration and learner-centric, pedagogically-sound instructional design in professional development policy and practice.

“[The professional military education system] goes in cycles. It depends on the curriculum in the various schools at the time. There has been a tendency to overcrowd, but I’ve seen commandants, at Fort Leavenworth for example, reverse this and change the curriculum fundamentally so there is more time for reading, thinking, reflexion, and writing. It depends on the level of the school and on the leadership within the education system” (McMaster, 2012).

While my initial approach to this research inquiry emphasised the autonomous conception of self-directed learning, the conversations presented a more symbiotic conception of learning, one more akin to that suggested by Livingstone, where the distinctions between one mode of learning or another were ‘fuzzy’; our conceptual models, in other words, begged scrutiny in terms of relevance and application.

Despite the circumspection regarding professional development I have encountered, it is difficult to escape the sense that the Janowitzian notion of an elite within an elite, is a truism.

“I feel that they are sharing in the classrooms, books that they have read and they are recommending. Our [commandant] right now will identify books that he thinks that people should read. We have people who are sharing and it is just a real wonderful learning environment here. I think [the officers] are concerned about their professional development and this is their chance to really [grow intellectually] while they are out of the field and while they are here and in this studying environment. They really have a lot of reading to do. But that is really beneficial” (Shope, 2011).

An ever-present concern during our inquiry was whether my research questions were ones which I could actually, and convincingly, answer. As highlighted from the beginning of this thesis, due to its incremental nature, self-development is something inherently difficult to measure.

“I think [professional reading] is one of those things you’ll never have a quantitative answer to. It is something you could ask a broad range of officers with recent operational experience about...ask them how they draw on what they learned through self-study...through these sorts of reading programmes...that may be revealing to a certain extent” (McMaster, 2012).

And then there is the question of the actual impact of much professional reading.

“However much you produce reading lists the tendency in an unreflective mind is simply ‘so but I’ve read that – What’s next?’ I’ve ticked the boxes. I know it like a parrot. It doesn’t mean I know it to understand it or ask questions about it or to examine it critically” (Strachan, 2009).

And what of the effectiveness or utility of the reading lists themselves?

“You know, my worst fear is that we sit in an ivory tower and make these dictates, everyone on the fleet just pooh-poohs them and goes on with their lives” (Arvizo, 2010).

Despite the prevalence of reading lists, professional military education programmes, courses etc., the question of what it is to be educated returns. While ‘being educated’ or, more usefully, being ‘wise’ may be identifiable at an individual level, decisions like whether to go to war – and the ends, ways and means of such an endeavour – are taken in group or collective contexts. Does the mass, collective long-term study of subjects like military history have an impact on the conduct of war?

“It’s really frustrating, makes me sad. I was ranting before I left Afghanistan that we should just scrap every strategic studies programme or anything to do with military history because we just don’t pay attention to it” (McMaster, 2012).

CHAPTER TEN: DEVELOPING THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL

Introduction

In this first of two discussion chapters, I consider the findings in relation to the broad themes of my conceptual framework. These are leadership, professional wisdom and the modern warrior, the education of military leaders, and the acts and arts of reading and critical literacies. In *Chapter Eleven* I complete the discussion by considering my findings in relation to the more specific topics we have raised relating to professional military reading and the military reading lists.

Leadership, professional wisdom and the modern warrior

Ellyson et al. (2012) note that militaries are not only at the forefront of developing quality leaders, but they have also long been the testing ground for many different leadership theories (p.8). In the course of conducting this research I encountered a significant amount of literature on the military perspective of leadership. The professional military reading lists I have studied can themselves be interpreted as syllabi for the non-formal study of leadership. My research did not aim to investigate or propose a model of military leadership. That is a line of inquiry for further research. However, the question of leadership models does have some relevance to this research topic.

In our research on Chinese leadership (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012), we used a conception of Barney and Zhang's (2009) to distinguish between 'a model of Chinese leadership' or 'a Chinese model of leadership' (McElhatton and Jackson, 2012, p.444). The first approach focuses on applying and refining theories developed elsewhere in a Chinese context. This envisages researchers using modern business and political practices in China to test and refine general and universal theoretical models. The second approach focuses on creating

explanations for the existence of Chinese leadership phenomena that are uniquely Chinese. Barney and Zhang (2009) see this approach as a rejection of ‘a research agenda created by Western scholars in favour of a research agenda created by *Chinese scholars*’ [emphasis added] (p.15).

My review of the literature on military leadership, and the research interviews and analysis of the reading lists has highlighted a similar dichotomy. I have encountered, or had described to me, ‘models of military leadership’ where generic theories are applied in a military context, and ‘military models of leadership’ which seek to understand the phenomenon of military leadership from a uniquely martial perspective. That this distinction matters has come clearly through, particularly through its highlighting of two distinct approaches to officer education and professional reading.

In the ‘models in military leadership’ approaches I have encountered, generic professional development opportunities – i.e. ‘mainstream’ university courses including MBA and Public Management – are encouraged and accepted as competency-enhancing career options, and readings from the business management literature, and the genre of popular non-fiction typified by writers like Malcolm Gladwell, are promoted as having ‘something to say’ to the profession of arms.

In contrast, the ‘military models of leadership’ approaches encountered have little truck with this approach, their emphasis on the distinctions of the military profession manifesting as a belief in *military* professional development opportunities – i.e. traditional staff and command colleges – and readings from the syllabus genres directly applicable to the profession of arms. Even where there is some overlap between the two inclinations – i.e. in the increasing value placed on the engagement in post-graduate research – the inclinations are further distinguished by the focus of the research – i.e. pursuit of topics relevant to the military

profession broadly considered versus pursuit of topics directly related to war and warfare at the tactical, operational or politico-strategic level.

This begins to highlight a flaw in my conceptual framework. Conceiving a model through which to examine professional reading in the military, I have framed military officers in a homogenous manner, and thus neglected to factor in that officers fill a variety of roles within contemporary militaries, the management of legalised violence being only one of them. Thus, combat proximity, either actual or through professional inclination, is an important differentiator to factor into my analysis.

In his examination of the U.S. Army's disastrous performance during the WWII Battle of Kasserine Pass, Alexander (2000) asserts that "leadership explains the differences in the performance of nearly all armies at all times", arguing that the outcome of battles and campaigns is more dependent on the decisions of commanders, than on the attributes or supporting matériel of the soldiers (p.180). Emphasising as it does "great man" or trait-based models, from a theoretical perspective, this assertion appears rather antiquated, and certainly in contradiction to much contemporary leadership research on, and by, the military that emphasises transformational (Hardy et al., 2010), charismatic (Antonakis and House, 2013) and even spiritual leadership (Fry et al., 2011).

I have encountered in the literature, and in interviews with some of the more 'managerial' inclined officers, something of a disjunct between the ideal and reality of military leadership. Piccolo (2010) notes an almost latent idealism in the leadership models presented in the academic literature. Noting that the vast majority of leadership studies have focused on positive aspects such as how leadership can contribute to organisational effectiveness, individual work satisfaction, etc., Larsson et al. (2012) have added to the growing academic literature on negative or destructive leadership through research in the context of military

leadership in the Swedish Armed Forces. While studies into destructive leadership might be relatively novel from the context of leadership or organisational studies, it can be argued that these are common in military history. For example, both Nye (1986, ps.99-107) and Alexander (2000, ps.181-7) have shown examples of the relative prevalence of career sabotage by peers in the military, that corroborate anecdotal accounts during the research. The literature review also highlighted self-aggrandisement, narcissism and other similar personality flaws in many of the notable leaders of our initial study period.

This brief discussion inclines me to agree with Cowper (2000) that, rather than there being a single military leadership model, leadership in the military is a fluid and ever-evolving conception, the profession incorporating what has been proven over time to be effective into contemporary contexts and practices, modifying and building upon changeable ideas, and rejecting those that are becoming “antiquated and outdated” (ps.229 & 243).

Professionalism

In *Chapter Five* I consider the evolutionary and discriminatory aspects of the military profession. These are important, this inquiry, having, as I have emphasised, a practical and pragmatic concern in accord with the prevailing intellectual demeanour of the officer class (Klinger, 2004). However the findings have indicated that a more teleological perspective on professionalism is required to understand the phenomenon I have studied.

In the literature review I made reference to Aristotle, particularly the conception of practical wisdom found in the *Nichomachean Ethics*. In the *Ethics*, Aristotle expounds his belief that everything in nature has a distinctive ‘end’ to achieve or function to fulfil (Stumpf, 1966, ps.105-6). An object, process or activity is teleological when it exists for the sake of an end, or *telos*. Aristotle distinguished between two major kinds of *telois*; instrumental and intrinsic.

Instrumental ends are acts done as ‘means’ for other ends, intrinsic ends are acts done for their own sake (Stumpf, 1966, p.105).

Instrumentally, each profession has an ultimate telos, the ends, and final ‘good’ of one profession differing from those of another (Aristotle, 330BCE/1906, p.11). Strategy has long been concerned with understanding the “dynamic relationship” between ends and means (Freedman, 2002, p.338). The telos of a profession provides insight into the theoretical construct that shapes and influences the practical application of its values by its members (Walter, 2007). The literature review considered Moskos’ (2000) typology of the dominant military officer roles in the modern, late-modern and post-modern eras, typified by the combat leader, manager/technician, and soldier-statesman/soldier-scholar types respectively in each period (ps.14-16).

For Moskos (2000), the dominant professional teloi were: for the modern era combat leader, the defence of the homeland and defeat of enemy invasion; for the late-modern era manager/technician the support of alliances and the management of nuclear war; and, for the post-modern era soldier-statesman/soldier-scholar, the leadership of new mission roles such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance and the management of subnational or non-state political violence (p.15).

The research data and literature has shown the impact of this teleological dominance on the design and focus of professional military education at any one point in time, this despite research like Downes’ (2000) pointing out that armed forces will represent a mixture of these role models, and that changing trends in the international operational environment, technological factors, and the prevailing strategic imperatives of individual countries and services will impact on the balance of roles in the military and the dominance of any one particular type (ps.191-2).

The complex array of intellectual skills my quantitative and qualitative findings have shown as being essential for military competence “matures in quality and grows...throughout a person’s lifetime through adulthood into old age” (Elliot Jacques quoted in Zais, 1985 pp.91-2). In a military context this development has been studied by the U.S. Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Science which plotted the cognitive development of leaders across their careers and organisational context.

Over the course of a full career, assuming steady promotion, the officer progresses from, at platoon command level, a cognitive state applied to hands-on direct work with objects and people in task execution, through to service level strategic command concerned with creating complex systems, organising strategic resources, and extrapolating system needs (Zais, 1985, p.93). In between these two career poles, the cognitive application develops from one wholly concerned with defining direct work and planning and controlling aggregates of tasks, to brigade leadership when a transition is made away from direct command to roles where the time-span of discretion moves from relatively short timespans, to multi-year and generational spans of projection (Zais, 1985, p.93). This would indicate that the teleology of the officer at a particular point in their career would correspond with the teleology of the professional military education and its institutions oriented towards that officer grade.

However, the research interviews showed that the teleology of a particular rank (e.g. captain) requires an education that does not necessarily prepare one for the teleology of another role. This teleological consideration of professional military education has been shown to be important by my interviewees. As indicated in *Chapter Eight*, it was oft mooted that by the time officers get to strategic command and haven’t had necessary intellectual preparation for that level through appropriate professional reading; it is too late.

Intellectualism in the military

In *Chapter Five* I introduced Janowitz' (1960) typology of the *Intellectual Officer* and the *Military Intellectual*. For Janowitz the first was one who brought an intellectual dimension to their job, but where this intellectualism was held in check by the needs of the profession. In contrast the military intellectual was one whose attachments and identifications were primarily with intellectuals and intellectual activities. Janowitz thought the second were fundamentally unsuitable for higher command (pp.430-5).

I 'road-tested' these two typologies and noted that they didn't resonate with my interviewees. When used in the same context however, the term 'warrior-scholar', a term with more *romantische* than rational connotations, slid into conversation so fluidly that it seemed innate to the topic and context.

Though somewhat akin to Janowitz' construct of the Intellectual Officer, it is easier to understand why the idea of the 'warrior-scholar' has more resonance; it embraces the tradition, symbolism, and history of the military in a way that Janowitz' construct – conceived when the Eisenhower-era nuclear doctrine of 'massive retaliation' was pushing technocratic/managerial skills to the forefront of military priorities (McMaster, 1997, Payne and Walton, 2002) – does not.

Both the documentary analysis and interviews reinforced the impression from the literature that the ideal of the warrior-scholar is a venerable one in the military (Petriburg, 1895, Clyde, 1964, Dunne, 2003, p.260), the stylised Greek helmet⁶¹ I mentioned earlier having been appropriated by the U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps as "symbolic of the ancient civilizational concept of the warrior scholar" (ROTC, 1994). The term has enjoyed a

⁶¹ I became consciously aware of Greek and Roman memes like the Greek helmet and the owl of Minerva when I started noticing their reoccurrence on book jackets, insignia, military art and multimedia. On one occasion, during an interview with a senior commander, the discussion on the intellectual dimension of command was given new meaning by the portentous presence of a large Greek helmet statue on a nearby shelf.

resurgence in usage in recent years within the land-forces (Moskos et al., 2000b, Reed and Efflandt, 2001, Horn, 2011) and in the media (e.g., Tisdall, 2007, Bohan and Stewart, 2011, Boteach, 2012). Used most prominently in the U.S. in relation to figures like Generals Petreus (Harris and Beaumont, 2007) and McChrystal (Beaumont, 2009), the depiction is used to suggest more than simply high qualities of command; it signifies that here is a ‘thinking soldier’, one able to bring new ideas, innovations, and solutions to a conflict; one able to cut through ‘the fog of war’.

Figure Twenty-three: The Greek helmet as meme for the military arts

Despite the resonance of the term with my interviewees, its application in the literature is at odds with my findings. As Field (2013) notes, the typology has been used to magnify the contribution of a small group of figures to military change, those who were adept at high profile bureaucratic and political maneuvering, and thereby marginalising the contributions of the many others who implemented and adapted those new ideas and innovations in the field (p.129). This effect of emphasising “the thinkers” over “the doers” (Field, 2013, p.129) is at odds with the professional qualities and values expressed both in that same literature and by my research cohort.

Change and a 'liberal education'

The term 'liberal education' frequently cropped up in the literature review and my data. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (2010) have stated, "thinking about the future requires an understanding of both what is timeless and what will likely change" (p.4). In his commentary on the Spartan army, Ferrill (1985) highlights the display of most of the criteria of a professional standing army over 2,500 years ago (p.100). Complementary to this, writing on the most recent technological concern of strategists and policy makers, cyber power, Gray (2013) reemphasises the Clausewitzian lesson that, while the character of war does change, its nature is enduring.

This tension between continuity and change, and the need of commanders to simultaneously grasp the enduring and the changing character of war, developed as a sub-textual research theme. However, while a historically and classically philosophical empathy presented in our dialogue within the combat-oriented data sets, it was not universally present or consistently articulated. This was reflected by the frequent, but inconsistent, use of the term 'liberal education' by my interviewees.

I interpreted the advocates of a 'liberal arts' based education for modern officers as those who tended to consider humanities subjects and disciplines more conducive to the development of critical intellectual skills than the purer sciences or technical subjects. These advocates indicated that they considered that a professional military education focussed more on technological concerns was producing more narrow-minded officers. However, the liberal versus technological dichotomy was in marked conflict with the traditional definition of a liberal education.

As Adler (1961) argued, a liberal education was not confined to particular academic subjects like those bracketed as the humanities or social sciences, but embraced any subject that could

develop the powers of “intelligence and imagination”, notably Mathematics and Physics (ps.105-6). Adler (1961) noted that, while liberal education did not aim to produce professional competence, a liberal education was indispensable for any intellectual profession (p.107). A point that can be derived from the data is that while the professional military education discourse frequently evokes the idioms of classical educational thought, it is actually still conceptually grounded in the disciplinarian divisions of the twentieth-century, what has been termed ‘Mode 1’⁶² thinking (Becher and Trowler, 2001, p.7).

What the warrior-scholar typology also does not adequately reflect, something important for our consideration of professional reading, is what we can frame from an epistemological perspective. The epistemological perspectives we have interpreted from our data range from a humanistic, neo-Renaissance sensibility, to one more inclined to a neo-Enlightenment scientific rationalism. This distinction is completely absent from the warrior-scholar typology, and does not align with Janowitz’ typology.

The humanistic sensibility I encountered in the course of the research has something of the Renaissance ideal of the *Homo universalis* to it; the ideal of an individual acquiring learning in a wide variety of subjects or fields to develop his or her potential, not only in all areas of knowledge but also in physical development, social accomplishments, and the arts (Watson, 2006, ps.525-550). This ideal derived from the past and future facing characteristic of the period in which it developed. Humanism can be defined as a “system of thought or action which is concerned with merely human interests”, *merely* serving to explicitly exclude abstract concerns (Ayer, 1968). Typified in military thought by theorists such as Machiavelli, the humanistic focus is on the here and now, in the temporal, not the metaphysical, and

⁶² In contrast to ‘Mode 2’ thinking which emphasises the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to inquiry (Becher and Trowler, 2001, ps.7-9).

advocates a close study of the ‘classical’ past to provide insights towards the challenges of the present.

In contrast, the neo-Enlightenment scientific rationalism I have observed has a much more contemporary purview. From this perspective, science and technology combined with rational thought and the power of the individual provide limitless possibilities for humanity going forward (Frampton, 2008). From this perspective, while ‘the past’ has relevance, it is only the near-past from which we can draw insightful lessons. That this was the perspective of Clausewitz (Bragg et al., 2012) gives an interesting twist to the consideration of relevance. As Bragg et al. (2012) note, despite the exhortation of his key referent Napoleon to learn from all the great captains of history, Clausewitz drew his understanding of war from a near exclusive consideration of the immediate past. Apart from the obvious question that poses for the continued relevance of the author’s own work, the example of Clausewitz illustrates the historiographical dimension to the depiction of the intellectual typologies and the consideration of the utility of history in professional reading.

Practical wisdom

The characteristics of phronesis as articulated by the ancients that we saw in *Chapter Three* have stood up to scrutiny during the research as the very modern traits, skills and characteristics commonly articulated as those necessary for leadership in complex organisations and environments like the military. The embeddedness of the concept of wisdom in the military ethos revealed itself in many fashions, the related concept to phronesis, *noesis* or ‘nous’ being a term that cropped up in the literature, interviews and analysis of the lists.

The importance of the notion of wisdom in war comes through strongly throughout the text of Ricks’ (2006) *Fiasco*, an important primer on the planning and execution of the 2003

invasion and occupation of Iraq.⁶³ In an important passage regarding the failure of the strategic political leadership to consult with or listen to the practitioners, an interviewee observes that, “these are educated men, they are smart men. But they are not wise men” (Ricks, 2006, p.99).

While the notion of wisdom as a tangible and, importantly, an attainable and not exceptionally singular phenomenon was clearly articulated in the literature and interviews, there was little precision or clarity about what ‘it’ actually was, and how ‘it’ was developed or attained. The need for clarity – the perennial endeavour to ‘define wisdom’ (Trowbridge, 2005) – may therefore be important for this inquiry because, as my findings have indicated, the teleology of professional military education could be described as developing wise commanders.

If this is the case, the cognitive end point – i.e. practical or professional wisdom – needs to be comprehended so educational design can then determine how it is best reached. In this sense then the professional development of a modern warrior could be considered in terms of an apprenticeship not an education. This would firmly align my conception of wisdom in the practical, locating our teleology of the intellectual development process as a means toward practical application, in this case decision making, rather than as speculative or contemplative aptitudes for their own right. While this corresponds with the phronetic over the sophistic approach I aligned this inquiry to in *Chapter Three*, it raises some further conceptual problems both in general and specifically for our consideration of professional reading.

I have framed the wisdom debate as one between the idea that wisdom is identified with abstract contemplation and one in which practical application to good ends is its truest, and

⁶³ Ricks’ analysis presents a damning picture of the strategic-level political and military leadership of the period. Of the operational leaders examined, Ricks cites as highly effective and successful USMC General Mattis, and US Army’s General Petraeus and (the then) Colonel McMaster. Mattis and Petraeus were both frequently cited by interviewees as exemplars of warrior scholars.

most attainable, manifestation. Dumain (2003) identifies the fundamental logical problem of this discussion as the mix-up of unity and distinction, in which unities are assumed where distinctions need to be made, and distinctions are assumed where generalisations ought to be made.

Dumain (2003) identifies a variety of positions adopted in the consideration of wisdom, individually or in combination. They are that: wisdom and abstract thought are inseparable; wisdom and abstract thought are two different things; theory and practice are inseparable; theory and practice are separable; theory is legitimate without regard to practice; practice is legitimate (wise) without regard to theory; theory is only legitimate with regard to practice; and practice is only wise with regard to theory.

Dumain (2003) asserts that while the question of theory and practice is not identical to that of abstract thought and wisdom, it raises the same issues. Wisdom may refer to knowledge, understanding or judgment alone, or in connection with action/practice. While the conflation of the abstract thought/wisdom question with the theory/practice question obscures the question of possible roles for non-theoretical intellectual judgment – e.g. informal reasoning and intuition – he reasons that as humans are not automatons, we cannot engage in any practice without some kind of thinking (Dumain, 2003).

While these are, on the surface, somewhat abstract considerations, they capture the plurality of attitudes towards, and conceptions of, professional development generally, and professional reading particularly I encountered in this research. This can be seen in the differing considerations we experienced of what constituted ‘experience’ i.e. something conceptually restricted to active participation as against the broader acceptance of vicarious experience. We will pick this thread up again presently. For the moment however, this leaves

our consideration of professional wisdom in some ontological limbo. Maxwell (2013) provides an out.

Criticising the academic focus on defining the term, Maxwell (2013) refutes the assumption that wisdom has some kind of “essential nature” that is capable of being captured through ‘correctly’ defining ‘wisdom’ (p.94). He asserts that the search for “what is wisdom?”, is some academic wild goose chase, the ‘what’ of wisdom in all probability being something dependent on context and purpose. It is, he asserts, up to the individual or group to decide what, precisely, they choose to mean by wisdom, depending on what the particular purpose is at hand (Maxwell, 2013, ps.94-5). Provocatively, Maxwell (2013) states that what needs to be appreciated is that there can be no such thing as the correct definition of wisdom: the search for it is the search for something that does not exist (ps.94-5). Qualifying this, he asserts that wisdom is merely a technical term; shorthand for ‘good’ or effective thought and deed.

Considering the discussion to this point, we begin to encounter what Argyris and Schön (1976) identified as a critical issue in organisational learning; the clash between espoused theory – what we *say* we are doing – and ‘theory in use’ – what we actually do. Rogers (2004) argues that, for a variety of reasons both benign and vested, in education, what educationalists and institutions do may on occasion contradict with what they say, or even what they *believe* they are doing (p.6).

My research findings to this point highlight a tension between the military’s interest in the academic soundness of its approach to intellectual development, ‘the ways and means’, on one hand, and the utterly pragmatic focus on practical outcomes, or ‘the ends’, on the other. I will further consider this emerging theme by discussing the divide the findings have highlighted between academic and professional military models of educational development.

Educating military leaders

I have stated that my interest in the differing conceptions of ‘education’ developed as a fundamental component of my investigation in the role of professional reading in the development of military leaders and leadership and that these conceptions guided, though did not explicitly form, the direction of my questioning. Broadly framed, counterpointed were the questions ‘what education *is*’ versus ‘what education *does*’. Related to the second was the question ‘what it is to be educated’.

These questions underpin much of the long philosophical discourse regarding the theory and praxis of education (Schofield, 1972, ps.30-5). Pring (2000) considers that the key consideration in any education-related research is to first clarify the general usage of the term and second, the different ways in which the term is applied, especially in its evaluative sense (p.12). For Pring, ‘education’ is a contestable notion. This is because, while the concept is value-laden, those values differ across individuals, groups and societies (p.11). Both the qualitative and the quantitative findings, overtly and obliquely, highlight the contestability of education generally, and specifically in the context of professional military education.

Schofield’s (1972) account of the contested etymology of the term education – whether the term comes from the Latin *educere*, ‘to lead or bring out’, or from *educare*, ‘to form or train’ - is illustrative of the issue (ps.32-3). My examination of the reading lists revealed differing conscious or unconscious motivators for each list’s construction. At least one list, comprising a number of contemporary titles from one ideological perspective and source, could be interpreted as having an indoctrinarian pedagogical approach. Exposure to only such limited range of sources would have a reinforcing effect on *weltanschauung* at the very least.

While being ‘educated’ surely implies more than being a repository of ‘facts’, a correlation might be drawn between being educated and being ‘knowledgeable’, knowledge assumed to

be something more than an accumulated set of individual pieces of information. For Wilson (2010) knowledge is about “concepts as the elements of understanding”, these elements combining into theories regarding aspects of the presenting world. For Wilson, these theories in turn can develop into models “that constitute operational representations of our understanding” and, in turn, combine to produce “intelligence, capabilities and critical thinking” (p.3).

Like much debate in education, Wilson’s conception is itself contestable. What it does point to, the purpose of his argument, is the need for professionals to have a breadth of understanding – interdisciplinarity – and a depth of understanding – deep rooted ability to confront problems, recognise them for what they actually are, and “select the appropriate elements from our conceptual toolkit” to address them (Wilson, 2010, p.4). This emphasis on the importance of developing knowledge or being educated in breadth and depth was endorsed by our findings, and is echoed by Sir Michael Howard (1961/1993) in his celebrated essay on “The Uses and Abuses of Military History”, Sir Isaiah Berlin (1953/1977) in his evocation of ‘the hedgehog and the fox’, and Zaccaro et al. (1992, p.326) in their investigation on the social intelligence of leaders.

Rogers (2004) highlights the difference between the ‘exchange value’ and the ‘use value’ of education, a related issue to the above, and one that resonated in my research conversations. At an individual level, the former is a form of schooling that is primarily aimed at qualifications. Knowledge is sought to pass an exam, learning is pursued to *get* a job. At an organisational level, the exchange value is where an institution exists to provide instruction. In contrast, the use value perspective focusses on education to *do* a job. Here the learner pursues knowledge for its own sake, enjoyment and utility and institutions exist to produce learning (p.56)

The ambivalent relationship of credentialisation to professional development was a strong theme of this research. The pros of credentials are that, for the employee, they add an extra incentive – the attainment of formal qualifications - to engage in professional development (Hayden, 2007), and for the employer they provide a benchmarkable measurement for the employee's professional development progress. On the contra, by becoming an end in itself, the pursuit of credentials obscures the purpose of education and, as Barone and Ortiz (2010) note, credential inflation creates employment conditions where tertiary degrees may be requested for some occupations, even though they are not really needed to perform the corresponding job tasks, with accompanying negative impacts on productivity and job satisfaction (ps. 3 & 14).

So, is this drive to study part of a 'virtuous' cycle of learning and credentialisation – one driven by a sense that it actually makes a difference to one's ability to command – or is it, as it is perceived to be in the civilian world (Zumeta, 2008), just another set of boxes to tick to get ahead in one's career? As has been mentioned, militaries have long been pioneers in education (Masland and Radway, 1957, Barnett, 1967, Shelton, 2001, Hirai and Summers, 2005) and with so much time and capital invested in it, it is not surprising that participation in formal military education is linked to career progression.

The relevancy of the credentialisation debate is summed up by Dore's (1976) comment that "not all schooling is education; much of it is mere qualification-earning" (p.ix). A pernicious effect of education inflation is where the relative 'value' to an individual of particular levels of qualifications declines, making it necessary for individuals to gain ever higher levels of qualifications simply to attain the same levels of professional reward (Rogers, 2004, p.47).

Ironically, Richardson (2004) found that workers with higher qualifications were those also most likely to engage in formal and non-formal education and training (p.17). There may be a

link between this and the paradoxical notion that a trait of the truly educated is that they never see themselves as truly educated and so are constantly engaging in self-developmental activities. This has parallels to Socrates' (Plato, 399 BCE/1984) realisation that the Oracle thought him wise because he knew that he did not know (ps.69-73).

This takes us closer to the central focus of this research which will be addressed in the next two sections of this chapter. I have framed my focus narrowly as the role professional reading plays in the development of military officers. Returning to the conceptual framework, this can also be expressed more broadly as the role self-development and non-formal education plays in the enhancement of the critical literacies necessary for command. I will first discuss critical literacies before concluding this chapter with a discussion of my findings regarding self-development and non-formal education.

Critical literacies

This thesis has set out to explore the role professional reading plays in shaping and developing a military officer's ability to make effective decisions for command. In a general sense then, it is fundamentally a question about learning, or more specifically, how does one learn to command for, and in, conditions of war. Thus framed, this question seems fully formed. Not so, for, while the constituent parts of the process I was considering were clear, the *point* of the process was temporarily and unconsciously eluding me.

To elaborate, my early focus was on the cognitive dimension of military leadership, the *thinking* bit. Previously, research on the notion of strategic thinking in a military context had led me to explore the role professional reading played in the purely cognitive development of officers. For the initial part of the research the lens of inquiry was thus metacognitively, or, more correctly, meta-strategically (Zohar and Ben David, 2009) focussed; I have been 'thinking about thinking', assuming that superior modes of thought *in and of themselves* were

what separated the leadership ‘wheat’ from the leadership ‘chaff’. This focus on the ‘thinking’ component is a Clausewitzian approach to the study of military leadership, one that has as its keystone skill ‘strategic thinking’, pre-eminently an activity of the mind (Kennedy, 2010, p.16).

However, as the research developed, both the literature review and data collection revealed the stark differences in approach from the purer academic appreciation of speculation as an end in itself, and the professional consideration of thinking as merely a means to an end, that being the making of good decisions. Critical literacies are thus inherently bound to the practical, or phronetic, form of wisdom. Two primary critical literacy related questions were posed to me during the research interviews. The first asked, somewhat rhetorically, whether there was a tension between the need for critical thinkers in the military and the need to maintain authority and discipline in such an authoritarian environment popularly conceived. The second asked, if this paradox can be resolved, how does one actually go about developing these skills?

Researchers from within the military, like Thomas (2006) in Australia and Simons (2009) in New Zealand, have highlighted the tension that exists in formal military education programmes that, on the one hand, espouse the values that underpin the principles of classical liberal education (i.e. debate, free inquiry, Socratic dialectic, challenging ‘all-comers’) yet, in practice, often default to more top-down or ‘instructive’ pedagogies.

Added to this is the seemingly paradoxical demand for officers who are simultaneously critical thinkers *and* obedient to the chain of command. The interviews revealed some bemusement almost at the juxtaposition of liberal educational ideals with military education imperatives and academic enquiry with organisational discipline. However, the substance of this juxtaposition might be superficial and/or situational, and is certainly not a new concern.

The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century views were that an educated, thinking soldier was a danger to military discipline, itself based on conformity and blind obedience (Durflinger, 2005). The question of whether higher education is a threat to military skills was much debated in the Cold War era (Jordan, 1971, p.240), a debate that remains current in some countries and cultures into the present era. This debate is fuelled by a perceived scepticism within military culture toward an ‘intellectual community’ with its characteristic anti-military values (Lindemann, 2006). Much of the overt discourse within the military also accentuates the perceived dichotomy between ‘thinkers’ and ‘doers’, articulated as a tension between the academician’s “why?” and the commander’s need to make, or commonly, act on, decisions.

However nicely this may play to popular stereotypes, and, within British military culture historically there has been a tendency to play up to this stereotype by a certain breed of officer, this line of thought has little substance to it. For one, as I have shown in the literature review, warfighting as a primarily intellectual activity has been fundamental to the prosecution of command since ancient times. Secondly, this understanding has simultaneously driven and demonstrated the rich tradition of literature, theory and intellectual debate within the broader military community.

Interpreting the data, I have inferred that the real concern about the threat of higher education within military circles is political; military professionals, particularly in ‘the West’, are sceptical about a politicised higher education sector where hostility to the military as an institution is commonly held, and military approaches as legitimate responses to certain problems are commonly derided (Downs and Murtazashvili, 2012). While this may be an oversimplification of the issue, it is not a fallacious one.

So, taken that the development of critical literacies are important, how does one actually set about doing this? A message consistently articulated in the professional literature, the reading

lists, and the qualitative interviews was the importance of fostering higher order generic attributes like critical thinking and problem solving in officers. While generic attributes have long been considered integral with the development of content knowledge in many disciplines, the last two decades has seen the development of these generic attributes in and of themselves identified as an explicit pursuit of higher education (Jones, 2009). The research confirms Jenkins' (2012) summary of the research on educating for critical thinking. Though higher education emphasises skills like critical thinking across disciplines, many students cannot effectively utilise this skill and that while critical thinking exists in the curricula of institutions, there is disconnect between what is taught and what is practiced (p.95).

Despite the importance given to the development of generic attributes in higher education policy, Jones (2009) found that they often existed as espoused theory, rather than as clearly articulated teaching practice, their degree of being embedded in a programme of learning varying according to the disciplinary culture in which they are taught (p.176). As we have seen, this difference between espoused theory – what we *say* we are doing – and ‘theory in use’ – what we actually do – was identified by Argyris and Schön (1976) as a critical issue in organisational learning. Rogers (2004) argues that, for a variety of reasons both benign and vested, in education, what educationalists and institutions do may on occasion contradict what they say, or even what they *believe* they are doing (p.6). The findings validate these points.

For one, the tension within professional military education between the espoused aim of fostering generic attributes *and* teaching disciplinary content was highlighted. Added to this are the quality pressures that come from the quantity of content the typical military syllabus is required to cover. However, as Jones (2009) points out, the reasons underlying the barriers to teaching generic attributes are many and reflect the practical constraints on teaching in contemporary higher education and on the complexity of generic attributes (ps.188-9).

While the practical constraints are significant, underpinning this is the fundamental nature of attributes such as critical thinking and problem solving as integral to disciplinary thinking. As Willingham (2007) shows, the nature of critical thinking explains why it is hard to do and teach, recent cognitive research suggesting that skills like critical thinking cannot be taught, the process of thinking being intertwined with the *content* of thought. Willingham asserts that, in fact, critical thinking is not a set of skills that can be deployed at any time, in any context and is dependent on domain knowledge and practice. Because of their fundamentally contextual nature, critical literacies are part of the discourse of disciplinary knowledge. Considering generic attributes as separate from disciplinary knowledge, and hence, in competition with it rather than integral to it, is at the heart of the problem (Jones, 2009, ps.188-9).

If this is the case, it brings us once more to our reoccurring question of the importance of the past. A once dominant view, but one we have experienced to be increasingly under attack, held that the study of military science combined with a study of the military arts in the form of quality military history sits at the heart of an officer's intellectual development. We can conclude that this view seems supported by the argument that the development of generic attributes like critical literacies are inseparable from the development of domain knowledge and practice. My interviews revealed something of a wooliness regarding the conception of critical literacies when discussed in the abstract. When discussed in the military context of historically referenced or experiential practice, the conceptions solidified into something articulable and achievable.

Self-development

I introduced my topic by recounting how my interest in self-development, non-formal education and professional reading grew from a study of senior commanders of the WWII-

era, particularly Generals Kippenberger and Patton and how they developed their command skills in the experiential vacuum that was the inter-war period.

While their focus was on formal military schooling, the pioneers of the sociological study of the U.S. military, Masland and Radway (1957), concluded that a major focus of formal military education was to “push that particular button” within each officer that enabled them to continue their education under their “own steam”; formal education served the military by stimulating the habits of mind, attitudes and intellectual curiosity that would determine whether a “genuine interest in continued self-education” was acquired (Masland and Radway, 1957, pp.509-10).

My concept of self-development has been challenged throughout the research process. The research topic evolved from an encounter with the autodidactic habits of a New Zealand officer, to a consideration of the developmental reading habits of a range of martial and political figures like Patton (Dietrich, 1989), Montgomery (Hamilton, 2001), Jefferson (Lehmann, 1947), and Hitler (Ryback, 2010), before encountering the artefact of the professional military reading list and the ‘Great Books’ programme of Hutchins and Adler. The early working title for our thesis was, “Autonomous, self-directed reading and the education of military officers”; but this became problematic the further the research progressed.

In his examination of Epicurus and the Epicurean tradition, Erler (2011) has highlighted the long-argued paradoxes in the relationship of self-education and external instruction and the proper relationship between innovation and the commitment to authority. Similar questions arose in the lead up to, and during, my full proposal presentation. Essentially, the question was how to reconcile the idea of autonomy within the framework of a formal, career-driven

professional education system and the notion of self-directed within the context of an institutionally developed and approved book list.

As Erler (2011) points out however, there may not actually be a diametrical issue here. For the Greeks, there was no conflict between the idea of self-development and the presence of outside instruction. Adler's (1940) reference to books as 'dead teachers' complements this. Fisher and Fisher's (2007) consideration of the phenomenon of the autodidact is interesting for this discussion for a number of reasons. Firstly, in their definition, "an autodidact may well access some formally taught learning, but that this would be an adjunct to a largely self-driven and highly accelerated learning process" (p.516). This conforms to my initial conception of self-development.

Secondly, their study provides useful insights into "accelerated critical learning" (p.156) as well as into ways in which learning as a social process has changed over time. Thirdly, their two study loci – 1930s British Communist Party activists and a group of contemporary cyber-learner/activists – provide interesting parallels to two focal points we have earlier considered; the education of 'non-professionals' we considered and the future of reading in a digital era our interviewees have raised.

Finally, through both their definition, and their acknowledgement that the concept of autodidacticism is "deeply problematic", Fisher and Fisher (2007) show us that any study of the effect of self-development through professional reading is extremely difficult where the research subjects are also developing through formal and experiential learning processes. This is the case with the overwhelming majority of our military professionals today (p.515).

An old dilemma in vocational training discussed with many employers over the years is whether to 'spend time and money training employees and then they leave, or not train them

and they stay.’⁶⁴ Goldrick (2013) has noted that, while the ‘Generation Y’ of service personnel have “a thirst for self-improvement and for gaining qualifications”, this can often be with an eye to careers outside the service. The trick, he notes, is to encourage study programs that meet both the individual *and* the service need. This can only be done within a mentoring culture that individualises officer career streams and educational pathways and encourages “an interior intellectual life”.

During my initial reading a figure relatively unknown today kept appearing as a pivotal figure in the personal and professional development of Generals Patton, Marshall and Eisenhower. U.S. Army General Fox Conner recognised and recruited talented subordinates, and encouraged and challenged those protégés to develop their strengths and overcome their weaknesses (Cox, 2010). The literature frames him as a mentor par excellence.

The importance of mentor-teachers like Fox Conner to organisational learning in the military has cropped up throughout the research (Alatiff, 2011, Jones, 2011, Zakaria, 2011).

Throughout our literature review and qualitative analysis we were presented with the belief that when a leader embraces the mentor role, a virtuous cycle of learning develops and that mentoring is the crucial factor that transforms an initiative like a reading programme from a professional development token to an effective tool for organisational learning. Lloyd (1950) notes that under the British regimental system, the responsibility for education lay in the hands of the unit commander, usually a Lt-Colonel. This, and the differing needs of each regiment, meant that British army education was varied (p.54). The glaring lack of a British Army reading list that fulfilled the pan-institutional function of the U.S., Australian or New Zealand versions reflects this tradition.

⁶⁴ Personal observation.

One final point regarding self-development – its relationship to ‘experience’ – should be mentioned. This point takes us back to the taxonomies of education I considered in *Chapter Five*. It will be recalled that the model most commonly encountered in our interaction with the military was the ‘professional development model’ which broke professional military education into the four distinct conceptual strands training, experience, education, and self-development.

As noted, while the model presented a conceptually neat typographical representation of professional military education, it neither captured the complexity of the learning process nor did it adequately reflect the ‘whats’ and ‘wheres’ of education. Moreover, for our study, professional reading, particularly when driven by a reading list, did not neatly fit into the schema.

The priority that should be given to experiential learning and, more fundamentally, what constituted ‘experience’, were two common points of debate during this research. The more polarised line on this held to the simplistic idea that experience is to education as practice is to theory, there being an innate dualistic line that divided human phenomena into separate speculative and active, or cerebral and physical, domains. This presented a hermeneutic challenge, the overt language or cultural text of our cultural members needing ongoing interpretation, reflexion and reformulation of understanding to elicit a sense of the actual relationship our subjects understood between these stark concepts experience, training, education, and self-development. Gadamer provided guidance:

“The whole concept of practice has been distorted by the modern concept of theory...as an instrument for explaining reality. But theory is an attitude of human beings, an attitude which demands a great deal of self-control and discipline...Theory...is a form of human practice; practice is not to be seen as the application of theory”.

Hans-Georg Gadamer (Boyne, 1988, p.29).

Despite the frequent inference within single interviews that dualistic norms were rejected in favour of an appreciation of the ‘fuzziness’ of the human condition, it became apparent that the older, simpler typologies from models like the professional development framework were so ingrained in professional discourse that the tropes surrounding their application to education and training slipped easily and unconsciously into dialogue, thus shaping the debate; a case of the trope wagging the debate, so to speak.

Beneath this surface dialogue, I interpreted the thrust of the military conviction that it was not experience per se, but an admixture of simulated and vicarious experience that was the surest teacher of the military arts. This line of reasoning is supported by the classic literature on the theory of war. The later Marshal Foch (1903/1918) was critical of the school of military thought that saw *experience* as the surest teacher of the military arts. For one, he noted that war – the only context that could truly be deemed ‘experience’ – was a school that “can neither be opened at will, nor kept going for the benefit of our learning” (p.5).

Secondly, he posited that the actual conditions of war *preclude* learning ‘on-the-job’. In the presence of an enemy, and the turmoil produced by that enemy’s blows, “one does there simply what one *can* in order to apply what one *knows*...in order to *do* even a little, one has already to *know* a great deal and to know it well” [italics as the original] (Foch, 1903/1918, pp.5-6). Noting the quip on Marshal de Saxe’s mule,⁶⁵ Foch stated that war should not be embarked on without first having rigorously studied it through critical reflection (p.5). It is instructive that the ancient Chinese philosophers believed that wisdom was learned by three methods; while reflection was the hardest, and imitation the easiest, experience was considered the costliest.

⁶⁵ “A mule” said Marshal de Saxe, “that made twenty campaigns under Caesar would still be but a mule”.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: PROFESSIONAL MILITARY READING

Introduction

In this chapter I complete the discussion by considering my findings in relation to the more specific topics I have raised relating to professional military reading and the military reading lists.

Reading for leadership

Our appreciation of what constitutes a ‘leadership text’ is challenged by the books we identified in the analysis presented in *Tables Four, Five and Six in Chapter Seven*. On face-value, Keegan’s *The Face of Battle* for example, ubiquitous to the studied lists, presents itself primarily as a *history* text, albeit one with a particular focus on the physical and psychological dimensions of war. However, on re-reading this work, it quickly became apparent to me, as clearly apparent as it is to the lists’ compilers, that Keegan’s opus is, at essence, a work on leading and being led in the most extreme of human contexts. Whether overtly or covertly, this essence of leading and the led pervades the books the military has acknowledged authority in through their inclusion on the reading lists.

The reading lists provide us with an interesting counterpoint to the broader public debates to where leadership resides in an organisation. The popular/populist leadership literature comes in a variety of genres, autobiographies (e.g. Giuliani’s *Leadership*) or ‘lessons from great figures’ (e.g. Axelrod’s *Elizabeth I CEO*) being some of the more common. The popularity of these tomes and their focus on CEOs, top athletes, Prime Ministers etc. suggest that leadership as popularly understood resides at either the strategic level of organisations or at the ‘fame’ or ‘big money’ segment of society. In contrast, the core or exemplary military readings on leadership the lists recommend focus on or exemplify the “sharp end” of military leadership (Hackett, 1983, pp.215-228), located at the tactical or small unit level.

The contemporary public notion of leadership itself is challenged too by the books' contextual focus. The lists are strong on *tactical* or small-team leadership, the realm of the Corporal *and* the Major. While leadership consumers from outside the military show no inclination to discard their biographies of cultural icons or *Fortune 500* CEOs, the hierarchical balance presented by the military lists could only be mirrored if civilians were to equally value the leadership lessons of the mailroom and maintenance shop as they do the boardroom and executive office.

Howard's (1997) definition of 'leadership' may be the key here to understanding the difference between military and civilian conceptions of leadership. For Howard (1997) leadership is most essential "at the lower levels of command where danger and hardships are greatest", the role of the upper hierarchies – command – being something more detached, less personal, more managerial (p.117). The reading lists confirm this view. Related to the locus of leadership is what the lists can tell us about authorial authority.

A finding of interest to leadership educators is the varying degree to which books on management, leadership and their directly related domains from outside the military environment are valued as core developmental texts by the reading lists. As illustrated in *Figure Twenty-one (Chapter Seven)*, my analysis of author provenance overwhelmingly points to one conclusion – authority in matters pertaining to military leadership, broadly defined, is invested in those authors, serving, retired, or civilian, who are members of the military 'inside'.

As Costley, Elliot and Gibbs (2010) have highlighted, learners in a particular vocational or workplace culture often approach their proposed educators having internalised questions like "who speaks and why?" and "who speaks for whom?" (p.39). The mistrust, albeit possibly unconscious, of the military profession's confidence in 'outsiders' ability to educate them on

leadership is palpable. It is evidenced that authority, when it comes to leadership education, is invested in serving and retired professionals, and those rare civilian scholars who, like Keegan, have so long nested in the branches of the old oak, that they have become more military minded than the military themselves.

This said, the reading lists give us a window into the evolving and contentious question of the military's conception of itself and its function. This is illustrated by the emerging focus in the lists on the counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency constabulary functions that Kitson (1971) dubbed 'low intensity operations'. As the military role changes, new conceptions of authority may emerge, and arguably did in the 2000s when the elevated importance of the cultural dimension of war gave the work of anthropologists and scholars of religion new cache among practitioners (McFate, 2005, Lucas, 2009), and led to debates about the "weaponisation" of disciplinary knowledge (Price, 2011).

The language of books

Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) noted that the strong linguistic and ideological connections between Anglophone countries enables the rapid transmission and adoption of ideas among institutions in those countries. The common reference framework of military knowledge that the professional reading lists help distribute exemplify this.

A significant finding from the reading list analysis was the relative homogeneity of the purely military works recommended across service, national and linguistic boundaries. While the most commonly recommended contemporary (i.e. post-WWII) leadership text across the lists,⁶⁶ John Keegan's *The Face of Battle* (1976), is a work primarily about the *English* experience of war, the work has transcended the national and is seen to speak to the common *human* experience of war. While the transnational military endorsement of the value in the

⁶⁶ Twenty-two of the sixty-eight lists cite it, putting it just behind the most cited text, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, with twenty-three citations.

study of the publishing phenomenon that is Sun Tzu's *Art of War* is harder to explain and requires further future research, it indicates that the speculative or philosophical approaches to the study of war are considered important. Thus far, the findings on the homogeneity of the lists indicate that a common 'core canon' of globally acknowledged authoritative military texts may be discernible.

Significantly, the contemporary portion of this emerging canon has Anglophone origins and spreads to the non-Anglophone militaries through translations and their members' facility with the English language. Prior to this cultural shift, which began sometime prior to WWII, the predominant body of modern military literature from Machiavelli and De Saxe, through Jomini and Clausewitz, to Foch and Von Der Goltz, sprang from outside the English speaking world (Howard, 1965, Luvaas, 1965) and entered the Anglophone body of knowledge through the translations of British and American scholars and the officer corps' natural faculty with European languages.

The research has indicated a worrying trend towards further entrenchment of Anglo-origin dominance of the professional military literature. From the Anglophone 'side', the end of the Cold War spelled a dramatic reduction in funding for translations *into* English (Shope, 2011); from non-Anglophone cultures, particularly Asian, there appears to exist a degree of bias against the value of their indigenous literature (Zaidi, 2011) or the development of their own indigenous methods of, and perspectives on, inquiry (McElhatton and Jackson, 2011a).

The reading lists *do* reflect individual cultural nuances in other ways, however. The mingling of works on philosophy and high literature (e.g. Kant and Goethe) with the more mainstream military fare on the Bundeswehr list reflects broader German educational values that emphasise creativity, close reading of texts, a broad education, critical thinking and the German tradition of *Bildung*, or 'self-cultivation', which emphasises the overall formation of

the individual and includes development of attitudes, views and values (Reichelt, 2009); the French military's unique obliviousness to Anglo-American business management literature in their list tells us something about that nation's public sector values and national psyche (Amis, 2009, Kodeih, 2013); while the ambition inherent in the Singapore Armed Forces' list seems an extension of their national 'study and succeed' ethic (Leong et al., 2013).

The British colonial origin of a number of the national defence forces has left a 'residue' on a number of reading lists. Some indigenous works on the Indo-Pak Wars aside, the Indian lists that were studied have a WWII-era Commonwealth forces campaigns focus. Considering the concentration of the Indians on the possible eventuation of a major conflict with its Western neighbour, the campaigns of the North African theatre may still have some practical relevance. Given Ireland's long-standing policy of neutrality, that this could also be the case operationally for the Irish Army is moot. It is only by considering the roots of the Irish Army in the old Irish regiments of its British parent, and the historical tradition of Irish soldiery in the armies of Europe and the new world, that the intellectual gravitation becomes understandable.

A final cultural twist to the intellectual influence of the British was revealed through my engagement with the military in Malaysia. During a week-long study tour to the National Defence University and the Royal Military College, Malaysia, and primed with a prior interview with Malaysian defence academic Muthiah Alagappa (2010), my general research focus was supplemented by a side-bar question; was there an indigenous Malay⁶⁷ body of literature comparable to the Chinese and Indian strategy classics that was an influence on modern Malaysian strategic culture? With great honesty and stoic pragmatism, the answer delivered was "no". My research conversations emphasised the bedrock that British military

⁶⁷ The term Malay, rather than Malaysian, is used here both to acknowledge that the ethnic Chinese and Indian denizens of the region have a prominent body of martial literature to reference, and to highlight my interest in the impact of traditional literature on the strategic thinking and culture of a country.

literature, particularly that of the WWII struggles with Japan and the post-war counter-insurgency campaigns of ‘the Emergency’, played and plays in the education of Malaysian officers. The influence of the counter-insurgency literature was particularly pronounced, the ethos and language of the ‘hearts and minds’ strategy being revealed as the assimilated strategic culture of the modern Malaysian military.

Ultimately however, the contemporary cultural distinctions across modern militaries globally are minor in contrast to the homogeneity of approach to professional reading influenced by what could be termed the intellectual hegemony of the United States military. My research has shown that the contemporary artefact of the professional military reading list is an American progeny, the contents of individual reading lists to a greater or lesser extent influenced by both local drivers and the universalising cachet and ubiquity given to particular texts by their inclusion in the ‘mother-lists’; the reading lists, notably those of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, that set reading trends in other services and other nations.

I arrived at this conclusion in two ways. First, individual list compilers over the course of our research told us so. Secondly, from my initial encounter with the New Zealand Army’s Professional Reading Programme in 2007, through my consideration of lists in Australia, Asia, Europe and North America, I have traced a process of development, implementation and revision of individual lists that follows trends led from institutions in the United States. That the U.S. is intellectually dominant in contemporary military thought and education should be of little surprise. That a staple of the U.S. compulsory education system - the state education board-mandated reading list - has, through its adoption and export by the military products of that system, become a common feature of professional military education around the world is certainly a quirk of cultural diffusion.

An Inclusive Canon?

In the discussion on canon, I note that canon can serve to reinforce the existing *weltanschauung* of its compilers and consumers. Outside some of the reading lists I have examined where reinforcement, if not indoctrination, seem the conscious objective of the author, the literature has led me to conclude that translation (or, more correctly, lack of) is the chief obstacle to the engagement of militaries with works outside of their particular cultural purview. The apparent lack of cultural bias (in a nationalistic sense) among students of military affairs is apparent when we consider that, in the field of strategy, the widely acknowledged masterworks are from China, Greece, Italy and Prussia (Gray, 2009). The popular four-volume *Roots of Strategy* (Phillips, 1985, Anon., 1987, Anon., 1991, Jablonsky, 1999) series reproduces the translated works of authors from what we know today as China (1), France (3), Germany (6), Italy (2), as well as Britain (1) and the United States (2).

While some of the authors in the *Roots of Strategy* series are somewhat obscure today – *Book Three's* (1991) German trio of Generals von Leeb, von Freytag-Loringhoven, and Erfurth for example are infrequently cited in contemporary literature – the majority continue to proffer much food for thought for students today.⁶⁸ A question raises itself: is the continuing impact and relevance of these, and other, works of non-Anglophone provenance *solely* due to their intrinsic quality, or has their translation into English, and the corresponding non-translation of other works of possibly intrinsically equal power, facilitated their canonical status, particularly today in the Anglo-dominated sphere of information provision and dissemination?

I am challenged to consider this question by leading Brezhnev-era theorist/practitioner Savkin (1972) in his review of influential Russian military literature. Tracking the development of pre-Soviet Russian military thought from the late seventeenth-century,

⁶⁸ Personal observation from the literature.

Savkin précises the theories of Rumyantsev, Suvarov, Kutuzov, Khatov, Medem, Astaf'yev and Leyer to cite a few (pp.11-39).

Despite Savkin's compelling arguments for the importance of these theorists, and in some cases their foreshadowing of the theories of the better known Clausewitz and Moltke (p.13 & p.28), 'Western' authorities on the history of military thought like Van Creveld (2000), Gat (1989), and Handel⁶⁹ (2001) make no reference to them. While the Soviet-era military theorists, including Frunze, Tukhachevsky, Shaposhnikov, Yegorov, Kork, and Uborevich, that Savkin (pp.39-46) précises get somewhat better attention in generalist (as opposed to Soviet-focused) histories of military thought, the active engagement with their works are minor and, like their pre-Soviet antecedents, there appears no great desire among Western students of military thought to raise the works of these Russian authors to canonical status (Blank and Weitz, 2010).

To return to the question I have just posed, is there something intrinsically inferior about the works and authors that Savkin cites, or are there other factors at play? Regarding the pre-Soviet authors, it may be that the prevailing unfamiliarity of non-specialists in the 'West' with the theatres they operated in – the Western, Southern, and Eastern borders of the expanding Russian Empire – and the campaigns they fought – against the Ottomans and Caucasians for example – (Davies, 1997, pp.653-4, 739, 869-70, & 1277) renders the *context* of their thought less accessible, and therefore relevant, to students of military affairs brought up to glow at the mention of the campaigns and battles of, say, Marlborough, Frederick, or Napoleon. More importantly perhaps is the lack of access to their works in translation.

The omission of Soviet-era authors from the Western military reading lists is, however, on any analysis astounding. As Blank and Weitz (2010) argue, the “most profound” military

⁶⁹ Admittedly Handel is quite explicit in his intent to focus predominantly on the writings of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz.

thinkers of the 1920s and 1930s, and the 1970s and 1980s were the Soviets thinker-practitioners (pp.1-3). They pinpoint the reason for this omission, wearily noting that, due to falling post-Cold War interest, the funding is simply not available for the translation and study of ‘irrelevant’ theorists (Blank and Weitz, 2010, p.2). My research interviews confirm this (Shope, 2011). A corpus of potentially universally relevant theory is therefore being neglected because of the currently perceived strategic irrelevance of its Motherland. Applying the same logic across the canon would surely lead us to question why print works of French, or Italian provenance, and British if its tongue wasn’t the lingua franca of strategic conversation.

The points I have made in this section lead to the question of whether there exists a common canon of key texts vital to the intellectual development of military professionals.

A common canon?

My initial considerations of a military canon were influenced by Gray’s (2009, 2010a) assertion that a strategist’s judgement can be greatly improved by an intense study of a handful of key texts. On initial analysis, my examination of the professional military reading lists has seemingly revealed the existence of a dominant suite of texts that, individually, services and national defence forces considered important enough to recommend or mandate as key texts for an individual’s professional reading and development and value as ‘professionally canonical’. However, the validity of the notion of canon in our professional context became apparent as I explored the idea across temporal, geographic, cultural, service and professional contexts through the interviews and analysis of the professional reading lists.

My discussions on ‘canon’ have elicited a nuanced variance in attitudes towards the idea of key texts. Academics in the defence space were more inclined to endorse the notion of

‘canon’ and see ‘authority’ as a permanent state. Practitioners, however, were more utilitarian in their reading and attachment to particular works, authors or ‘classic texts’. The only authority they perceived as being relevant was that to their proximate needs and context. Textual ‘authority’ was expressed as having a transient quality. Furthermore, as the defence community collectively confronts the rapidly changing character, if not the nature, of war in the twenty-first-century many military theorists and practitioners are questioning the continued relevance of classical military theorists such as Clausewitz, Jomini, Sun Tzu, and others (Andersen, 2012). Ironically, and further underscoring his enduring vitality, the questioning of the relevance of the far past and its chroniclers was a fundamental position of Clausewitz himself (Bragg et al., 2012).

One of the core problems associated with a military canon from a professional perspective is utility through accessibility. While largely supportive of the aim of professional reading lists in the military, many interviewees were critical of their application. Many noted that, in their experience, the issue was not caused by the failure of officers to attempt to read some of the more challenging texts mandated in the lists, but a combination of a lack of guidance the officers receive about what is key in those books, and the sheer difficulty of reading many of the texts themselves, their intellectual provenance residing in a milieu distant and foreign to the average junior officer. A common refrain was that it was one thing to tell an officer to read a book, but quite another thing for that officer, in most cases a company grade officer of limited practical experience, to grasp some of the important concepts of those books and be able to determine what is in them that is relevant and applicable to their own immediate challenges.

This emphasis on the utilitarian function of the lists as professional development tools is reflected in the process of compromise used to develop the lists I have instructional design data on. The effective lists – effective as in their ability to engage a range of professional

readers – could be described as inhabiting a ‘zone of compromise’ between an ideal and reality. The ideal conceives professional reading in the military as a quest to get to the heart of the complex phenomena of war; it is the pursuit of wisdom. The real however recognises that wisdom is arduous and its pursuit is stalled by poverty of time, attention deficit, and the average intellect and pre-education of the average officer. Designing an effective list is, therefore, an exercise in ensuring a sufficient spread of texts across the reading challenge spectrum, from conceptually orientated to more narratively framed works.

A further challenge to the notion of a professional canon came from within the canon itself. As Rahe (2006) and Waldman (2012) emphasise, both Thucydides and Clausewitz are less interested in telling their readers what to think than in teaching them how to think (p.99 and p.358). A consideration of the differing intellectual, social and technological contexts in which both theorists developed challenges us to consider if ‘how to think’ may no longer be the exclusive domain of the non-fiction book.

Complementary to many professional reading lists are recommendations regarding audio-visual material relevant to the professional study and understanding of war. For example, *The Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Crane, 2007) highly recommends the 1966 film *Battle of Algiers* as a “troubling and instructive” (p.391) guide to the application of French counterinsurgency doctrine in the Algerian war. Watching this movie recently for the umpteenth time, I have been prompted to ask myself if a book could provide better instruction. Having a personal interest in the history and development of firearms, my own knowledge of the topic has rapidly deepened by watching YouTube clips of modern enthusiasts demonstrating the use and effect of historical pieces. Now that media content⁷⁰ is

⁷⁰ The availability of films, documentaries etc. aside, for professional development, the access online to leading institutional and conference presentations that previously were limited to attendees is an important advance.

exponentially more available, the reliance on older mediums for the prompting of professional debate is lessening rapidly.

I noted the recommendation by the lists of works of fiction, notably science or speculative fiction, as key. For this research I read Card's *Ender's Game* (1977/1991), and re-read Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* (1959) as recommended by reading lists in the U.S. and Australia. Approached for professional instruction, rather than pleasure, both works prompted critical reflection. Considering the abridged history of professional reading earlier presented, it can be argued that an important part of professional understanding is a reader grounded in the 'stories' of their profession. Like early warriors versed in the oral epics and sagas, and later readers grounded in the great novels and heroic adventures, modern genres, both textual *and* visual are the mediums for an enduring path to understanding.

Noting historian Tom Holland's (2013) view on the political and strategic lessons to be gleaned from the *Game of Thrones* series of books and TV dramas, a claim can be made for an ever-broadening range of 'texts' for our professional instruction. To dub these as 'new' or 'emerging' canons would put paid to the notion of canon itself; to deny them the 'accolade' would make the notion of canon as something relevant, well, irrelevant.

CHAPTER TWELVE: ARE LEADERS READERS? CONCLUSION

“Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers”, Harry S. Truman (Gillen, 2004, p.2).

Introduction

Following the presentation and discussion of my research findings, in this final chapter I conclude my research odyssey by presenting my key conclusions on the conceptual framework, highlighting the original contribution of this research, and considering the implications and limitations of the research as well as areas for further research I have identified.

Key conclusions

I set out to address three main research questions:

1. What is the influence of professional reading-based self-development and non-formal education on the development of leadership skills in the military?
2. Why and how are professional military reading lists developed, and what are their use and utility among their audience(s)?
3. Is there an identifiable canon of key texts the military deem important to critically read for the development of leadership and command skills?

As previously mentioned, to address these required my constructing and applying a conceptual framework to the topic. While I have already commented on the use of such a tool from the perspective of method, when addressing the research questions I need to make comment on the constituent parts of the framework, particularly where they have illuminated or clouded the analysis and findings. I summarise my conclusions by question order.

The influence of professional reading

Although the research did not seek to prove the link between reading and the development of military leaders, such an approach being inconsistent with the methodological lens adopted, the research does however indicate, the many contingent variables at work considered, that professional reading in breadth and depth is as important a component in the development of military wisdom as is training, experience, and formal education. This conclusion is particularly supported through my exploration of the critical literacies and wisdom components of the conceptual framework. This conclusion can be worked towards from its expressed end state, the attainment of professional or practical wisdom. Thus:

- the attainment of professional or practical wisdom by the individual officer is the goal of professional military education in all its formal, informal and non-formal modes
- this form of wisdom can be described as the ability of the commander to make deeply informed decisions as presenting circumstances require
- effective decision making is dependent on the development of critical patterns and habits of thought
- this is dependent on a broad and deep knowledge of the ‘content’ of the profession
- as we grow intellectually, we expand our horizon, through application or *praxis*, the practical decision making that puts knowledge to work
- career-long professional reading, by supplying content in breadth and depth, clearly offers an important supplement to the professional content gained through formal education, training and experience.

Central to the development of this conclusion is the hermeneutic notion of *horizon*, the range of ‘vision’ that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. For Gadamer (1960/1996), human inquiry is embedded in horizon, the limited perspective of the

individual's history, language, or in our case, professional knowledge. An individual's horizon shifts over time through the inter-related and inter-dependent processes of understanding, interpretation and application.

In the 'experiential vacuum' much of the preparation for war is conducted in, training, experience, and education requires supplementation through critical engagement with war vicariously experienced through "the repositories of knowledge captured in past and present literary works" (Hirai and Summers, 2005, p.90). This horizon expansion or personal intellectual growth occurs during the development of an individual's career. The horizon of individuals is constantly expanding through the dynamic informational interaction of groups and subgroups involved in professional dialogue. This dialogue is conducted between the broadly designated groups of serving officers, retired officers, civilian defence officials, and academics. Knowledge transfers from organisation to organisation through either the conduits of common language or translation.

In their most developed form, professional reading lists present a curriculum for non-formal learning that, it being explored more gradually and incrementally than in the 'crowded curriculum' of formal programmes (Strachan, 2009), present a broader and deeper learning opportunity for the engaged learner. However, as illustrated by the U.S. Marine Corps programme, actually monitoring and measuring the impact of the programmes is tricky (Arvizo, 2010).

Humankind has long understood that books, particularly when they concern such a fundamental subject as war, can be powerful things, especially in the right (or wrong) hands. At various points in history classic tactical and strategic works have been treated as powerful texts, access to them restricted to an elite few (Gat, 1989, p.23, Sawyer, 2004, p.17). While technologies come and go, there is something fundamentally unchanging in the human

dimension of warfare. To this point in history at least, the book has helped guide (parts of) humanity through both continuity and change.

The nature of reading

While Bloom (1994) and Manguel (1997), perhaps reflecting their personal characteristics and preferences, portray reading as a solitary activity, Hartley (2001) emphasises the long-standing history of, and benefit from, reading as a group activity (ps.1-2). Hartley's research into the phenomenon of the 'reading group' in the UK resonates for my research. While her focus is on group reading in a social/personal context, rather than one with a work/professional orientation, her findings highlight the role peers have in stimulating the reading habit or urge, and, importantly, the role group discussion on a particular text plays in discussion members' ability to critically engage with a text and with other discussants' conception of a text – the growth of their critical literacy skills in other words. Importantly, a reading list, developed by/for the group through a range of processes located at all points on the democratic/autocratic spectrum, is the lynchpin of most of the reading groups' activities (Hartley, 2001).

Hartley's research (2001) serves to reinforce a key conclusion of this research: that rather than the autonomous, self-contained and self-directed activity I conceived at the beginning of this inquiry, reading in a professional context is, *on average*, an activity that is stimulated and enhanced through its incorporation in daily professional discourse. This research indicates that military reading lists and programmes that encourage and support group discussion, and/or insinuate themselves into the professional mentoring relationships between leader and successor, are those that will stimulate an enduring form of organisational learning independent of the presence of academically inclined or intellectually oriented individuals.

The development and utility of military reading lists

Development

I have examined the construction and implementation of the reading lists. Unsurprisingly, my findings revealed that the lists have been developed using a varied mix of structural, androgogical, and disciplinarian approaches.

Structurally the lists vary from simple lists of books to sophisticated reading programmes supported by instructionally designed reading resources and digital enhancements. While a minority of the lists are on the ‘minimalist’ end of the structural spectrum, an even smaller minority are fully supported, the majority inhabiting a middle ground where the list is structured by topic and/or rank and annotations accompanies each reading recommendation.

While the structure of each list is influenced by the organisational resources allocated to develop and maintain it, there are clear androgogical influences at work. The first, and most important of these, is the relative importance the particular organisation or sponsor gives to self-development and non-formal education. While the relative importance of self-development through professional reading may be espoused, its relative resourcing in comparison to formal education programmes is indicative of the actual importance given to it in use.

A second androgogical influence is the weighting given to the degree of challenge or accessibility that should be built into the particular books chosen for recommendation. There are both cultural and ideological dimensions to this. Culturally, the lists are reflective of each military’s wider societal values and norms regarding educational attainment and achievement. This can be thought of as the difference between believing one should *push* learners or *coax* them. Ideologically, the lists’ construction reflect varying degrees of

idealism regarding the need to pursue professional wisdom, and the reality that many officers have neither the inclination nor ability to pursue wisdom with the rigour it requires.

The disciplinary influence on construction will most obviously be influenced by the disciplinary background of the individual or institutional list compilers – i.e. a list on leadership compiled by a military history institute will favour traditional military texts.

However there is also an indication that the relative organisational encouragement or support given to the officer corps to engage in the academic study of non-traditional military disciplines – e.g. anthropology – has an influence on the considered relevance, and thus inclusion of, a broader range of texts.

A final point regarding development relates to the method employed to select or reject individual texts. In many cases, it would appear that there is no method to speak of employed. Texts are recommended based on the individual compilers' familiarities and preferences and group consensus is deployed to arrive at a final, manageable list. This approach seems susceptible to the 'cachet effect', where texts are included because of their perceived prestige and because 'they always have been'.

This approach is in contrast to the principles-based approach evident in the method used in the design and construction of many lists, from the deceptively simple ones, to those I have described as sophisticated. It is hoped that the 'twenty principles for the development of reading lists' this research has arrived at can be used to inform and improve the construction of lists globally, thus making them more effective developmental tools.

Utility

The primary utility of the reading list approach is as a means of promoting professional reading, particularly to assist officers:

- prepare for a posting or campaign

- prepare for formal professional military education courses
- aid developmental activities towards promotion
- broaden general knowledge, and
- cultivate professional military knowledge in breadth and depth.

I have concluded that reading lists function as ‘shadow’ syllabi for the non-formal mode of professional military education, particularly to supplement the study, in breadth and depth, of military history, strategy and doctrine, the art of war, and leadership in command. This function is particularly important because of the ongoing impact on formal military education from financial constraints and the habit of diluting the formal programme content through the inclusion of additional ‘must have’ topics. On a positive note, the shadow function is increasingly important because digital technologies have made it possible to create rich and sophisticated reading programmes that can be accessed anytime or anywhere.

A military canon?

The question of whether there is an identifiable canon of key military texts has been the earliest and most enduring component of this research topic. The idea of canon has long intrigued me and, under the influence of a number of thinkers from both the politically realist and the educational perennialist perspectives, I incline towards the value and actuality of the concept. This acknowledged position or bias has made it particularly important for me to ensure objectivity and contingency were present as I laid out my final conclusions on this part of the topic.

So, to the question, “is there an identifiable canon of key texts the military deem important to critically read for the development of leadership and command skills?” the conclusion is “yes, but...” I have arrived at this contingent position because, while the findings indicate there exists an identifiable set of key military texts, I now think that it is incorrect to label this

body of knowledge ‘a canon’. This is because of four interrelated points that I will elaborate on.

- immutability of the key texts
- the characteristics and utility of the military body of knowledge
- a fault with the concept of canon.

Immutability

I came to the notion of canon via the perennialists Hutchings (1952) and Adler (1940, 1959) and their ideological kinfolks Downs (1983), Allan Bloom (1987) and Harold Bloom (1994), and O’Hear (2008). The influence of the idea of canon on the initial approach to this research topic is illustrated by the annotation scribbled on the frontispiece of the copy of O’Hear’s (2008) *The Great Books* in my library:

Thesis – there is something in well written, human focussed, time & context transcending books that provide an intellectually active, motivated professional with tools/scenarios/lines of inquiry/diagnostic equipment/reference points etc. that facilitate decision making in complex contexts and environments. This provision is an important component of tactical and strategic wisdom.

Written by me sometime in late 2009 or early 2010, it is revealing that this proto-abstract is written in a book that examines O’Hear’s pick of classical literature including Homer, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Milton and Goethe.

The idea of a military canon seemed to be supported by the writings of Colin Gray (1999, 2009, 2010a) who suggested that there existed a “classical canon of strategic texts” (2009, p.48) invested with such intrinsic and timeless power, and fundamental and enduring messages to impart, that they could, and should, function as the core professional readings for officers and others with a professional or personal interest in understanding strategy and the phenomenon of war. Gray identified this strategy canon as the key work each of Sun Tzu, Thucydides and Clausewitz. Conceptually, I was using the ideas of classical realists like Gray

to apply the ideas of the *literary* canon onto the notional idea of a *professional* canon. This became problematic.

Gray's context was the education of strategists, a select set of uniformed and civilian positions within any national military. He was not claiming that there existed a tactical, operational or logistical canon, the realms in which the majority of military leaders would function in and be educated for. The notion of canon is traditionally applied to substantial bodies of time-tested literature. In relation to the notional military canon, beyond the realms of strategy, I could find little evidence to support the idea that there was a substantive set of immutable texts that spoke from the *distant* past to the tactical, operational or logistical realms of today. The majority of 'key' texts I identified were written in the twentieth- and twenty-first-centuries.

The 'yes, but...' factor is that, yes, there exists a 'canon' of key time-tested works, but it is so small as to make it difficult to sustain the argument that it is a 'canon'. To Gray's Sun Tzu and Thucydides, can be added Caesar (c.50 BCE/2008), Machiavelli (1532/1999), De Saxe (1732/1985) and Frederick (1747/1985) and few others of more than purely historical interest before we enter the military literature of the Modern Era.

Characteristics and utility of the military body of knowledge

A further problem with the term canon came from its normal application to substantial works – treatises, novels, plays, epic poems, single author collections, etc. When I began this research, under the influence of Adler's 'Great Books' ideals, I imposed a limit on the boundary of canon to books in their properly understood sense. Excluded from this were reference works and textbooks, essential as they are. Significantly, I also excluded journal articles, lecture notes, and other 'texts'. This has proven problematic in three ways.

First, as my research journey has progressed, it has become increasingly apparent that one cannot meaningfully conceive of a ‘canonical’ body of military knowledge without referring to the rich lode of articles from venerable journals like *Parameters*, *RUSI*, or *Military Review*, or monographs and papers from research institutes like the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Strategic Studies Institute or RAND.

Secondly, it has become apparent that, in contrast to the ‘great conversation’ of human ideas described by Adler (1940) and Hutchins (1952), ‘canonical ideas’, in a military context, do not solely disseminate via key text, but also, perhaps predominantly, through the interpreters and popularisers of these canonical ideas. The preeminent example of this is Clausewitz. I would argue that the overwhelming majority of interested readers approach, and begin an appreciation of, *On War* through secondary sources like those of Aron (1976/1983), Paret (1985), Bassford (1994), or Strachan (2007). Even a direct engagement with *On War* is today predominantly in the Anglophone world through the accessible Howard and Paret ‘Princeton’ translation, and its accompanying translators’ essays and the indispensable *Guide to reading On War* by Bernard Brodie. This edition provides the busy reader with a concise overview of Clausewitz’ thought without having to actually read the whole of the main text.

Thirdly, despite these previous caveats, by expanding the boundaries of canon to include all texts of influence, one encounters a vista so vast as to be beyond the boundaries of easy codification. This point is illustrated by the lists I have studied that, by trying to be comprehensive, have become incomprehensible.

A point should also be made regarding the inapplicability of the notion of canon to a professional context. Canon, particularly as envisaged by Bloom (1994) has at its heart the idea that certain texts are superlative *in and of themselves* – they have an intrinsic aesthetic value and their teleology is contemplative. In contrast, the professional audience I have

studied are more concerned with the utilitarian value of a text. Works may have an intrinsic aesthetic value, but their teleology must be both contemplative and for application.

A fault with the concept of canon

A final point, one that recalls my previous comment about the Princeton edition of *On War*, relates to the role of the translator in the transmission of canon. Adler particularly frames the ‘Great Books’ canon as the works of their original or primary authors. This is fine while the book was authored in the reading language of the reader, and in an idiom that the reader is comfortable and familiar with, but becomes problematic when the written language is in a form of English for example that is alien to our reading ear.

If we do not read ancient Greek or Enlightenment High German, we are dependent on the provision of translations. Thucydides is accessed for example through Rex Warner’s fine 1954 translation or the older 1874 version by Richard Crawley. However, while the Penguin Classics edition lets Warner down by the provision of poor maps (essential for following the text) and a rudimentary index, Crawley enunciates on the stage provided by Strassler’s (1996) edition and its clear maps and extensive supporting essays by an array of contemporary experts.

Thinking of *The Iliad* of Homer, my childhood introduction to the work was through Pope’s 1715 translation, one that is as much Pope as it was Homer. Since then, of the many different *Iliads* on my shelves, I find that Homer speaks to me best through Fagles (1990), rather than say Rieu (1950) or Lattimore (1951). Going back to Clausewitz, the transmission of *On War* succeeded *despite* rather than because of the 1908 Maude and Graham translation.

Thus, rather than being fixed, immutable things, as time passes classic become products of the original author and the editors and/or translators who re-render them accessible to the modern reader. The ‘hidden canon’ of key Russian texts I highlighted in *Chapter Nine*

illustrates this point. While their intrinsic value is lauded by Russian specialists, because many of them have not been translated into English or made widely available, they don't feature on the 'must-read' lists that a canon represents.

A farewell to canon

Canon has been a useful concept through which to explore the 'key texts' component of my research topic. It allowed me to explore ideas like the longevity and reach of theory and the development and transmission of, and critical engagement with, the body of knowledge that the military arts and sciences are based on. Canon works as an idea in literature, especially in its broader humanistic conception, and is a particularly valuable concept where one is seeking to explore, and inquire on, the human condition.

However, canon, in the limited sense that I have been exploring the term, while interesting from an academic perspective, does not fit the professional context under consideration.

While there is a body of key texts that can *currently* be identified as being valuable for the mastery of war and the development of professional wisdom, this corpus is constantly changing and evolving, only a select few texts so far demonstrating the endurance to become, to use Thucydides' (BCE 395/1972) idea, "a possession for all time".

Rather than through the lens of canon, I now believe that the idea of syllabus is the more appropriate concept to frame *professional* reading. The reading lists I have collected and studied, with their varied approach to challenging their consumers, laying out their cut on the military body of knowledge, and deciding and revising the texts to include as key readings, act like shadow syllabi complementing the formal military education programme. Scown (1998) notes that "the nature of a professional syllabus is that it should be constantly under review" (p.5). This is antithetical to the concept of canon.

Original contribution

This research makes an original contribution to the literature and to professional practice through:

- conducting the first qualitative review of professional military reading lists across national and service boundaries
- updating the literature on the influence of professional reading on military leadership development through an interdisciplinary literature review as well as a qualitative interview engagement with military leaders and academics
- applying the hermeneutic method to a military leadership context
- and, forming, propagating, and validating principles for the development of professional reading lists.

Implications for theory

Implications for leadership theory

I have attempted to approach the subject of military leadership through Keegan's (1987) 'post-heroic' lens. This has not been easy for, more so than any other leadership context, the library of military leadership is ablaze with the distracting flashes and smoke of the plumes, medals, gold lace, great deeds and heroism (Keegan and Wheatcroft, 1996, pp.vii-ix) that attires much popular, and some professional, military history and science.

The conflation of the concepts of 'hero' and 'genius' particularly confound the study of military leadership. Clausewitz (1832/1976) devotes much thought to the idea of military genius and the conditions for its development. This is unsurprising considering the Napoleonic shadow his magnum opus was conceived in. He considered genius in quantitative and qualitative terms. For Clausewitz, the "condition of a society" was the relevant

determinant of the distribution or *quantity* of military genius within that society (1832/1976, p.100).

According to Clausewitz (1832/1976), in modern or post-modern societies where there are a large range of social activities, military genius will be rare. In more ‘primitive’ societies (i.e. those where the social activities are more warlike) then, following Clausewitz, military genius will be much more numerous (1832/1976, p.100). An illustration of this idea can be seen in the panoply of military talent on display in the Iliad’s famous ‘ship scene’ where a roll-call of the warrior elite of the Greek world is given, none less than Odysseus, “mastermind like Zeus” (Homer, c.800 BCE/1997, pp.115-124).

In contrast to the frequency of military genius, Clausewitz asserts that the *quality* of military genius depends on the “general intellectual development” of a given society. For Clausewitz, the most highly developed societies produce the most brilliant soldiers (1832/1976, p.100). The subtlety of the notion of “highly developed” is interesting and does not necessarily equate to most technologically developed. To a man like Clausewitz, highly developed would most likely relate to the prevailing intellectual environment of the society.

How does this relate to my study? First it frames military leadership as a product of the dialect between the variables ‘individual’ and ‘social condition’. That the second of these variables is correct is argued convincingly by Keegan (1987, p.1) who sees military leadership as “stubbornly local and particular”, something shifting and changing from one age and place to another. The first of Clausewitz’ variables is altogether more problematic, maintaining as it does the primacy of the individual in the human endeavour. For Clausewitz seemingly, the march of history is one in which military genius concentrates into fewer and fewer leaders as society and social roles evolve and develop. It is pyramidal leadership (Greenleaf, 1977, p.74-5); top-down and singular. This presents challenges on many levels.

One implication of this is that leadership in the military, affected as it is by the conflicting and complementary forces of caste and professionalism, and continuity and change, does not lend itself well to examination and extrapolation using leadership models deriving from ‘civilian’ life or from idealistic or teleologically intrinsic conceptions of leadership. This endorses Jackson and Parry’s (2008) caution about the need to conduct research that takes both emic and etic approaches: that is, studies conducted within as well as from outside the host culture (p.79), in this case military culture.

Related to this is, when considering the military, the need to clearly distinguish between *leadership education* and *the education of leaders*. Hayes (2008) distinguishes between the former – instruction in leadership theory, concepts, and models of action – and the latter – the professional knowledge a leader needs to do their job (p.87). Rost (1993) differentiates these as the process of leadership and the content of leadership, with a mastery of professional content as the “stuff that separates the real people from the quiche makers” (p.4). The implication of this is that, like the critical thinking skills considered earlier, if a separate learning strand for the academic teaching of leadership is created away from the professional context it occurs in, something develops that is both potentially irrelevant and a further burden on the formal learning curriculum.

Implications for methodology

The research experience validates hermeneutics as a methodological perspective for research of this nature. This was illustrated by the need to be consciously aware of researcher prejudice and horizon in the interaction as an outsider with the cultural members of a research locus so notably ‘guarded’ as the armed forces.

Prasad (2002) has examined the application of the hermeneutic method to organisational studies and concluded that, as an epistemology and philosophy of interpretation,

contemporary hermeneutics has expanded the scope of the term text to include not only documents in the conventional sense but also organisational practices and structures, social and economic activities and cultural artefacts. In methodological terms, he infers that scholars may legitimately adopt hermeneutics as a research approach not only for interpreting corporate documents but for investigating a whole host of micro-level and macro-level organisational phenomena such as leadership, motivation, empowerment, corporate strategy, and technological change, (p.19).

Prasad (2002) observes that methodologically, hermeneutics as an approach for research requires the investigator to pay great attention to the context and history of the organisational phenomenon being studied, and hermeneutics as a methodology makes important demands on the organizational researcher's capability for self-reflection and self-critique (p.19). Citing Gadamer's guidance, Prasad (2002) highlights the necessity in hermeneutics to be conscious of one's prejudices and allow them to be confronted by "texts whose meaning challenges the truth of our prejudices" (p.19).

This has been an important grounding for my approach to this topic, my status as an 'outsider' an ever-present consideration during our dialogue with this notoriously closed community. While comforted by Brodie's (1973) assertion that outside observers are best able to judge clearly and objectively a particular culture (p.479), this was tested by off-hand comments from some senior officers questioning the credibility of this research project due to my lack of military service. I consider that the primary strength of the methodology is that it provides the researcher with an intellectual framework and method in which to derive objective, and thus verifiable, findings from a subjective approach (i.e. a single individual's interpretation). The reliance on interpretation stems from the need to consider quantitative and qualitative data-sets that could, from a purely empirical perspective, be seen to contradict or nullify each other.

Implications for method

Using a conceptual framework

On initially exploring my research topic, it became clear that rather than there being a discrete ‘whole’ to investigate, the phenomenon I wished to consider was the sum of a number of key constituent parts. Some of these were less discernibly relevant to the topic than others, but *felt* important to explore nonetheless. Adding to the fog was my personal distance from the topic. Having never served in the military my approach to the topic was as an outsider, albeit a very well-read one.

To allow me to conceive the topic in a conceptually manageable fashion, I decided to relate the constituent parts that were emerging – i.e. reading, professionalism, military leadership, intellectual development – to a framework that could be used to aid the data analysis, and then relate it back towards the key focus. With Miles and Huberman’s (1994) guidance in mind, this conceptual framework would enable me to label, arrange and define the interrelationships between the discrete concepts, factors or variables I was being confronted with (p.18).

Nersessian (2008) discusses how concepts provide a means through which we can make sense of the world. By categorising experiences, phenomena can be sorted, relationships noted, and differences and interconnections identified and analysed. A conceptual framework is thus a way of systematising, or putting concepts in relation to one another in a coherent manner (p.391-2).

As a caveat though, Nersessian (2008) also points out that conceptual structures are complex and intricate and, because of the difficulties inherent in examining the enormity of their whole all at once, trying to understand how a concept relates to others can reveal previously

unnoticed limitations and problems in the representational capabilities of the conceptual structures and can reveal inconsistencies with other parts of the structure (pp.391-2).

In approaching the artefact of professional reading lists and the development of military leaders, I formulated, tested and retested the conceptual structure to satisfy myself that the framework was assisting, rather than shaping, the topic evaluation. Doing this required ongoing recourse to the visual depiction of hermeneutic circle supplied by Michrina and Richards (1996). Armed and aware of my particular prejudices and limited horizon, I engaged with the cultural text of the military through the constantly cycling stages of data-gathering, interpretation, description, challenge, self-analysis, reformulation and back to data-gathering, interpretation, and description.

The implication of this is that the use of a conceptual framework requires an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in its construction and application, and that these weaknesses are hammered out through ongoing critical methodological examination. My consideration of the strengths of the conceptual framework is summed up in the saying “a picture paints a thousand words”. Understanding a complex phenomenon is facilitated, for me at least, by the visualisation of its components through the development of relational diagrams. Embodied in this strength is the prime weakness in my eyes. This is that the results of the application are dependent on the rigour of the initial construction of the framework. Being both constructor and applicator, the researcher must consider a self-developed conceptual framework more critically than one adopted from another tested source.

Data analysis

The use of data analysis software during this research was considered during the data collection period, when I was introduced to, and given the opportunity to use, prominent analytical software, particularly NVivo. While engagement with this software package

confirmed the potency of this tool, it raised questions regarding the compatibility of the use of such a tool with the philosophical inclinations of my chosen methodological approach. After some deliberation, a conscious decision was made to preserve the epistemological purity of my approach by relying on the long-standing analytical methods of the pre-digital age.

This decision has been reinforced by Goble et al. (2012) who found that the introduction of software like NVivo into a project “invariably brings with it new practices, both extending and restricting human possibilities”. While the programmes expanded the scope and potential of projects, they stymied phenomenological analysis by creating practical conditions that are markedly *unphenomenological* [ital. in the original]” (p.46). They concluded that “while we as qualitative researchers may believe we are actively shaping the use of this software, we ignore at our peril how this software also shapes our research practices, our relationship to research, and ourselves as researchers” (Goble et al., 2012, p.46).

While this is an argument this researcher endorses, it raises the spectre of the perennial debate regarding the authenticity of research (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982, Bryman, 2012) read as managing the balance between validity – the idea that a researcher’s observations or deductions are an accurate reflection of reality – and reliability – the extent to which the research methods, findings and interpretation can be repeated, yielding consistent outcomes (Kayrooz and Trevitt, 2005, ps.339 & 342).

Mikhaylov et al. (2012) highlight how the debate over machine versus human coded content analysis largely revolves around this trade-off between reliability and validity. They point out that while proponents of computerised schemes of content analysis cite perfect reliability in their favour, they struggle to demonstrate validity. In contrast, they note that hand-coded schemes claim validity as a central advantage but then devote huge resources to attempts to

enhance reliability. While Laver and Garry (2000) convincingly present the case in favour of computer-based documentary analysis for teasing out meaning from data sets involving multiple texts and individual actors, Grimmer and Stewart (2013), though excited by the potential of digital methods, warn that, for now, they are no substitute for careful thought and close reading and require extensive and problem-specific validation.

Having vexed great minds throughout the modern era, this is clearly an epistemological and ontological conundrum that will continue to be debated generally, and in the minds of individual researchers and their peer-reviewing or examining audiences.

Implications for practice

While the heels of this research may hover with Hermes, my methodological patron, the balls of our feet must remain planted firmly on terra firma; our research lives and dies in the arena of practical application. To this end, I have developed *Twenty Principles* (see *Table Seven*) for leaders with organisational learning and personnel development responsibility to consider and apply when developing and implementing the tool now familiar as a professional reading list. These principles have formed, re-formed and solidified throughout the research process, and have been shared with, and validated by, practitioners in the field (e.g. McMaster, 2012).

These principles represent the sharp, applicable end of this research. Supported with further research and development on syllabus/curriculum, learning support, and, crucially, programme effectiveness measures, these principles might provide a foundation for the development and implementation of economical, forward *and* backward-facing, innovative, responsive and accessible organisational learning programmes. While the principles are oriented to professional military education, it is hoped that, backed by further research, they have application beyond the immediate context to other professions and contexts.

Table Seven: Twenty Principles

Twenty Principles for the development of reading lists

Pre-Development Principles

1. Have a 'sponsor' for the reading list. They should believe it is an important resource, will support its development and implementation, and will be its ambassador in communiques, talks, and orders.
2. Be clear on who exactly is the intended audience for the reading list as this will influence your list structure. All ranks? Officers only? Does 'officer' include NCOs?
3. Be clear on the intended purpose of the reading list as this will influence your content. Is it to prepare your audience for a particular tour of duty or theatre? Is it to inform, motivate, indoctrinate, or challenge the intended audience? Is it part of a longer term professional military education initiative designed to promote and foster sustainable self-development among the audience?

Structural Principles

4. Decide on a structure (or whether to have a structure) to 'grade' the texts on the list i.e. by (a) level of perceived difficulty or by (b) recommendations by service rank. Beware! Option (b) is fraught with potential 'alienation dilemmas'.
5. Decide on a structure (or whether to have a structure) to theme or categorise the texts on the reading list. Develop a matrix of 'topics' the reading list will cover. These topics should ideally cover the main knowledge domains in the military profession's body of knowledge.
6. Ruthlessly limit the number of books on the list to the absolute essentials – less is more. Only select texts that suit your purpose and are the finest 'teachers'. Resist selecting texts to flatter colleagues or self. Resist inclusion by default; a 'classic' text should be on your list because of its utility not its intellectual cachet.

Content Principles

7. Your pre-development considerations will have established your audience and purpose. Decide on the academic disciplines, professional bodies of knowledge, or genres your audience could benefit from being exposed to. Reserve final judgement on the breadth and depth of this until all other content related questions are adequately resolved in your mind.
8. Decide whether good military history should be the foundation of your list.
9. Don't underestimate the educational and engagement power of good fiction and poetry.

10. If your purpose is long-term, default to including texts with a proven providence i.e. those that have been tested by time and will endure. Resist 'fad' or 'slogan' works.
11. If your purpose is short-term, then also default to including texts with a proven providence regarding a particular theatre, culture, aspect of human behaviour etc.
12. Unless the purpose of the reading list is to indoctrinate, then seek to educate by including texts that challenge the mind and the mind-set/worldview of the audience. Particularly look for good translations of texts from outside the Anglophone world. Never underestimate the power of non-Anglophone authors (in translation) to challenge!
13. Have a small selection of up-front 'must reads' to create a common referential text for all your audience. Is there a key service, campaign, or motivational/leadership work(s) that can 'anchor' the list?
14. Create a 'space' around the reading list for discussion, debate, and information sharing to occur. Would a simple online forum or wiki enhance the reading list and the audience's ownership of it through making it more inter-active?

Accessibility Principles

15. Review your content selections with intellectual accessibility for your particular audience and purpose in mind. A concise derivative summary of a classic work may be of more value to your purpose than the original work itself.
16. Review your content selections with physical accessibility for your particular audience and purpose in mind. Are texts readily available to your audience and in quantity? Are they purchasable at a reasonable price? Are they available for free as e-book downloads?
17. Ensure your list is balanced with shorter and longer works. Consider for some texts recommending what your audience can skip and what is essential reading.
18. Support the key readings with links or references to other sources e.g. further readings, key journal papers, reference texts, films, online media including webcasts etc.

Implementation Principles

19. If the list has sponsorship at the highest level and if professional reading is important to your particular organisation, then build an interaction with the reading list into your mentoring and professional review processes.
20. Be patient – reading lists produce slow and incremental results!

Limitations of the research

I have identified three limitations of this research. These are the two related questions concerning the breadth of my international enquiry and my consideration of data from all military services, and the question of reinforcement bias in the data sample.

During the initial data-gathering exercise, I was cautioned by one defence academic to limit my study to professional reading in the American, British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Armies' (ABCA) programme, both to keep the focus manageable and ensure accessibility to data and literature in a language I could readily understand. While this advice was, and is, sound, an interest in the strategic culture and literature of non-Western countries from previous research (McElhatton, 2008a) compelled my data gathering focus to remain as global as language and other literature permitted.

I stand by this decision, giving me, as it has, an insight into the professional reading of militaries in continental Europe, Asia, and, to a lesser extent, Latin America. However, my picture is a fragmentary one. Despite extensive efforts, I was unable to gather data from continental Africa and the Middle East, as well as many important military institutions in Asia and Latin America as well as the former Soviet Union/eastern bloc of Europe.

Related to this was my decision to consider professional reading from a trans-service perspective. This was more an iterative rather than a conscious decision, and primarily stemmed from the 'neither fish nor fowl' character of the U.S. Marine Corps whose professional reading programme I became quickly acquainted with in the initial research phase. While the popular imagination associates the U.S. Marine Corps with land campaigns in WWII in the Pacific and the Vietnam War, its operational focus is power projection *from the sea* and has, since its inception, come under the oversight of the U.S. Department of Navy (Krulak, 1996b).

My interest in this navy that is an army, and immersion in the joint services doctrine and education at strategic levels, opened my interest in professional reading lists from other maritime and aerial services. While the analysis of this data, and the insights provided by non-Army service personnel, enriched our research, my aim to arrive at some ‘universal’ insights into military leadership development might be undermined by the low proportion of data from the other services I gathered and analysed in comparison to that from armies, and the very real differences in professional practices and leadership, perceived and actual, between these services.

In considering my third limitation, I refer to Kayrooz and Trevitt’s (2005) meditation on the objective consideration of phenomena through the limited perceptions of participants and the impact of contextual change on those perceptions. They demonstrate that research in organisational settings is complex because it is tempered by people’s limited, and/or varied, perceptions (p.9).

When discussing the qualitative component of my research – the research interviews – with peers, particularly those with both an academic *and* service background, I was repeatedly challenged with three related questions:

1. Has reinforcement bias come into play through your targeting of particular individuals for interview who showed a positive inclination towards your research questions?
2. Has their actual participation reinforced this inclination?
3. Will your subjects – military professionals – for a variety of reasons, monetary and professional pride, actually be truthful about the *academic* inclinations and activities of self and service?

While the first two points are moot, the extracts given in *Chapters Eight* and *Nine* are candid about the reality of professional reading in the military. Yes, my engagement with individual

officers was facilitated by their interest in, and promotion of, my research focus. However their input into the research was forthright and far from dewy-eyed regarding the limitations of their profession.

Finally, during previous presentations of this research, comment has been made on the apparently innate male gender-centricity of the work. While there is some truth to this criticism, it needs pointing out that this does not reflect any calculated design, merely the historical dominance, still largely prevailing, of the military profession by males.

Areas for further research

An aspect of the professional military reading lists worthy of further consideration is their use of Science Fiction and Historical Fiction works to promote models and ideals of leadership. The spectre of *Prudentia* rears again because, while the works by Heinlein and Card are set in a possible future, they depict a futurised past – in the case of *Starship Troopers*, a modernised, but clearly identifiable Sparta. The depiction of leadership in these works would trouble those who embrace ideals of transformative or servant leadership. That they are considered by the highest military authorities to have valuable lessons to impart is worthy of further inquiry.

I have collected a significant number of reading lists from the late nineteenth-century through to the mid-1990s period where my main focus of enquiry begins. While I have made some brief analysis and commentary on these, the opportunity to engage in a fuller consideration of the evolution of professional military reading trends over time presents itself. Until we see the full digitisation of relevant archives, this topic would require a significant amount of archival research in the great collections in the U.K., U.S. and Europe.

Also collected were reading lists issued by war, defence, and strategic studies departments from universities and research institutes with a predominantly ‘civilian’ (i.e. non-uniformed)

purview and target audience. These lists were not included in my analysis because their primary consumers were not military officers. A future comparative analysis of the texts they recommend and the texts the professional military reading lists recommend would provide an interesting insight into the differing worldviews and approaches to development through reading by each group.

I have considered the means militaries use to develop their learning capabilities or ‘organisational wisdom’ through self-development, and examined two ‘sub-questions’ that I have had to ‘converse’ and interact with towards our interpretive inquiry: the means and ends of professional military education and the nature of military wisdom. A by-product of this inquiry has been a consideration of how modern militaries function as ‘holding environments for knowledge’, particularly with regard to the learning relationship between the minds of their leaders and the textual sources of military knowledge. This is an area for further research.

Closing thoughts

In the introduction, examples were shown of two commanders who had so closely studied history that they could see enough analogy in the events of the past to give them guidance to their endeavours in their present. General Patton’s ardent study of military history gave him flashes of strategic insight so intense that he felt it akin at times to some effect of reincarnation (Duggan, 2005). Nearer to home, our prior immersion in Major-General Sir Howard Kippenberger’s autodidactic approach to mastering the military arts (McElhatton, 2008b) led to my research topic on the influence of professional reading on the development of military leadership.

However, as political and economic changes continue to shape and re-shape professional education, particularly within public sector professions like the armed services, situational

forms of learning like self-directed and collective informal learning is gaining more attention from educators and, importantly, those with responsibility for setting organisational education policy and procurement (Simpson et al., 2004). I have previously argued that directed and concentrated professional reading is intellectual self-development in its purest and most immutable form (McElhatton and Jackson, 2011a). There have long existed exemplars of the military reader-leader, but the model conveyed by Dietrich (1989) of the still-to-develop George S. Patton is illuminating; his “professional reading was only one of several pillars of his intellectual development as a soldier, but it may have been the most important one overall”. Compiling a reading list is a key step in creating any programme of professional development (Stohry, 1993).

In principle the ideal of the warrior scholar is a noble one to pursue. Like all ideals however, reality has a disturbing habit of intruding, or to paraphrase Moltke the Elder, no ideal survives contact with reality. The professional soldier must balance reading obligations with the demands of occupational and personal life. Work schedules, demanding fitness regimes, ongoing technical training requirements, and, for many, the responsibilities and distractions of family life and multi-media entertainment, squeezes the time left available for engagement with texts, even engagement with texts on a reading list.

D.H.M. Henry acknowledges that even for a ‘Leatherneck’ these conflicting demands make “allocating sufficient time to the US Marine Corps Professional Reading Program at the end of everyone's ‘to do’ list. Unfortunately, for most military personnel, they have to spend their reading time for other things” (Henry, 2006). Plato, through the medium of Socrates, while acknowledging that these conflicting demands exist, has no tolerance for the professional soldier who allows one professional military education demand to trump another.

They need intellectual eagerness, and must learn easily. For the mind shirks mental hardship more than physical...anyone who takes it up must have no...inhibitions

about hard work. He mustn't be only half inclined to work, and half not –for instance a man who is very fond of hunting and athletics...but has no inclination to learn, listen and inquire (Plato, c. 360 BCE/1955).

The complex nature of reading makes it something that, evidence from a neuro-science perspective aside, is inherently difficult to study and reach empirically based conclusions. Its effects are incremental and not isolatable from other environmental factors; e.g. Eugene was an avid reader but circumstance, temperament, heritage (his mother) etc. were so vitally important to his psychological make-up, and therefore his generalship (Bevan, 1975, pp.198-9), that it would only be self-serving to isolate one of these factors and say 'there is the key factor'. Adrian Liddell-Hart (1976), despite his father's long assertions, doubted whether a direct correlation could be determined between the influence of writers and theorists and the actual conduct of war (p.5).⁷¹ Winton (2011) argues that military theory can be quite useful in the maturation of military commanders, but it is not always necessary and by no means perfect, and thus should be studied assiduously but used with caution.

In *Chapter Three* I note Socrates' antipathy to the medium of written knowledge. Socrates concerns were, that in transforming from an oral/memory culture where knowledge was stored in the mind and transmitted through social conversation, to a written culture where the guardianship of knowledge was entrusted to the page and transmitted through textual engagement, the very act of thinking, the process of human inquiry, would irrevocably change. He was right.

As Barber (1964) noted, before writing, all cultural traditions had to be memorised and, while the human memory is capable of storing much more than our twenty-first-century under-exercised mind might appreciate, there are still limits to what memory alone can store, and

⁷¹ A soldier, adventurer, businessman and journalist, Liddell-Hart junior had a distinguished and varied military career including service in the British Army, Royal Navy and the French Foreign Legion (Danchev, 1998).

thus, the permanent expansion of human knowledge has been dependent on its collection and codification in written form (p.50).

Neuroscience-based research like that of Wolf (2007) and Dehaene (2009) show the impact that the act of reading in all its variety and complexity has had, and continues to have, on the structure and activity of the human brain. We see this developmentally by observing the life-cycle of human growth and the anomalies of conditions like dyslexia. We see this culturally as we observe the differences today in the brain activities of alphabetic, ideographic, or non-literate cultures, and those that read left-to-right, right-to-left, top-to-bottom or not at all. And finally, we see this historically, as humans have moved from oral to written, to mass-print, and now to digital, cultures. As Wolf (2007) points out, humans are not born to read, and humanity was never destined to read. Writing and reading is singularly humanities' greatest invention and agent for intellectual change.

Arguably, the changes in the way we read in the digital age are the fourth major milestone in the ongoing evolution of the impact of reading on brain structure and activity. As in Socrates' day, this will have an impact on the very act of thinking, on the process of human inquiry, on the intellectual development of our species. And as in Socrates' day, this will be both to our benefit and to our detriment, though proportionately in what order we cannot yet know, and when we can, it will be too late to change.

Wolf's (2007) erudite work was named *Proust and the Squid*. Hitchens (2008) draws from Proust that, "the past is never really over" (p.143). My research journey has revealed patterns and connections, a sense that many things do in fact connect each other, that the logos concept is something real, maybe a grand map of the human experiment. Lifelong reading helps illuminate the connections that little bit more. We have seen that experience alone is a

difficult teacher; learning from others' mistakes is a much more profitable and less costly exercise.

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ANNEX ONE: MILITARY READING LISTS

Service	Institution	Title	Year
Argentine Army	Escuela de Defensa Nacional	Libros	2008
Australian Army	Land Warfare Studies Centre	Chief of Army's Reading List	2007
“	Land Warfare Studies Centre	Small Wars Reading Programme	2009
Australian Defence College	Centre for Defence Leadership Studies	Recommended Reading	2009
Royal Australian Navy	Sea Power Centre	Royal Australian Navy Reading List	2006
Royal Australian Air Force	Air Power Development Centre	Chief of Air Force's Reading List	2010
Canadian Forces	Canadian Defence Academy - Canadian Forces Leadership Institute	The Canadian Forces Professional Studies Reading List 2006: A Guide to Reading on Professionalism and Leadership	2006
“	Directorate of Land Concepts and Designs	The Canadian Army Reading List: A Professional Guide for Canada's Soldiers	2009
“	Canadian Army Infantry School	The Infantry School Reading List	2003
“	Saskatchewan Dragoons	Library	2005
“	Directorate of Training	Introduction to the Study of Military History for Canadian Students	2008
Armee de France	St. Cyr	Culture Militaire	2006
Bundeswehr		Buchtitel	2007
Indian Army	Indian National Defence College	Pre-course Reading	2007
“	Indian Army Staff College	List of Books: Correspondence courses to prepare for promotion exams and Staff College entrance examination	2007
Irish Army	The Infantry School	Professional Reading Programme	2011
Italian Armed Forces	Joint Services Staff College (ISSMI)	Pre-course Reading	2010
Republic of Korea Army	ROK Army	Recommended Reading List	2008
Malaysian Armed Forces	National Defence University	List of Recommended Strategic and Defence Studies Books	2010
NATO	Supreme Headquarters Allied	SHAPE Reading List	2010

	Powers Europe		
“	NATO Special Operations Training Program (NSTEP)	NSTEP Suggested Reading List	N/A
Armed Forces of the Netherlands	Dutch Institute for Military History	General War Reading List	2009
“	Dutch Institute for Military History	Military Historical Outline	2010
New Zealand Army	Military Studies Institute	New Zealand Army Reading List Sixth Edition	2009
Singapore Armed Forces	SAFTI Military Institute	SAF Professional Reading Programme	2009
Royal Thai Navy	Naval War College	War College Reading List	2010
Royal Navy	Royal Navy	Intermediate Royal Navy Reading List	2008
British Armed Forces	Defence Academy of the United Kingdom	Developing Strategic Thinkers - a Reading List from CDS	2010
“	Defence Academy of the United Kingdom	Pre-course and Arrival Readings	2010
“	Defence Academy of the United Kingdom	Higher Command and Staff Course - Reading List	2010
“	Defence Academy of the United Kingdom	Director Defence Academy's Reading List	2007
United States Air Force	Chief of Staff U.S. Air Force	Chief of Staff U.S. Air Force Reading List	N/A
United States Army	US Army Chief of Staff	CoS of Army Gen Eric Shinseki's Recommended Reading List	2000
“	Chief of Staff of Army	The US Army Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List	2004
“	Armor School	Armor School Reading list	2006
“	3d Armored Cavalry Regiment	Brave Rifles Reading List for Operation Iraqi Freedom	2004
“	US Army War College Library	Suggested Military Reading List	2006
“	Center of Military History	Recommended Professional Reading List	2010
“	US Army Medical Corps	General Weightman's Professional Reading List	2006
“	Command and General Staff College	Books for the Military Professional	2007
“	Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)	Professional Reading List	N/A
United States Army	Training and Doctrine Command	TRADOC Senior Leader Reading List	2007
“	US Army Warrant Officers	Reading List	2009

	Association		
“	US Army General Officers	Suggested Reading List	2010
“	US Army Chief of Staff	Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List	2000
“	Maneuver Center of Excellence	Maneuver Center of Excellence Reading List	2010
“	First Army Division East	Recommended Reading List	N/A
“	Center for Army Leadership	Recommended Reading List	2007
“	US Army War College Library	Suggested Military Reading List	2010
“	US Army War College Library	The Military Profession: A Selected Bibliography	2006
United States Coast Guard	US Coast Guard	Coast Guard Reading List 2007-8	2007
United States Congress	US Congress	Congressman Ike Skelton National Security Book List	2003
United States Joint Chiefs of Staff	Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff	Chairman of JCS Reading List	2006
United States Joint Forces Command		Joint Staff Officers Guide: Professional Reading List	2000
“	US Joint Forces Staff College	The Fog of War	2002
“	US Joint Forces Staff College	Professional Reading List	2008
United States Marine Corps	US Marine Corps	Commandant of the US Marine Corps Official Reading List	2005
“	Commander, United States Marine Forces, Central Command	ComUSMarCent Reading List	2007
“	II Marine Expeditionary Force	Suggested Further Reading List	2006
United States Military Academy		The USMA Officer's Professional Reading Guide	2006
United States National Defense University		The National Defense University President's Reading List	2006
United States Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy	MCPON Reading List	2005
“	Naval Historical Center	Professional Readings in U.S. Naval History	2000
“	Naval War College	President's Reading List	2011
United States Navy	Naval War College	Navy Professional Reading Program	2007
Uruguay National Army	Army Strategy School	References to the Chair of Strategy	2010

Venezuela Army	Venezuela Army College	Venezuela Army College Programme	2011
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ANNEX TWO: INTERVIEWS AND PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE

- ALAGAPPA, M. 2010. *Interview with Dr. Muthiah Alagappa, East-West Centre, Washington DC, 22 December 2010, Wellington.*
- ALATIFF, M. 2011. *Interview with Lt-General Dato' Wira Allataif Bin Mohd Noor, Vice Chancellor, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 9 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- ARAFIN 2011. *Interview with Lt-Colonel Arafin, Deputy Dean of the Defence Management Faculty, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 8 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- ARVIZO, I. T. 2010. *Interview with Maj Ian T. Arvizo, U.S. Marine Corps Professional Reading Program, 6 October 2010, Quantico, VA.*
- CHAN, K.Y. 2011. *Interview with Lt-Colonel Kim-Yin Chan, SAF-NTU Military Academy, 23 February 2011, Singapore.*
- GHAZALI, A. 2011. *Interview with Lt-Col Professor Ahmed Ghazali, Dean of the Centre for Defence and International Studies, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 9 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- GILBERT, G. P. 2010. *Interview with Dr. Gregory P. Gilbert, Air Power Development Centre, 5 November 2010, Canberra.*
- GOLDRICK, J. 2013. *Correspondence with Rear Admiral James Goldrick, Royal Australian Navy, October 2012 - January 2013, Canberra.*
- HORN, B. 2012. *Correspondence with Colonel Bernd Horn, Chief of Staff Strategic Training and Education Programs, Canadian Defence Academy, 23-31 October 2012.*
- IDRIS, K., ARRIFFIN, M., SAMHASRI, NAZRI, A., ISMAHIZAN, SAZILI, M. & NOOR 2011. *Interview with LtCol Kamal Idris bin Johar, Maj Mohd Arriffin bin Saimun, Maj Samhasri bin Sameh, LtCmdr Ahmed Nazri bin Bahari, Maj Ismahizan bin Ishak, Maj Mohamad Sazili bin Hussain, and Maj Noor ain bt Sulaiman, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 7 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- JONES, R. R. 2011. *Interview with Lieutenant-General R.R. Jones, Chief of New Zealand Defence Force, 19 January 2011, Wellington.*
- KARIM, M. 2011. *Interview with Mohammad bin-Abdul Karim, Chief Librarian, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 7 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- MCMASTER, H. R. 2012. *Interview with Major-General H.R. McMaster, Commander, Maneuver Center of Excellence, Fort Benning, GA., 14 April 2012, Fort Benning, GA.*
- SHOPE, V. 2011. *Interview with Virginia Shope, Research, Instruction, and Access Services Chief, U.S. Army War College Library, 21 January 2011, Carlisle, PA.*
- STRACHAN, H. 2009. *Interview with Professor Hew Strachan, Chichele Professor of the History of War, University of Oxford, 15 August 2009, Wellington.*
- VAN CREVELD, M. 2012. *Personal correspondance with Professor Martin van Creveld, 7-8 October 2012.*
- ZAIDI, A. 2011. *Interview with Captain Ahmad Zaidi, Director of the Centre for Defence Foundation Studies, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 7 February 2011, Kuala Lumpur.*
- ZAKARIA, M. 2011. *Interview with Colonel Mohd Zakaria Bin Yadi, Komandan, Royal Military College, Malaysia, 10 February 2011. Kuala Lumpur.*

ANNEX THREE: RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Research Information Sheet

Emmet McElhatton, PhD candidate, School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/>

Researcher email: emmet.mcelhatton@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors' emails: lance.beath@vuw.ac.nz b.jackson@auckland.ac.nz

Research Topic: Professional Reading in the Education of Leaders

This research seeks to explore the role of reading in the education of, particularly military, leaders. The research explores the phenomenon of the 'professional reading list' and its impact and the place of 'classic' texts in modern military education.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of this research. The interview will consist of open-ended questions which you are free to answer in any manner you see fit. You may refuse to answer any question. You may terminate the interview at any point during the interview. This interview will be recorded using a digital recording device. Access to the 'raw' interview audio will be limited to the researcher and his supervisors. All audio will be stored in a secure, password protected location. All audio will be destroyed five years after the completion of the thesis.

You can choose to indicate to the interviewer either before or after the interview whether you wish your comments to be either fully or partially attributable or wholly confidential. If during the course of the interview you wish to make some comment non-attributable or confidential please indicate so during or immediately after the interview. You will be asked to sign a consent form before the interview commences. This consent form can be reviewed after the interview is completed if you wish to make any changes to the attribution status of all or some of your comments.

The interview should take no more than 30 minutes to complete. Your time is valuable so your participation is highly valued.

The researcher will seek to publish the whole or part of his thesis in book or journal formats.

This survey has received ethical approval from a Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee

Consent for Interview

Emmet McElhatton, PhD candidate, School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/>

Researcher email: emmet.mcelhatton@xtra.co.nz

Supervisors' emails: lance.beath@vuw.ac.nz b.jackson@auckland.ac.nz

Research Topic: Professional Reading in the Education of Leaders

- ☐ I have been provided with adequate information relating to the nature and objectives of this research project, I have understood that information and have been given the opportunity to seek further clarification or explanations.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw from this research at any time before the final analysis of data without providing reasons.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the project, any audio commentary and subsequent communications I have provided will be destroyed.
- ☐ I understand that the information I have provided will be used only for this research project and that any further use will require my written consent.
- ☐ I understand that five years after this research is completed the audio recording will be destroyed.

Attribution of Comments

- ☐ I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential and reported only in an aggregated/non-attributable form *or*
- ☐ I consent to information or opinions expressed in this interview and subsequent communications being attributed to me *or*
- ☐ I consent to information or opinions expressed in this interview and subsequent communications being only partially attributable to me as indicated during the course of the interview.

Interviewee name:

Interviewee signature:

Date: