

GENERAL GERHARD VON SCHARNHORST : MENTOR OF CLAUSEWITZ AND FATHER OF THE PRUSSIAN-GERMAN GENERAL STAFF

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“My career is entirely my work, since I became ten years old.”

Scharnhorst, March 1809

Introduction

The character of Prussian General Gerhard Johann David von Scharnhorst permeates the modern German armed forces. The *Bundeswehr*, the Federal Armed Forces of West Germany, was founded with appointment of the first soldiers in Bonn on 12 November 1955, Scharnhorst's two hundredth birthday to the day. The highest decoration of the former *Nationale Volkarmee* (National People's Army) of the German Democratic Republic, introduced in 1966, was named after Scharnhorst. The main auditorium at the Officer School of the German Army in Dresden is named after Scharnhorst. In 1989, the then Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant-General Horst Hildebrandt, donated an award according to performance, character, and manner to the best graduate of the army's officer courses, the so called *Scharnhorstpreis*, named after the Prussian general.

Why is there so much interest in remembering and honouring the contributions of a long dead general of another age? General Gerhard Johann David von Scharnhorst was an exceptional military intellectual thinker and laid the foundations for the development of the German armed forces as a truly professional institution. After the disastrous defeat of the Prussian troops by Napoleon at Jena and Auerstedt in October 1806 and the subsequent Peace of Tilsit in July 1807, Scharnhorst became the intellectual and political leader of a group of re-

formers that reorganized the Prussian Army in the years between 1807 and 1813, which made possible Prussia's liberation from French domination and the recovery of her dominant position amongst European states. A cornerstone of Scharnhorst's comprehensive programme of reform was the introduction of a permanent general staff, deeply interwoven with the reorganization of the military educational system in Prussia.

Indeed, by doing so, Scharnhorst became the father of the Prussian-German general staff, an organizational element that was developed further by his successor as Chief of the Prussian General Staff, General August Neithardt von Gneisenau, and reached its temporary climax under Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke. Gneisenau honoured Scharnhorst's greatness with the statement: "People like to compare me with him, but I am a pygmy beside this giant, whose mind I can only admire, never fully comprehend."¹

The rise of the Prussian-German general staff has attracted many authors, publications, and studies, especially after World War II. The German structure was often copied in the military and other realms. But, the Prussian-German general staff was more than just an organizational instrument for effective command and control. Rather, the system's applied working methods inspired selection, training, and education of subsequent general staff and admiral staff officers for later generations.

The *Bundeswehr*'s general staff sys-

tem has roots in Scharnhorst's work and mind. But what were the characteristics of his comprehensive programme? Are his principles still applicable today? Does his overall concept provide a solution as to how an army can face future challenges? Core elements of Scharnhorst's reform of the Prussian Army still possess enduring relevance. Scharnhorst recognized that disciplined intellect was essential to the profession of arms, he encouraged a responsiveness to change within the Prussian officer corps, and he improved the quality of leadership on all levels of command by instituting a general staff system.

Scharnhorst's mind and work must be analyzed from three distinct perspectives. The major influences that formed Scharnhorst's particular intellectual skills and aptitude groomed him to be an advocate of reform. He lived in tumultuous times, within the context of the French Revolution and disastrous Prussian defeats at the hands of Napoleon, both of which gave a great impetus to military reform. Scharnhorst had a profound influence on the subsequent development of military education and staff systems in Prussia. Clausewitz and other distinguished pupils internalized the ideas and principles of their mentor. The lasting qualities of the Scharnhorst legacy are best exemplified in today's *Bundeswehr*.

Scharnhorst was a prolific writer who published many articles and books during his thirty-five years of military service. Even though having left behind a substantial body of work in his writings and papers, Scharnhorst never developed a comprehensive analysis of his views. Therefore, it becomes necessary to reconstruct his military theory from numerous letters, memoranda, and other papers. The main sources for any such endeavour are personal letters and primary documents, which Ursula Gersdorff edited under the title *Gerhard von Scharn-*

horst: Ausgewählte Schriften (1983), and Hansjürgen Usczeck and Christa Gudzent edited under the title *Gerhard von Scharnhorst: Ausgewählte militärische Schriften* (1986). Another major source for this work was several Scharnhorst biographies, of which four deserve special mention: Rudolf Stadelmann's *Scharnhorst: Schicksal und geistige Welt* (1952), Reinhard Höhn's *Scharnhorsts Vermächtnis* (1952), Siegfried Fiedler's *Scharnhorst: Geist und Tat* (1958), and Klaus Hornung's *Scharnhorst: Soldat-Reformer-Staatsmann* (1997). All contain valuable documents relating to Scharnhorst, his life, and his work. These sources are complemented by the most comprehensive English work, Charles Edward White's book *The Enlightened Soldier: Scharnhorst and the Militärische Gesellschaft in Berlin, 1801-1805* (1989).

Scharnhorst — his origin, education and mind

“My career is entirely my work, since I became ten years old,” Scharnhorst told his daughter on a piece of paper when he was seriously ill in March 1809.² In fact, Scharnhorst's brilliant career was not automatically the logical consequence of his natural abilities and traits. Throughout his life, he had to overcome numerous obstacles and unpredictability. What qualities enabled Scharnhorst to be one of the main reformers of the Prussian state after its collapse in 1806? In answering this question, his background and those experiences and incidents that predominantly influenced Scharnhorst's military and political thinking, his character and mind, are significant.

Gerhard Johann David Scharnhorst was born on 12 November 1755, in Bordenau, a small village northwest of Hanover, the eldest son of Ernst Wilhelm Scharnhorst and Friedericke Wilhelmine Tegtmeier. Their marriage, however, was against the

will of the family Tegtmeier who had other plans for their youngest daughter. As the son of a so called "Brinksitzer"³ who had served as "Quartiermeister"⁴ in a Hanoverian dragoon-regiment, the social status of the elder Scharnhorst was much below the status of the wealthy and respected free peasant Tegtmeier. Only after the illegitimate birth of Scharnhorst's elder sister Wilhelmine did the parents Tegtmeier finally consent to the marriage, which took place in the church at Bordenau on 31 August 1752. However, it took another three years before reconciliation occurred. This rapprochement only happened when the first son was born and was baptized with the name of his grandfather, Gerhard Johann David.⁵

When the old Tegtmeier died in 1759, his son-in-law took over his own tenancy, in Hämelsee, where Scharnhorst spent most of his childhood in modest yet difficult circumstances. Two years later, his grandmother died and inter-family conflict broke out again. The two unmarried sisters of the old Tegtmeier accused the elder Scharnhorst of legacy hunting. A bitter legal dispute over the Tegtmeier inheritance took more than ten years and consumed most of the earnings and savings of the young and growing family. Later, a friend of Scharnhorst at that time described the family life as determined by legal proceedings.⁶ In 1765, almost all buildings of the farm were destroyed by fire and the Scharnhorst's had to move to a new tenancy, in nearby Bothmer. It can be assumed that the constant family strife cast a shadow on Scharnhorst's youth. In fact, he never spoke positively about this period of his life.⁷

Under these circumstances, how could Scharnhorst develop a mind, which was the foundation of his later military and intellectual leadership? Until that time, he had only received a fragmentary school education. In 1772, however, the elder Schar-

horst inherited the Tegtmeier estate in Bordenau by judicial decision.⁸ He was now a free peasant who owned a former manor and was exempted from paying taxes. His social advancement allowed him to think about an officer career for his son. In preparation for this occupation, Scharnhorst received mathematics lectures by a retired captain in nearby Schwarmstedt. After passing an examination, the almost 18-year-old Scharnhorst entered the military academy of Count Wilhelm zu Schaumburg-Lippe near Bückeburg on 19 April 1773.

Count Wilhelm (1724-77) was known as a man whose liberal mind was coupled with great culture and dignity, and his character was in many aspects a remarkable one.⁹ Born in London, he went to school in Geneva and studied in Leyden and Montpellier, where he enjoyed a broad education in the classics.¹⁰

In 1748, Wilhelm became monarch. His little principality of Schaumburg-Lippe, with a population of 20,000, was the fourth smallest in Germany. Captivated by the spirit of an enlightened absolutism, Wilhelm introduced numerous changes and reforms in his little state to raise the morale of his people.¹¹ In addition to these progressive steps, Wilhelm endeavoured to bring intellectuals and artists to Bückeburg, which made the royal seat a centre of science and culture.¹²

In military affairs, Wilhelm was an autodidact, and a successful and revered one. During the Seven Years's War (1757-63), he commanded the allied artillery of Prussia, Hanover, England and Schaumburg-Lippe, and was instrumental in the victory of the coalition troops against France at the battle of Minden on 1 August 1759. In 1762/63, he was a Field Marshal in Portugal, reorganized the Portuguese forces and led them successfully during the defensive

war against Spain and her ally France.¹³

In addition to his success as a commander, Wilhelm was also regarded as an exceptional military theorist for his time. His war experiences and continuous reflection on the character of war found expression in his most famous work “*Mémoires pour servir à l’art militaire défensif*”, printed in 1776 and written, as were most of his papers, in French.¹⁴ Wilhelm believed that “[w]ar is one of the greatest calamities that afflicts mankind, ... ‘an evil inevitability.’”¹⁵ For him, the application of the art of war is the necessary means to avoid war, or at least to reduce its evil. “Only the defensive war is legitimate,” wrote Wilhelm, “waging an offensive war, however, was below an honourable man’s dignity.”¹⁶ Wilhelm was convinced that a strong defence could reduce the likelihood of war by deterring an even stronger attacker. Accordingly, the historian Rudolf Stadelmann called him a “strategist of deterrence in the Rococo period”.¹⁷ Wilhelm believed that an effective deterrence was predominantly based on two elements — mobilization of the entire resources of a nation and perfection of the military sciences. Consequently, social reforms and military policy were deeply interwoven in Schaumburg-Lippe. For Wilhelm, perfection of the science of war was not contrary to the enlightened humanitarian spirit. It is rather a precondition for the effective use of defensive means, and consequently, for the welfare of mankind. He recognized that the key for success would be a highly qualified and effective military leadership. For this purpose, he established the military academy at fortress Wilhelmstein. Wilhelmstein became the preparatory school for the young Scharnhorst in the study of military art.

Fortress Wilhelmstein was built between 1765 and 1767 on an artificial island in the Steinhuder Meer, a lake north of

Hanover. It had been used since Spring 1767 as an artillery and military engineering school and became of particular importance for Scharnhorst. At Wilhelmstein he was able to compensate for his fragmentary school education; he extended his common education and he laid the foundation for his thorough professional knowledge and skills.¹⁸ Wilhelm personally instituted the syllabus and selected the textbooks.¹⁹ His educational concept was based on a combination of theoretical and practical classes with a focus on the artillery and military engineering science. The young cadets could improve their professional and common knowledge in courses, such as military history, campaign planning, tactics, gunnery, fortifications, military engineering, surveying, and terrain sketching as well as mathematics, physics, chemistry, civil engineering, economics, geography and languages. Key to Wilhelm’s ideas of military education, however, was not only a broad, general education, but also the critical examination of the studied subject. He believed that military command was not simply the application of learned techniques. Wilhelm stated the purpose: “To understand his profession the officer must have some idea of its relationship to other fields of knowledge, and the ways in which they contribute to his own.”²⁰ Practical exercises offered the opportunities for students to apply and verify their knowledge.

The main influence on Scharnhorst, however, had been Count Wilhelm himself. Acting regularly as an instructor, Wilhelm had the natural talent to inspire his pupils with his personality and military expertise.²¹ He cultivated Scharnhorst’s character and intellect, and laid the foundation for his enlightened mind. According to Rudolf Stadelmann, Wilhelm was “the first great experience in Scharnhorst’s youth”, “the most important educational power in his

life”, and “probably the only superiority he ever accepted”.²² Scharnhorst later testified to Count Wilhelm’s particular character and solicitous noblesse in the first volume of his periodical *Neues Militärisches Journal*: “One will rarely find combined in one person that much kindness of the heart and greatness of the mind. His affability, the goodness of his heart, and his charity made him the universal father and provider of his state. He had never left people living in poverty without help; he never left widows and orphans without care. ... In his military academy he was principal, instructor and benefactor, as well as educator and friend of his officers.”²³ Finally, Scharnhorst’s great admiration and thankfulness for Count Wilhelm culminated in the sentence: “He brought happiness to many young people.”²⁴

When Count Wilhelm died on 10 September 1777, his military school was subsequently closed and a new chapter began in Scharnhorst’s life. He applied for service in the Hanoverian Army and on 28 July 1778, he joined the 8th Dragoon Regiment in Northeim as *Fähnrich* (ensign), the same unit in which his father had served. Scharnhorst would stay in the Hanoverian Army for the next 23 years. During this time, three primary fields of experience formed his mind and influenced his military career — his occupation as a military educator, his active writing, and the War of the First Coalition against the First French Republic (1792-97). Each, in its own way, left an imprint on Scharnhorst for the rest of his life.

Scharnhorst’s ability as a teacher was recognized from the start. Shortly after he reported for duty in Northeim, his regimental commander, Major General Emerich Otto August von Estorff (1722-96), appointed him as “second teacher” at the regimental school.²⁵ Estorff was well ac-

quainted with Count Wilhelm, and believed, like him, that a professional education together with a solid common knowledge are the basis for successful military leadership. Therefore, in 1770, Estorff had already established a regimental school for young officers, cadets, and non commissioned officers. In Northeim, Scharnhorst gave courses on mathematics, on tactics and on engineering, and later additionally on sketching, history, and geography.²⁶ Soon he had established a reputation as a talented military teacher. In tribute to his success, Scharnhorst received an appointment to the newly established artillery school in Hanover.

At the artillery school in Hanover, Scharnhorst continued to teach the same subjects as he had at Northeim. The school was founded and commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Victor Lebrecht von Trew who personified more the strict troop officer than the military theoretician. However, like Estorff, he was convinced that the improvement of the scientific and technical education of officers was necessary.²⁷ Soon after his arrival, Scharnhorst began to make numerous suggestions to Trew concerning the institute’s syllabus, development, and examination procedures. This tendency to present memoranda and concept papers to his superiors would become characteristic of Scharnhorst’s future career.

In his suggestions, Scharnhorst stressed the importance of theoretical and applied mathematics, chemistry and physics, as well as later military history and languages, predominantly French. In doing so, Scharnhorst followed the same syllabus concept he himself had experienced at Wilhelmstein.

In accordance with Trew, Scharnhorst insisted from the start, on expansion from an artillery school into a military or war academy, including all branches of the

service.²⁸ He rejected fears that a scientific officer education could interfere with the military practice.

If a young man, who is destined for a military career, does not learn to use his mind right, to judge correctly and conclusively, the mathematics and theory of war, then no experience will help him. One has to give young people, destined to become officers, the early opportunity to think about their profession, to use other's insights and experiences; to do that they need to have the right basic notions. Without those they will not find an interest in reading and will become gradually idle and inactive. The lessons at our institute aim to stimulate the ambition; the students become, due to the circumstances they live in, interested in things they would not have otherwise been interested in. They judge among themselves, dispute, ask, read up, and in doing so learn gradually to examine a topic thoroughly rather than only to repeat it in private lectures.²⁹

Scharnhorst recognized that it is important to educate military leaders at an early age, even if they needed their knowledge only when they have achieved higher ranks. Experience proved that there is no time or desire for a comprehensive study at an advanced age or higher rank:

If Frederick, Gustav Adolf, Condé, Caesar and Alexander would not have had any theory, and would not have studied war according to principles, how could they have commanded armies at age, won battles and made conquests, as neither the one nor the other could have had much experience? If many years of service would be sufficient to create generals one could give old corporals or privates,

these appointments.³⁰

Least of all, Scharnhorst planned and organized the examination procedures of the academy according to clear expectations, which he later also tried to develop in Berlin. All cadets should attend a three-year course with quarterly intermediate examinations and a final examination by the school commander and in the presence of the commanding general and other officers. Together with a note signed by the examiners these improvements should guarantee the objectivity of the examination. The candidates should receive an examination certificate, and its marking should be of importance for further advancement of the officers. In doing so, the academy should not only acquire a better reputation, but should also replace the current practice of officer promotions being based on connections with objective performance criteria.³¹

Scharnhorst's occupation as a teacher had a positive side effect. It gave him the opportunity to further his education by applying the principle 'learning by teaching'. In that time, he also invented numerous improvements in gunnery, for example the micrometer telescope for ranging.³² But most importantly, during his teaching in Hanover, Scharnhorst expanded his reputation as a knowledgeable and prolific writer on military subjects.

First, Scharnhorst published the *Militair Bibliothek* of which four volumes, with 150 to 170 pages each, came out in Hanover between 1782 and 1784. Scharnhorst intended with this journal to encourage officers of all branches of the services to participate in the spiritual and scientific life at that time and he wanted to compensate for the fact that most officers did not have a private library. Accordingly, the *Militair Bibliothek* contained reviews of important military literature and papers with direct

links to the officer's profession, as well as information about German and European armies. It had approximately 700 subscriptions and was read, for example, in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Leipzig, Copenhagen, Lisbon, and Vienna.³³

It was the first issue of the *Militair Bibliothek*, where Scharnhorst revealed his rationale for military education. In his article "Introduction to literature: The benefit of scientific knowledge, the prejudices against it and the usual studies," Scharnhorst argued the case for training under near combat conditions instead of the daily monotonous duty and constant drilling: "This constant repetition of an action enervates the spirit and exhausts its activity, engendering antipathy and dissatisfaction." Through reading, an officer "enriches himself with the experiences and insights of others." "Ignorance", however, "disgraces the reputation of the military". The "Bildung" of officers, Scharnhorst argued, "gradually refines the military", and consequently "will have an influence on the society".³⁴ Indeed, for Scharnhorst, military education was the balance between practical field exercises, theoretical instructions, and personal study. He believed that "... the profession of arms was not just a craft or technique, which is primarily mechanical, or an art, which requires unique talent and ability. It was instead an extraordinarily complex intellectual skill requiring comprehensive study and training."³⁵

After three years, Scharnhorst unexpectedly stopped publishing the *Militair Bibliothek*. He changed the title, publisher, and place of publication (Göttingen) and started a new project in 1785, the *Bibliothek für Officiere*. Why Scharnhorst made such a radical move is not clear.³⁶ However, the new periodical was, in terms of content, a continuation of the *Militair Bibliothek*, with reviews of foreign military literature and

translations of foreign military textbooks and manuals added.³⁷ Four volumes were published in Göttingen in 1785 before Scharnhorst decided to end the *Bibliothek für Officiere*.

Scharnhorst continued to publish journals aimed at a military audience. He achieved his greatest success with his third periodical, the *Neues Militärisches Journal*.³⁸ Between 1788 and 1805 thirteen volumes were published, interrupted by Scharnhorst's participation in the War of the First Coalition from 1793 to 1797. The character of the *Neues Militärisches Journal* changed considerably over time. The first seven volumes (1788-93) were rooted in the tradition of the *Militair Bibliothek* and *Bibliothek für Officiere*. However, the military pedagogic element became even more evident by giving information about foreign armies, book reviews, articles on tactics, short biographies of important military captains, and historical war anecdotes.³⁹ The most quoted military authorities were Frederick the Great and Count Wilhelm zu Schaumburg-Lippe.⁴⁰

In comparison, the last six volumes of the *Neues Militärisches Journal* (1797-1805) were subtitled "Militärische Denkwürdigkeiten unserer Zeit, insbesondere des französischen Revolutionskrieges im Jahr 1792 von dem Herausgeber des militärischen Journals" and dealt with the military, political, and social consequences of the French Revolution. Scharnhorst's experience in the War of the First Coalition turned the focus to critical examination of the revolutionary wars. This writing laid the foundation for a general debate on the change of the armed forces and the art of war in that epoch.⁴¹

Scharnhorst's journals were aimed mainly at officers interested in extending their professional knowledge. In addition to

the military periodicals, he published his first book, entitled “Handbuch für Officiere in den anwendbaren Theilen der Kriegswissenschaften”, which appeared between 1787 and 1790 in three volumes. Scharnhorst’s motivation to write this book was rooted in the lack of a comprehensive textbook at the artillery school in Hanover. Consequently, the *Handbuch für Officiere* was a practically orientated, elementary military compendium, geared to young officers.⁴²

Scharnhorst continued his military writing. In 1792, Scharnhorst’s second and “most popular” book, “Militärisches Taschenbuch, zum Gebrauch im Felde”, appeared.⁴³ His intent was once again to give practical guides to young line and staff officers. The book was divided into four sections. The first part addressed infantry and cavalry officers by providing tactical guidance on marches, reconnaissance, ambushes, patrolling, and security operations. The second part treated the artillery, the third fortifications, and the fourth the war with and against fortresses.⁴⁴ Scharnhorst used historical examples in all parts to illustrate his tenets. This comprehensiveness made the *Militärisches Taschenbuch*, according to Carl von Clausewitz, “the best that has ever been written about actual war.”⁴⁵ Scharnhorst’s military writing influenced several generations of young officers.

Besides Scharnhorst’s professional development in Hanover, two events of a personal nature need to be mentioned during this time. In 1782, Scharnhorst’s father died and he inherited the family estate in Bordenu and, on 24 April 1785, he married Klara Schmalz, the daughter of a Hanoverian official. They had met through her brother, the jurist Dr. Theodor Schmalz who was a close friend to Scharnhorst. Theodor Schmalz wrote a biography of Count Wilhelm, which inspired or was the result of this acquaintance.⁴⁶ In their eighteen years of marriage,

Scharnhorst and his spouse had five children.⁴⁷ Scharnhorst’s eldest daughter, Clara Sophie Juliane, became after the death of her mother, his closest confidante and addressee of numerous letters, which provide much information about his way of thinking.

Scharnhorst had spent the first fifteen years of his military life almost exclusively teaching at military schools and editing his military periodicals. During that time, he had established a good reputation as an educator and military writer. However, he was also branded as a military scholar without having any practical experience. Scharnhorst received the first opportunity to prove his abilities in combat when after the execution of King Louis XVI (1754-93) on 21 January 1793, the First Coalition against the revolutionary French Republic was formed, under the lead of England. In March 1793, Hanover provided one corps to join Austrian and English troops to oppose France’s expansion into Flanders and Holland.⁴⁸ Scharnhorst, advanced to captain on 19 October 1792, experienced combat for the first time as an artillery battery officer in the wake of the siege of the fortress Valenciennes in May 1793. Four months later, he would personally distinguish himself as an officer under fire. At the battle of Hondschote in September 1793, Scharnhorst took control, without orders, of several weakened Hanoverian units fleeing the battlefield and turned the impending rout into an orderly rear-guard action that helped preserve the entire corps.⁴⁹

The following year, Scharnhorst received a second opportunity to prove his leadership qualities under fire. At that time, he served as principle staff officer of the Hanoverian Major General Rudolf von Hammerstein. Hammerstein was ordered to occupy the town of Menin in today’s southern Belgium. Scharnhorst improvised a system of ditches and barricades that enabled

the garrison of a little more than 2,000 men to repel several French assaults following encirclement by approximately 20,000 troops under General Jean-Victor Moreau. Moreau's offer of honourable capitulation was rejected by Hammerstein with the bold statement: "Nous sommes habitués à faire notre devoir on se rendra pas."⁵⁰ To save his force, Hammerstein decided to break through the siege. Scharnhorst took command of a part of the corps to make the attempt and, on the night of 30 April 1794, succeeded against strong French opposition. Out of 1,800 troops taking part in the operation, 1,500 were able to break through.⁵¹ This operation was regarded as a moral victory and Scharnhorst's contributions were fully recognized.⁵² In his report to the commander of the Hanoverian troops, General Count von Wallmoden, Hammerstein gave the credit to Scharnhorst, and recommended to ask King George III in London for "a reward for something extraordinary."⁵³ Hammerstein's report had a favourable result. On 27 June 1794, Scharnhorst was promoted to major, and subsequently, was transferred as second *aide-general quartermaster* to Wallmoden's staff.⁵⁴

Although Scharnhorst had proved himself under fire, he revealed a remarkable ambivalence about his profession and the savagery of war in particular. "I am not made to be a soldier", he wrote to his wife on 24 May 1793, and affected by the battle of Famars (23-24 May 1793).

I can face danger without difficulty, but I am enraged and thrown in an insupportable mood by the sight of innocent people moaning in their blood at my feet, by the flames of burning villages, which men have put to the torch for their own pleasure, by the other horrors of this universal devastation.⁵⁵

At the same time, he was ashamed to confess to his wife, finding "almost pleasure" in warfare that he called a "shameful activity".⁵⁶ This inner conflict between the exercise of power and the savagery of war confirmed to him the importance of his theory of *Bildung*. With regard to the plundering of villages and his experiences during the siege of Valeciennes, Scharnhorst wrote:

The man without *Bildung* is surely a cattle, a cruel beast; in general I have found that only well-educated people sought to alleviate the horrors of war, and that uneducated officers were just as bestial as the rank and file.⁵⁷

What really dismayed him, however, was the lack of *Bildung* and ignorance within the Hanoverian military leadership: "I can well praise myself that nobody knows the connection better than I do. Here are awful stupid and cowardly people." And, in the same letter Scharnhorst confided to his wife:

I would be contented, if I only could achieve any aim. I do recognize the inappropriateness of many orders, and I cannot say anything to that. Therefore, my ambition does not get satisfied, ... because I do not see yet, how to get a company. The silliest cattle succeed here almost as well as the most intelligent.⁵⁸

Here, Scharnhorst for the first time confessed his strong desire to command. He felt very qualified for this task. But at the same time, he was well aware that within the existing caste-ridden Hanoverian Army, his chance to get such a command was low.

Once again, a 12 year old aristocrat from the country will be appointed to the Regiment Diepenbroik, and Gust, who is qualified for everything, is being set back only because he has not a

title. Aristocrats are setting us back and yet we fight for them — that is the way it is.⁵⁹

After the campaigns of 1793-95, Scharnhorst returned to Hanover in the quartermaster staff. His thoughts at that time were focused on the revolution in warfare that was obviously taking place in consequence of the political developments in France and the success of the French nation-in-arms over the standing armies in Europe. Inspired by his personal war experience, Scharnhorst systematically and thoroughly analysed the basic reasons for the French success in the Revolutionary Wars, and summarized his notions in his main essay “Entwicklung der allgemeinen Ursachen des Glücks der Franzosen in dem Revolutionskriege, und insbesondere in den Feldzügen von 1794”, which he and his friend Friedrich von der Decken published in the *Neues Militärisches Journal* in 1797.⁶⁰

In this essay, Scharnhorst described the changes in tactics introduced by the French. Based on patriotic volunteers and, later, on conscripts in apparently unlimited quantities, the French troops applied a combination of free-firing skirmishers (“tirailleurs”) and dense columns of attack in coordination with extensive artillery support. The flexible and dispersed fighting order of the *tirailleurs* proved to be superior to the linear tactics of the allied troops, especially in intersected and covered terrain. This tactical advantage was of particular importance for Scharnhorst: “And, it is an established fact that the French *tirailleurs* had decided the greatest part of affairs in this war; that they were superior to those of the Allied armies.”⁶¹

However, Scharnhorst’s essay was more than a typical military examination of tactical affairs. He also considered the

socio-political and morale factors of the war. Scharnhorst noted that France was able to mobilize “all available resources of the nation”, whereas the allied forces did not have such support.⁶² He deduced that the deeper reason for French success was primarily driven by social and political changes. The enthusiasm of the French soldiers was based on a society determined to fight for its revolutionary ideals. With the French nation-in-arms, war became the business of the people again, all of whom considered themselves to be citizens. In comparison, the Allies of the First Coalition did not have common interests to fight for, except the retention of their power and the fear of the revolution.

Thirdly, Scharnhorst delineated the superior effectiveness of French military education and organization. Beyond better officer’s training, he pointed out that in the French Army, the decisive criteria to advance in the hierarchy were qualification and merit. In the Allied Armies, however, an officer’s career was determined on descent and social status. Due to this socio-political difference, the French did have a higher qualified officer corps. In addition, they made use of an effective command and control element, the general staff. Consequently, Scharnhorst was convinced that “after 1793, general staffs had become as important for armies as governments are for states.”⁶³

Scharnhorst drew the conclusion that to deal with the challenge of the French nation-in-arms it was necessary to modernize Hanover’s military institutions. He advanced his arguments not only in his publications, lectures, and discussions, but also in memoranda to his superiors. For him, the basic renewal of the officer corps, its recruitment and professional education, the better education of non-commissioned officers, the promotion to lieutenant by examination, the abolition of nepotism and favour-

itism, the reorganization of the army into all-arms divisions, and the institution of a permanent general staff were of overriding importance.⁶⁴

Scharnhorst's analysis of the challenge posed by revolutionary France found little support in Hanover. The Hanoverian Army was not persuaded of the need for fundamental reform in the military sphere. To do so would have required important political and social adjustments "no less than a revolution in service."⁶⁵ There were still doubts that King George III "would have been reluctant to test the resistance of the Hanoverian aristocracy and the estates in the defense of their long-standing privileges."⁶⁶

Scharnhorst was well aware that due to both social and professional reasons, his further advancement in the caste-ridden Hanoverian military was restricted, and even more important, that it was very unlikely he would get the command position he was yearning for.⁶⁷ It was this turn of events that convinced Scharnhorst to reopen negotiations with the Prussian Army. Already in 1797, the Prussian King Frederick Wilhelm III (1797-1840) had offered him a position in his army. At that time, Scharnhorst declined the Prussian offer because Hanover promoted him to lieutenant colonel and provided a significant salary income.⁶⁸ Three years later, however, his plans had become more concrete. Scharnhorst was attracted by the Prussian Army, which was considered the most important in Germany and provided opportunities he was denied in Hanover.

In a letter to the Prussian intermediary, Lieutenant Colonel Karl Ludwig Lecoq, on 5 October 1800, Scharnhorst referred to the contacts established in 1797 and requested a posting as a lieutenant colonel in the Prussian artillery, as well as a respect-

able pension for himself and his family.⁶⁹ In his official application to the Prussian King, on 25 October 1800, he finally added a third request — the promise of being ennobled. After Frederick Wilhelm III had met these terms, Scharnhorst asked for his reassignment from the Hanoverian Army on 30 December 1800. On 12 May 1801, he transferred to Prussian service.

Scharnhorst in Prussia

Scharnhorst was a man of forty-six when he arrived in Berlin in the late spring of 1801, in robust health, accustomed to work half the night, with a mind that had reached the full powers of maturity while retaining its early receptivity and suppleness. To his new comrades he presented an unusual figure. He carried himself negligently, his trunk and massive head bent slightly forward. His speech, too, lacked elegance of form; it was low-keyed, deliberate, at times halting, with a Hanoverian intonation that sounded slurred to Prussian ears. Even on the parade ground he displayed none of the physical tautness and smartness of manner that was becoming fashionable among other Prussian soldiers. An artillery officer was soon heard to say that in service matters any NCO [non-commissioned officer] was superior to the newcomer.⁷⁰

This short and sharp portrait by Peter Paret, illustrates why "Prussia's new acquisition" received a cool reception in Berlin. A large part of the Prussian officer corps branded Scharnhorst as a military scholar, an "indecisive, unpractical, unmilitary book writer," and reformer.⁷¹ Scharnhorst decided to act cautiously in this new and potentially hostile environment. He recognized the tensions between traditionalists and reform orientated officers in Berlin and

decided, for the time being, to remain impartial. “Admittedly it has its disagreeable side, but in the long run it takes you farthest,” he told his wife.⁷²

While cautiously dealing with his superiors, Scharnhorst continued to strive for military reforms. Soon after he had settled in Berlin, he advanced several proposals and memoranda to the King and senior Prussian officers intended to enhance organization and education in the Prussian Army in order to catch up with the French. His suggestions for reform were based on the same concept he had already advocated in Hanover. But as in Hanover, there were strong objections to his plans.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, many senior officers in the Prussian Army “had been subalterns during the wars of Frederick the Great, and they combined a veneration for Frederician methods with a stubborn reluctance to admit that the practice of warfare may change.”⁷³ These officers actually doubted whether the success of the French was significant enough to re-examine Frederick’s principles, or as Queen Louise had written, the Prussian military (and with it the Prussian state) “had fallen asleep on Frederick’s laurels.”⁷⁴ Lieutenant General Ernst Friedrich von Richel illustrated this arrogant confidence with his habit of saying “that the Prussian Army possessed several generals of the quality of ‘Herrn von Bonaparte’.”⁷⁵

Against this background, it is not surprising why these conservative, predominantly noble traditionalists were unresponsive to innovations, especially when introduced by a Hanoverian son of a peasant. They were well aware that each of Scharnhorst’s proposals “denied the continued validity of a particular aspect of the Frederician system, and each was potentially damaging to special interests.”⁷⁶ Finally, King

Frederick Wilhelm III followed the judgement of Duke Karl of Brunswick that the proposed innovations “would be not applicable to the Royal Prussian Army.”⁷⁷

Recognizing that for the time being the Prussian military was beyond comprehensive reform, Scharnhorst changed strategy by adopting an indirect approach. Convinced of Frederick the Great’s theorem that “the spirit of an army lives in the heads of the officers” he now put his hope in *Bildung* and insight to change the spirit of the Prussian military leadership. However, this endeavour was challenging. How could the Prussian aristocrats, who believed in their inherent command abilities, become convinced of the value of *Bildung*? And, how could the prejudices against *Bildung*, which since the French Revolution had become disreputable and was seen as a “preliminary stage of putsch,” be removed?⁷⁸

Scharnhorst clearly recognized that generals trained under Frederick the Great could not be re-educated. Every attempt to do so, to show them that their professional knowledge needed to be updated, would not only be hopeless but would also cause fierce opposition to his plans. For this reason, Scharnhorst confronted the Prussian generals with the moral question: “What will happen when the men Frederick II trained during the Seven Years’ War are no longer with us?” And at the same time, he provided the answer: “This crisis can be met only by educating our officers.”⁷⁹ Scharnhorst believed that if he could convince parts of the senior Prussian leadership of his notions, a highly educated young officer generation could be developed. Those officers would be capable of meeting the new challenges of war and balancing the widespread incompetence within the senior leadership itself.

With the cabinet order of 5 September 1801, Scharnhorst would receive the

opportunity to translate his theory into practice. At that time, there were three main military institutes in Berlin. The “Ecole Militaire”, also named “Académie des Nobles”, was founded by Frederick the Great, and educated talented noble cadets with a focus on fine arts and philosophy. On the other hand, the predominantly bourgeois cadets of the artillery corps received their scientific professional foundation at the “*Militärakademie der Artillerie*” (Military Academy of the Artillery). Between these extremes existed a third, almost neglected military institute, the so-called “*Lehr-Anstalt für junge Infanterie- und Kavallerie-Offiziere*” (Institute for Young Infantry and Cavalry Officers), and Scharnhorst was appointed its director.⁸⁰ Now, he had a key position inside the Prussian military educational system, and a vehicle that allowed him to influence parts of future Prussian officer generations.

In this new area of responsibility, Scharnhorst was in his pedagogical and organizational element. Within the next three years, he transformed the institute from an insignificant military regional school into a military academy of national importance. Everything in the academy, “up to the reports and admittance requirements” was influenced by Scharnhorst’s mind.⁸¹ He developed the curriculum, he selected the best available instructors, he set the benchmark with his own lectures, and he fought successfully several times for a budget increase.⁸² In 1804, finally, the transformation process culminated when Scharnhorst wrote a comprehensive constitution dealing with the details of the then called “*Akademie für junge Offiziere*” (Academy for Young Officers).⁸³ According to Rudolf Stadelmann, this document was the crowning moment of Scharnhorst’s twenty years of educational experience as it “could not be thought purer and brighter.”⁸⁴

Scharnhorst’s goal with the academy was to enhance the very low educational standard throughout the Prussian officer corps. “One has always recognized,” stated Scharnhorst,

that most families select their most incompetent sons to become officers, one has seen a lot of officers who were incompetent to do an officer’s job; one has seen officers who could neither write nor calculate, and what is the worst of all, one has generally recognized that most young people, as soon as they had become officers, immediately ceased their efforts, and instead resigned themselves to idleness and often to unrestraint.⁸⁵

Scharnhorst believed that “ignorance is degrading and dishonouring the military, and often the entire state.”⁸⁶ For him the profession of arms was an “extraordinarily complex intellectual skill, requiring comprehensive study and training.” Through a thorough scientific education, the officer would develop “insight” and “understanding” for the reforms necessary in order to cope with the challenges in the wake of the new war paradigm. Subsequently, the officer would become a “thinking officer”, pushing progress in the army on his own initiative.⁸⁷ At the end of the day, this group of educated officers would create an important “centre of power” for the Prussian monarchy. “Men with insight”, as Scharnhorst called them, trained in military command, were ready to “rise themselves up, if the state was in difficulties”.⁸⁸ From regarding war as a science, it was only a short step to the introduction of a coherent scientific education in an academy, combining all branches of the service. Consequently, the *Akademie für junge Offiziere* was a decisive cornerstone in Scharnhorst’s pedagogical concept. But how did he put his theory into practice?

According to its organizational structure the *Akademie für junge Offiziere* belonged to the Prussian general-quartermaster staff, supervised by the general-quartermaster who also acted as the inspector.⁸⁹ The student body was fixed at twenty officers from outside Berlin plus a group of officers from the Berlin regiments, selected by the inspector. There was no formal examination for admission. The director, however, interviewed all applicants and had the right to reject those he judged unsuitable. The course of instruction extended over three consecutive winters, from 1 September to 21 March. Students attended classes for sixteen to twenty hours a week, supplemented by private study, remedial instruction, practical exercises and field excursions.⁹⁰

The *Akademie für junge Offiziere* derived from Scharnhorst's application of the best aspects of his previous experience. Scharnhorst never did develop a complete educational concept.⁹¹ However, he did successfully apply the educational principles he had experienced at Wilhelmstein, and practiced at Northeim and Hanover. His overall goal was to form young cadets and officers with an "independent intellect" and to develop their "power of judgement" systematically.⁹² These officers would be the hinge to overcome the pedantic focus on drill and on teaching single facts within the Prussian Army. Their cultivated intellect would provide them a critical view about all military dogma and ideologies and would examine whether they were valid in reality.

Although, Scharnhorst had clear pedagogical objectives, he was concerned how to "place theory and practice in the proper relationship."⁹³ The key to success, he believed, would be to allow young officers to apply their theoretical knowledge in the field.

All lectures in the art of war will leave those in the dark who did not serve in a war, or who did not have the opportunity in war to get the right ideas of army operations, if they do not see through examples in the field how the paper sentences and tenets could be applied.⁹⁴

A young officer's power of judgement had to be aroused in the field. There he had to learn that the knowledge of universal rules alone was not sufficient. Rather more important was the recognition of the certain circumstances under which these rules had to be applied.

If the officer does not know how and where he could apply the universal principles and rules, and if he did not make his eyes used to the terrain; if he is not able to comply with the certain circumstances — if he here was missing practice and judgement — what then does it help him all? Everybody knows the advantages of outflanking; but how many know how and where this can be done.⁹⁵

Demanding a close link between lecturing the art of war in classes and gaining practical experience in the field, Scharnhorst opposed the usual drill routine in the Prussian barracks. His philosophy, today known as mission orientated training, is still a basic element in the training of modern armed forces. But how did he methodically transfer his notions into action?

Scharnhorst recognized that educational success depends on three factors — the method of the lectures, the teacher's skill and ability, and the pupil's diligence.⁹⁶ With regard to the low standard of education most of his students had, Scharnhorst insisted: "the desire to learn must not be reduced by an overtaxing teaching enthusiasm."⁹⁷ An overloading of the students had

to be avoided. Therefore, it would be necessary to select only that subject material most “relevant to the education and training of the officer.”⁹⁸ And, in order to prevent tiredness “lectures must never last more than one hour.”⁹⁹

The teachers had “to focus more on thoroughness than on the amount of material taught,” Scharnhorst wrote. He believed that “[a] main thing in every institution is not to teach too much, but to consider that the students also should understand how to apply skilfully what they had learned.”¹⁰⁰ Therefore, teachers should not present final results, but guide students to find their own solution. Forming intellect instead of supporting rote learning was one of Scharnhorst’s main concerns. As Clausewitz, his most famous pupil, later wrote:

Far from being a pedant, he [Scharnhorst] placed little value in the raw substance of knowledge, and paid attention only to the intellectual and spiritual values that can develop from it; nor was anyone more practical and active. This showed unmistakably in his judgement and selection of men for important assignments; native intelligence, common sense, even the crude child of nature counted more with him than any amount of learning that had not yet proved its aptitude and usefulness.¹⁰¹

In Scharnhorst’s opinion, dialogue and discourse should methodically enrich the lectures while all dogma and rigid formulas should be eschewed. This approach would arouse pupils thinking with an independent, critical, and receptive mind. Accordingly, they would develop a proud consciousness of their own effort, and even more important, they would be prepared to think and respond intelligently and resourcefully under complex and uncertain circum-

stances. Clausewitz later described this quality as “coup d’oeil”, and as an essential element of “military genius.”¹⁰² In Scharnhorst’s concept, theory had to be based on experience. In the absence of experience, however, the study of war had to be founded on history. He believed that “history was the most complete intellectual representation of reality.”¹⁰³ Consequently, the examination of historical examples would help officers to train judgement.

With regard to the third factor for educational success, the diligence of the pupil, Scharnhorst stressed the importance of “ambition”. He wrote: “Most effective is that man in whom the flame of ambition is burning most purely, and the state must be supported and led by his most effective elements.”¹⁰⁴ In Scharnhorst’s mind, it was essential to keep up the voluntary nature of learning and to avoid the exertion of schoolmasterish pressure. The lectures should be attended regularly; however, their selection was the responsibility of the students. The young officers should learn that it was knowledge that made their profession interesting. Scharnhorst assured them that “if they had acquired thorough knowledge, they would be in a better position on achieving higher appointments than those who were lacking this knowledge.”¹⁰⁵ In order to create a positive learning climate, student mistakes in written deliverables, as well as their best performances, should be examined anonymously.¹⁰⁶ Convinced of the psychological effect of ambition, Scharnhorst stated, that “the ambition to be the first” would automatically create outstanding performances.¹⁰⁷

All the notions that Scharnhorst had about enhancing the military educational system found their way in the *Akademie für junge Offiziere*. There, he was able to gather and educate those young men, who later, among others, became the designers of

the Prussian Army reform — Carl von Clausewitz, Karl Ludwig von Tiedemann, Ludwig Wilhelm von Boyen, and Rühle von Lilienstren. The most impressive reference for Scharnhorst's inspiring thoughts, however, was given by Clausewitz who called his mentor "the father of my spirit."¹⁰⁸

With the *Akademie für junge Offiziere*, Scharnhorst had created an effective institution to educate parts of the young officer generation. Over the long term, these officers could imbue the Prussian Army with a new spirit and enhance its professionalism. But how could he convince the decision-makers then of the need for reform? How could he permeate the middle and upper ranks with his notions?

Scharnhorst was aware that the proud, aristocratic Prussian senior officers with their widespread reservations about *Bildung* could not be brought back to school that easily. They, as Clausewitz remarked, "like most persons, could only get floated on the sandbank of their prejudices with invisible levers."¹⁰⁹ The vehicle for this endeavour became a volunteer society called the "Militärische Gesellschaft", and according to the historian Reinhard Höhn, "one of the genius creations of Scharnhorst's mind."¹¹⁰ "We have founded a military, scholarly society here," Scharnhorst wrote his wife on 24 July 1801: "I was invited to be a member, and at the first meeting was called its director."¹¹¹

The purpose of the *Militärische Gesellschaft*, according to the first article of its statutes, was:

...to instruct its members through the exchange of ideas in all areas of the art of war, in a manner that would encourage them to seek out truth, that would avoid the difficulties of private study with its tendency to one-sidedness, and that would seem best

sued to place theory and practice in proper relationship.¹¹²

Functioning like a club, the work of the Society focused on a variety of intellectual activities. "There would be no meeting without a lecture on a military topic," wrote Scharnhorst.¹¹³ In order to achieve this goal, he inspired the associates to write essays, to present them, and discuss them with the membership. This discussion would often induce the author to examine a topic in more depth and subsequently, would train his "power of judgement". "The preparation of a short essay is often more instructive for the author than the reading of a thick book," Scharnhorst pointed out.¹¹⁴ Moreover, essay competitions provided the necessary incentive. The fact that these competitions were often conducted anonymously would help to "create more space for innovative ideas."¹¹⁵ With these methodical tricks, Scharnhorst heightened the willingness for active participation within the membership. His objectives, however, were more far-reaching.

In the *Militärische Gesellschaft*, Scharnhorst created an intellectual climate where military affairs could be openly discussed, "without being suspected of having a subversive tendency."¹¹⁶ A prerequisite, he recognized, would be to obtain and maintain objectivity. He accomplished this objectivity not least by winning General von Rüchel, Inspector General of the Prussian Guards and military institutions, and governor of Potsdam, for the honorary position of presidency. According to the statutes, the president was guiding "the spirit that reigns in the society."¹¹⁷ Having a powerful traditionalist like Rüchel for president, "who considered himself the standard-bearer of the Frederician tradition in the army," would give the *Militärische Gesellschaft* a certain reputation and legitimacy, while Scharnhorst himself, who as director, was the real executive authority, could stay and act in the

background.¹¹⁸

Under Scharnhorst's direction, the *Militärische Gesellschaft* provided an intellectual platform, where under the protection of certain traditionalists, the advocates for innovation and reform could announce their notions within the framework of academic customs.¹¹⁹ At the end of the day, this interchange would affect the mind of the members, and subsequently, it would enhance the army's receptiveness to innovation. The reputation of the Society attracted officers from all ranks as well as civilians, among whom the then Minister of Finance, Reichsfreiherr Friedrich Karl von und zum Stein, was the most prominent. Until the break up of the *Militärische Gesellschaft* in 1805, when the Prussian army mobilized for the war against France, it had almost two hundred associates, including two princes of the royal house, August and Louis Ferdinand. On the other hand, nearly half of the officers were captains and lieutenants, including most of Scharnhorst's students at the *Akademie für junge Offiziere*. The majority of the officer membership became generals. Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Karl Wilhelm von Grolmann, Rühle von Lilienstern, and Friedrich Karl Freiherr von Müffling, all from the *Militärische Gesellschaft*, became Chief of the Prussian General Staff.¹²⁰ This fact indicates that under Scharnhorst's guidance the *Militärische Gesellschaft* became a focal point of intellect and *Bildung* in the Prussian Army. He now had a vehicle to influence discreetly the mind of the middle and upper officer ranks. Furthermore, with the *Militärische Gesellschaft* in combination with the *Akademie für junge Offiziere*, Scharnhorst had formed two instruments to enhance the intellectual level of the Prussian officer corps.

Scharnhorst recognized, however, that besides intellect, a sound organization would be the second essential means to mas-

ter the transformation of warfare unleashed by the French Revolution. Consequently, he insisted on removing the quartermaster staff from its subsidiary position to an institution of central significance, a notion he had already declared during his time in Hanover. In Scharnhorst's mind, a general staff could work out strategic plans and consult the higher command. Additionally, well-educated general staff officers could assist commanders-in-chief and improve their leadership through qualified advice.

Actually, Colonel Christian von Massenbach and not Scharnhorst had instigated the reorganization of the Prussian general-quartermaster staff (at that time the official Prussian terminology for general staff). In 1802, Massenbach, who was a *Württemberg*er in origin and a most active member of the *Militärische Gesellschaft* advanced two memoranda to the King, pointing out the necessity of a permanent general staff even in peacetime as the central element for planning and consulting organization of the highest command.¹²¹ He proposed that this general staff should prepare operational plans for military eventualities in three possible "theatres of operations" — East (Russia), South (Austria, Silesia) and West (France). Accordingly, the staff should consist of three sections or so-called "brigades". Exercise journeys should be regularly undertaken in peacetime for the purpose of reconnoitring the terrain and studying possible scenes of operations. Furthermore, Massenbach insisted that the chief of staff should have unhindered and uncontrolled access to the sovereign, called "Immediatvortrag". Its implementation would not only mean an advance toward unified control of strategic policy, but also a significant influence by the chief of staff on strategic decisions.¹²²

Based on Massenbach's suggestions, King Frederick Wilhelm III ordered the re-

organization of the general-quartermaster staff on 26 November 1803.¹²³ Lieutenant General Julius August von Grawert was entrusted with this task and Lieutenant General Levin von Geusau was appointed general-quartermaster (chief of staff). The staff consisted of twenty-one officers and in accordance with Massenbach's plan, it was divided into three brigades, each headed by a general-quartermaster-lieutenant.¹²⁴ Scharnhorst (now promoted to colonel) took over the 3rd Brigade, responsible for Western Germany. The 1st Brigade, headed by Karl Ludwig von Phull (also a *Württemberg*er by origin), dealt with East Prussia, and the 2nd Brigade under Massenbach covered Central and Southern Germany, including Silesia.

Unfortunately, the three general-quartermaster-lieutenants disagreed amongst themselves on almost every issue of strategy and tactics. As a result, each pursued their individual concerns within their area of responsibility.¹²⁵ A single general staff academy to balance these differences was missing. Furthermore, the role of the new staff within the military organization remained unclear. "Prussia now had for the first time a regular General Staff," Walter Görlitz has written:

The only trouble was that nobody knew the true use of this institution and that among the organized disorder of the various military hierarchies [Quartermaster staff, *Oberkriegskollegium* and Adjutant-General's department] the exact limits of its functions and authority was not clearly regulated.¹²⁶

With regard to these inadequacies it is not surprising that the Prussian General Staff "made its *début* on the stage of history with a fiasco."¹²⁷ In the war year 1806, general staff officers were distributed to various

corps and to newly-created division headquarters. But, a unified planning, and command and control element was missing. Even Scharnhorst who was appointed chief of staff to the Duke of Brunswick, the commander of the Prussian main army, experienced limited influence on events. "What ought to be done I know only too well," he wrote to his daughter on 7 October 1806: "What is going to be done, only the gods know."¹²⁸

One week later, on 14 October 1806, came the disastrous defeat of the Prussian Army by Napoleon at Jena and Auerstedt. Scharnhorst himself gave an illustrative example for the disaster that day. When his troops were forced to retreat, he gave his horse to a brother of the King, whose own horse had been killed, picked up a musket, and fled the battlefield wounded and on foot with the last of the infantry.¹²⁹

Prussia's military catastrophe revealed — despite Napoleon's genius and the fact that the Prussian Army was outnumbered — that the Frederician army's organization and tactics had become obsolete. An unsuccessful end to the war threatened the military and political downfall of the Prussian state, and found expression in the Peace of Tilsit (9 July 1807).¹³⁰ The political future of post-war Prussia was uncertain. She had to be prepared that Napoleon would destroy her if he thought it politically expedient. Concerned about this situation and the preservation of his dynasty, Frederick Wilhelm III finally determined to proceed with thorough reforms. In the so-called *Ortelsburg Publicandum* of 1 December 1806 (only six weeks after Jena and Auerstedt) and in later memoranda, he outlined ideas that basically coincided with Scharnhorst's views.¹³¹

Immediately after the Peace of Tilsit, Frederick Wilhelm III promoted Scharnhorst

to major general and appointed him chairman of the “Militär-Reorganisations-Kommission” (Military Reorganization Commission) on 25 July 1807. Initially, Scharnhorst mourned, as the commission was a “very heterogeneous” one.¹³² Gradually, however, he managed to replace the most obstructionist members with men he trusted. Most had been his students at the *Akademie für junge Offiziere* or members of the *Militärische Gesellschaft*, like for example Boyen, Grolmann, Braun, Count Dohna, Tiedemann, and Clausewitz. Others, like Gneisenau, had attracted Scharnhorst’s attention by distinguishing themselves in combat. All had proven themselves under fire.¹³³ Finally, when Stein, who was Scharnhorst’s counterpart in the civil administration, joined the commission the link between civilian and military reformers was established.

As the head of the Military Reorganization Commission Scharnhorst, had become the intellectual as well as the political leader of the military reformers. Their goal, however, was not to build a new state: “The only changes wanted were those that would generate additional power, and anything old but still serviceable was used.”¹³⁴ Thus, the plans of the reformers were rather evolutionary than revolutionary. The prerequisite for success, however, would be the break-up of the old absolutist system, or as Scharnhorst expressed it in a letter to Clausewitz:

We must kindle a sense of independence in the nation; we must enable the nation to understand itself and to take up its own affairs; only the will of the nation to acquire self-respect and to compel the respects of others will succeed. To work toward that goal is all we can do. To destroy the old forms, remove the ties of prejudice, guide and nurture our revival without inhibiting

its free growth — our work cannot go further than that.¹³⁵

Scharnhorst believed that while the memory of Jena and Auerstedt was fresh, now would be the best time to achieve what up to then had been ignored. Within the next two years, the plans for the reorganization of the Prussian Army had been completed and essential parts of the reform proposals were accepted and ratified by the King. The reform work focused on four fundamental questions — the conceptual framework of the army and consequently the issue of universal conscription in the future, the amendment of doctrine and equipment, the renewal of the officer corps, and the reorganization of the army. The various proposals the Prussian reformers made and implemented are not directly germane to Scharnhorst and his influence on professional military education. However, the question whether the two essential elements of Scharnhorst’s reform concept, intellect and organization, are still relevant for a modern army requires closer examination.

Scharnhorst’s concept of a general staff system — out-of-date or still modern?

For Scharnhorst, the failure of Prussian military leadership at Jena and Auerstedt demonstrated once more that qualified command would be the key for military success. He believed that a permanent general staff would secure the quality of command, and at the same time guarantee its continuity. In Winter 1807/08, Scharnhorst presented his proposals for the reorganization of the general-quartermaster staff and the establishment of a permanent Prussian general staff to the King.¹³⁶ “A well instructed, theoretically and practically educated and trained general staff,” he wrote, had become “for the army of every modern power an unavoidable essential need.”¹³⁷ Scharnhorst’s general staff system com-

prised three principal and interrelated elements — the reorganization of the Prussian command structure, identification and selection of talented young officers, as well as the training and education of these men to general staff officers.

Reorganization of the Prussian command structure was initiated with the cabinet order for “Establishment of the General War Department” on 25 December 1808. The following year, on 1 March, the Ministry of War was created as one of five new ministries of state. The War Ministry was organized into two principal departments — the General War Department, and the Economic Department, which dealt with administrative and budget matters. The General War Department was divided into three “Divisions”. The First Division, headed by Grolmann, carried out the main functions of the old general adjutant’s office (Generaladjutantur) and reported to the King on personnel matters. The Second Division, under Boyen, formed the general staff, while the former general-quartermaster staff was abolished. The Third Division, placed under Gneisenau, was the artillery and engineer division dealing also with procurement matters.¹³⁸

With creation of the War Ministry, Scharnhorst disposed of the former “organized disorder of the various military hierarchies.”¹³⁹ Now, Prussia had an institution that centralized the activities of war. Furthermore, a general staff would advise the King and not the general-adjutant, who “used to be an infantry officer without higher knowledge.”¹⁴⁰ For Scharnhorst, the general staff should become the focal point for collective knowledge and astuteness; in other words, it was meant to be a consulting instrument substituting for the strategist’s lack of military genius, and unifying command of the army in the field.

Additionally, Scharnhorst introduced a “troop general staff” (Truppengeneralstab), in order to enhance the quality of leadership at the tactical level of command.¹⁴¹ Scharnhorst recognized that it would be a hopeless undertaking to remove all “ignorant generals, whose understanding of strategy and tactics was not beyond the knowledge of a subaltern officer.”¹⁴² Their authority and the tradition supporting them were too powerful. Scharnhorst’s solution was to assign highly educated general staff officers to the different headquarters, guiding the commanding generals according to the intentions of the supreme command, and advising them on all matters of the science of war. With this notion, the general staff as the brain of the army was born, and the role of the general staff officers was raised from a purely administrative one to an assistant commander. The troop general staff, represented by the chief of staff, became a replacement for the commander’s lack of talent. It had been developed into an effective planning and controlling instrument for military operations.

Scharnhorst was aware that his concept required officers of superior character and intellect. Their identification, selection, training, and education would be essential to achieve his vision. His notions found their way in the “Reglement” of 6 August 1808, whereby the Military Reorganization Commission issued the future selection criteria for officers. Its opening paragraph declared:

A claim to the position of officer shall from now on be warranted in peacetime by knowledge and education, in time of war by exceptional bravery and quickness of perception. From the whole nation, therefore, all individuals who possess these qualities can lay title to the highest positions of honour in the military establishment. All social preferences which as hitherto ex-

isted is herewith terminated in the military establishment, and everyone, without regard for his background, has the same duties and the same rights.¹⁴³

The *Reglement* further stated that candidates for commissions no longer entered the army as officer-cadets but as privates. They had to demonstrate a minimum level of academic competence before they were appointed to the rank of ensign and pass a second examination for promotion to lieutenant. To give due weight not only to the candidate's knowledge but also to his character and personality, the regiments had to report on those candidates who were already serving. This law was a revolution in selecting the army's leadership. Its focus on knowledge, examination, and education broke down the aristocratic exclusivity of the Prussian officer corps. It reformed the practice of automatic promotion according to seniority and gave scope to talent, qualification, and justified ambition. Additionally, it made necessary a thorough reform of Prussia's military educational system.

According to Scharnhorst's plans, military education was more simply and rationally organized into a three-tier structure, under supervision of a single directorate. On the first level were the cadet schools, which prepared aspiring officers for the ensign examination. The second level consisted of three military schools in Berlin, Breslau, and Königsberg, which prepared ensigns for their second examination. At the apex of the educational programme, the three institutes for advanced study that existed before 1806 (see pages 24-5 of this paper) were combined into a single school for officers in Berlin, the "Allgemeine Kriegsschule" (General War Academy).¹⁴⁴ Besides training gunners and engineers, the new institute educated selected officers in a three-year advanced military course in the art of war. For selection, the students had to

pass an entrance examination. The classes were limited to fifty officers. The educational goal was to prepare selected officers from all branches for the general staff and for service as adjutants and assistants to senior commanders.

The *Allgemeine Kriegsschule* was the final cornerstone in Scharnhorst's endeavour to improve Prussian military leadership. He had now set the preconditions for selection, training, and education of a military elite, and in the general staff, he had created the organizational instrument to bring this intellectual potential to bear. The link between a sound military organization and intellect was established. But is Scharnhorst's general staff system still relevant to today's *Bundeswehr*?

The *Bundeswehr* does not have a general staff in the traditional sense, but it does have officers in general staff and admiral staff appointments. The command and control organization of the German armed forces has been streamlined in the wake of the reorganization that the *Bundeswehr* is presently undertaking. The position of the Chief of Staff, *Bundeswehr*, (Generalinspekteur der Bundeswehr) has been reinforced with additional instruments for planning and operational command and control. The "Operations Council" (Einsatzrat), for example, is chaired by the Chief of Staff *Bundeswehr* and supports the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in the planning, preparation, and command and control of *Bundeswehr* operations. Moreover, the newly established "Joint Operations Command" (Einsatzführungskommando) in Potsdam now plans and controls all joint operations of German armed forces abroad.

Additionally, German general staff officers are also employed at the tactical level of command, the "troop general staff service" (Truppengeneralstabdienst). In

the German Army, for example, general staff officers can be found down to the level of combat manoeuvre brigade. The brigades previously required two general staff officers – the G3 (planning, operation and training), and the G4 (logistics). In the wake of the *Bundeswehr*'s reorganization, however, the command structure of the high readiness brigades has been significantly reinforced. These brigades do now have two additional general staff officers — a chief of staff, and a G2 (enemy estimation). In cases where there is no chief of staff, the G3 performs this task, acting as “*primus inter pares*”. From the divisional level of command, general staff officers head all staff sections (G1-G6) in the headquarters.

The general staff service of the *Bundeswehr* is regulated by the so-called “*Heusinger-Erlass*”, dating from 8 September 1959.¹⁴⁵ It determines that specially earmarked general staff posts must be filled with general staff officers. As a rule, these officers have successfully attended the two-year general staff officer course at the “*Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr*” (German Armed Forces Command and Staff College) in Hamburg. For a short time, up to 20 percent of the general staff posts can be appointed with officers having no general staff education. Officers in a general staff post bear after their rank the designation “*im Generalstabsdienst*” (in the general staff service), or the abbreviation “*i.G.*”¹⁴⁶

General staff officers are a small group within the *Bundeswehr*. In 1996, only 3.7 percent of all officer posts were general staff officer posts, and this figure has not significantly changed during the last few years. In an army with 21,452 officers in 1996, there were 1,061 posts filled by general staff officers, hence 5 percent. In 1996, altogether 1,723 educated general staff and admiral staff officers served in the *Bundeswehr*; 309 of those were not on gen-

eral staff or admiral staff posts, and were instead predominantly employed as commanders of battalion size or higher units. General staff and admiral staff officers of the *Bundeswehr* are employed within the Ministry of Defence, NATO, UN, and all other western alliances, as attachés or liaison officers, with troop service, with agencies and schools, as well as with other ministries and science institutes.¹⁴⁷

In the *Bundeswehr*, the selection process for general staff and admiral staff officers is based on three notable factors. The first is the examination report of a fourteen-week joint staff officer basic course (*Stabsoffiziergrundlehrgang*), that must be passed by every career officer in the rank of captain as a prerequisite for promotion to staff officer. The second is the officer's performance according to his evaluation reports. The third is the recommendation of a superior in the position of a division commander, or comparable, as well as the recommendation of the head of the responsible personnel management department. The final decision then rests with a “selection commission” in the Ministry of Defence that considers the character, performance, suitability, and the willingness of the candidate to attend the training. Finally, approximately 15 percent of an officer year group, or in absolute figures up to forty-five officers from the army, twenty-five from the air force, and sixteen from the navy, are selected to attend the general staff and admiral staff courses at the *Führungsakademie* in Hamburg. Generally, the personal profile of the selected officers, on average, can be described as follows: approximately thirty-three years old, in the rank of captain, university degree and experience as commander at the company level.¹⁴⁸

Every year in October, the two-year general staff and admiral staff courses start at the *Führungsakademie* of the *Bundes-*

wehr. The aim of the courses is:

...to enable officers to fulfill tasks independently and responsibly in a general staff or admiral staff appointment, in peacetime, crisis, and in the different forms of conflict, within and out of their single service, in the national and international realm, in particular in NATO, and at all levels of command.¹⁴⁹

The main objective of the programme is to identify and develop military commanders and assistant commanders, who according to their character, education, and training are able to understand and analyse complex facts, and who are able to prepare decisions based on different problem analysis methods. The curriculum comprises 450 programme days and a total of 3,600 programme hours. Approximately 46 percent of the programme hours are available to the students for personal studies. The curriculum focuses on security policy and strategy, operational planning and command, armed forces operations in peacetime, and *Bundes-wehr* planning. More than half of the programme time is used for joint education in mixed seminars and working groups. Every student has to write one main essay on a topic either provided by the *Führungsakademie* or proposed by the student. This essay can also be done in conjunction with a university as part of a master's thesis or dissertation. Numerous journeys, exchange programmes with command and staff colleges of other NATO states, field training exercises, and computer-assisted single service, and finally joint exercises, round off the programme.

The students are divided up in syndicates, which become their "military home" for the duration of the course. International students from NATO countries enrich the syndicates. A tutor, who is a selected and

experienced general staff officer in the rank of lieutenant colonel, heads each syndicate. He is responsible for both the service specific training and the evaluation reports his students receive at the end of the course. Hence, the tutor occupies a key function in preparing his students for future general staff and admiral staff appointments. A director of the prevailing service heads the courses.¹⁵⁰ He (or in future she) has for the army and the air force the rank of colonel and for the navy the rank of captain. The latter is also a tutor. Approximately 130 military and 20 civilian teachers lecture at the *Führungsakademie*. Together with guest speakers from various realms, they provide an intellectual platform for intensive academic exchange of ideas.

The general staff system of the *Bundeswehr* reveals significant parallels with Scharnhorst's programme. The *Bundeswehr's* command and control structure, the selection process of talented officers, and their training and education at a higher military academy are founded on Scharnhorst's basic principles. How did Scharnhorst perceive the specific role of general staff officers and what is their role today? What distinguishes general staff officers from the other officers in a staff?

In the *Bundeswehr*, like in other armies, a general staff officer must relieve his commander or superior in all aspects of staff work. According to German opinion, however, his second and at the same time main task is to advise superiors with the right to be heard. A general staff officer is fully responsible for the accuracy of the advice he provides. Consequently, a German general staff officer does have a position that distinguishes him from other staff officers. When requested, all staff officers advise superiors. A general staff officer, however, provides advice on all official matters in his official capacity, and if required he urges his com-

mander to make decisions and to take action. Superiors should consult him as a matter of course. A general staff officer is obliged to express his misgivings. He is significantly involved in all phases of the operational planning process. Together with his superior, he analyzes the mission, estimates the situation, and develops the commander's decision. Therefore, it is later often not ascertainable who had provided what contribution. However, only the commander or prevailing superior is authorized to make decisions. Once the decision is made, the general staff officer will loyally implement it.¹⁵¹

This brief task description for general staff officers has its roots not only in the Prussian general staff but has also found its way into the newest German Army regulations. Army Regulation (HDv) 100/100, Command and Control of Armed Forces, for example, states:

Before making decisions, the commander will seek advice from his principal staff assistants. He should consult them. Principal staff assistants are responsible for the accuracy of the advice they provide. If required, they will urge the commander to make decisions and take action. Their thinking and action must be guided by the commander's will and intentions and must be determined by his decisions and orders. They will be loyal in implementing his decisions. He will involve subordinate commanders where practical and possible.¹⁵²

In addition to that Army Regulation (HDv) 100/200, Command and Control Support of Armed Forces, says in its paragraph "Tasks for Commander and Staff":

A distinguishing characteristic of staff work is the duty to give advice to the commander. Before making deci-

sions, he will seek advice from his principal staff assistants. He should consult them. They will be loyal in implementing his decisions. If required, they will urge the commander to make decisions and take action. Principal staff assistants are responsible for the accuracy of the advice they provide. The duty to give advice is linked with the regulation of the right to brief. Before a member of the staff briefs to a higher authority, he has to inform his superior.¹⁵³

In brigade, division, or corps size units, only the general staff officer with the highest position, the chief of staff, has the close relationship to the commander as described above. However, younger general staff officers work together with their superiors in the same way. They have the duty to provide advice. The Army Regulation 100/200 describes the tasks of the chief of staff as follows:

The chief of staff commands the staff and coordinates its work. He is the first adviser of the commander and is responsible for the staff's effectiveness to him. He informs the staff about all important decisions of the commander. If neither the commander nor his deputy can be reached the chief of staff will make the necessary decisions.¹⁵⁴

It is the Prussian general-quartermaster staff of the early 19th century, and in particular Scharnhorst's behaviour during the campaign in 1806, where these regulations are rooted. When the remaining elements of Prussia's Army started retreat after the defeat at Jena and Auerstedt, Scharnhorst joined Lieutenant General Gebhard Lebrecht von Blücher's corps that was tasked to be the "Arrière-Garde" (rear guard).¹⁵⁵ Blücher, although a thoroughly

ill-educated man was an excellent and popular commander. He was the first Prussian general recognizing the value of a scientifically educated and intelligent principal staff assistant.¹⁵⁶ Scharnhorst, acting as chief of staff, organized and controlled all movements of the corps, and Blücher appreciated his counsel. The corps fought its way to Lübeck, where it finally was defeated and the remnant disarmed and captured. In his report to the Prussian King, Blücher testified that Scharnhorst's effort was of significant importance to him. He praised Scharnhorst as a man, whose "ceaseless activity, firm determination and intelligent counsel" were largely responsible for "the lucky progress of my arduous retreat". "I do not hesitate to admit," Blücher wrote, "that without the active support of this man, it probably would have been hard for me to do half of what the corps really has done."¹⁵⁷ This historical example marks the beginning of the "military marriage" between a commander and his principal staff adviser. "It was the first example of the co-operation between a naturally gifted commander and a scientifically trained Chief of Staff," wrote Walter Görlitz.¹⁵⁸ Accordingly, it could be considered, in a way, as the birth of the principal staff adviser within the Prussian-German general staff system.

Later, during the Wars of Liberation (1813-15), the Prussian general staff proved its effectiveness for the first time in combat. When the Prussian Army mobilized for war in 1812, Scharnhorst's life had reached its climax. Every division, corps and army commander received a small staff, responsible for operational planning and execution. All principal staff assistants were chosen by Scharnhorst, and most had either been his former students or members of the *Militärische Gesellschaft*. Additionally, a chief of staff was assigned to every corps and army commander as principal adviser.¹⁵⁹

When the war began for the Prussian Army in Spring 1813, Scharnhorst decided to serve as chief of staff under Blücher, who was commanding the main Prussian Army in Silesia.¹⁶⁰ However, Scharnhorst made this decision despite his own feelings on the subject. His strongest desire was to command the Prussian Army in the field. But he also recognized that due to Blücher's reputation and political circumstances this wish would not be possible. "I want nothing from the world. What I prize I will not be given in any case...I would exchange my seven decorations and my life to command the army for one day," Scharnhorst wrote in a letter to his daughter.¹⁶¹ Thus, serving as chief of staff for Blücher, Scharnhorst himself obeyed the unwritten law for general staff officers, normally to stay anonymously in the background, and to advise, warn, and guide commanders when needed.¹⁶² According to Walter Görlitz, Scharnhorst had become a "perfect exemplar for all Chiefs of Staff."¹⁶³

Unfortunately, on 2 May 1813, Scharnhorst was wounded in the battle of Groß-Görschen, when a bullet struck his leg below the knee. At first the wound seemed harmless. Scharnhorst left the army for Vienna to negotiate with the Austrians to become a member of the coalition against France. However, the wound became infected, and he died in Prague on 28 June 1813. Therefore, Scharnhorst did not see the later success of his general staff system, culminating on 18 June 1815, when Blücher and his then chief of staff Gneisenau played a decisive role in Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo.

In the German understanding, the primary task of general staff officers is to provide accurate advice to commanders and superiors. In this system, the role of the chief of staff is a particular one. He has a very close relationship to the commander.

Scharnhorst demonstrated as Blücher's chief of staff, how important an intelligent and scientifically educated principle staff adviser could be for the overall success. International and German critics, however, often argue that the German general staff system undermines the commander's authority, and endangers the cohesion in the officer corps, with only a small group of specially educated officers occupying the majority of the senior positions. The question still remains, whether the Prussian-German general staff system is still suitable and relevant for modern armed forces and to what degree.

Actually, the German general staff system is a challenge for both commanders and principal staff assistants. First, commanders need to be aware that general staff officers providing responsible advice do not restrict their authority, but would enhance the efficiency of their leadership with their systematic staff work and counsel. General staff officers apply similar command and control principles, often resulting in similar solutions. If one is not available, another can jump in. Staff work, based on the same principles, will establish continuity in the armed forces, and subsequently, will relieve commanders. They would then be able to focus on their primary functions of command, training, education, and mission-orientated leadership, while at the same time being assured that the daily work would be accomplished according to the guidelines given, and without permanent personal control. The advice provided by similar-educated principal staff officers on all questions of military command and training supports commanders in their decision-making. However, commanders working together with principal staff assistants also need to have discipline. They have to seek advice from their general staff officers, and give them the chance to practice providing advice, rather than abusing them as particu-

larly diligent staff workers. General officers, who have themselves attended the general staff or admiral staff course, and in the *Bundeswehr* this number is the majority, seem to have less difficulty dealing with these characteristics.¹⁶⁴ But the remainder also learn quickly how to make effective use of their principal staff assistants.

On the other hand, the main challenge for general staff officers is to be responsible for the accuracy of advice they provide. The quality of their counsel correlates with the quality of a commander's decision. In an increasingly complex operational environment, the education of general staff officers does not end after they have passed a command and staff college. They will only mature by regularly changing appointments at all levels of command. General staff officers need to have the ambition to take every opportunity for further education. The "ambition to be the first", stated Scharnhorst, would automatically create outstanding performances.¹⁶⁵ But unfortunately it is the ambition that in some cases results in careerism. Streamlined and adapted general staff officers, only focused on not making a negative impression on superiors, however, are poor principal staff assistants. They generally do not fulfill their duty to give responsible advice, and if required, to urge superiors to make decisions. Therefore, it has to be one of the primary tasks for commanders and superiors to counteract such tendencies.

In this context, it must be remembered that the German general staff system demands an independently formulated decision from the commander. After consulting his principal staff assistants, it is the commander who has to make the decision. No general staff officer can relieve him of this responsibility. Consequently, the German general staff system does not undermine the commander's authority. It rather leads to a

responsible decision through high quality advice.

The second objection, that creation of a specially educated elite would endanger the cohesion in the officer corps, also does not withstand closer examination. In the *Bundeswehr* all career line officers must go through the same selection process, and consequently do have the same chance to qualify for the general staff and admiral staff education. Furthermore, there is no isolated general staff and admiral staff officer corps in the *Bundeswehr*. The chance for advancement up to the rank of general or admiral remains open for all officers.¹⁶⁶ Since general staff and admiral staff officers serve in regularly changing appointments on all levels of command they remain in competition with line officers. Both objective examinations and commonly accepted selection criteria, as well as the fact that leadership positions in the *Bundeswehr* remain open to talent and reward merit remain two essential preconditions for justifying an educational elite.

The example of the *Bundeswehr* has illustrated — and similarities too can be found in other western armed forces — that key principles of Scharnhorst's general staff system still find application today. Scharnhorst's objective was to design a Prussian army wherein the best would have access to the top positions and improve the quality of military leadership. Although, the *Bundeswehr* does not have a general staff, it does possess organizational elements doing general staff work for both the political leadership on the military-strategic and operational level of command, as well as for commanders at the tactical level of command.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the German general staff system, in keeping with Scharnhorst's model, is based on a small group of selected officers, thoroughly trained, and educated at a military academy, the *Führungsakademie*

of the Bundeswehr. The creation of such an educational elite is justified so long as it strengthens the military organization, remains open to talent, and rewards merit. General staff and admiral staff officers support commanders in their decision-making through high quality advice. This major task constitutes the particular value of the Prussian-German general staff system, and it is the key to master the increasing complexity of military affairs. Therefore, Scharnhorst's concept of a general staff system is not out-of-date; it is of enduring relevance for the *Bundeswehr* and other modern armed forces.

Conclusion

Scharnhorst had a brilliant career. He rose from a Hanoverian son of a peasant to be Chief of the Prussian General Staff and architect of the reorganization of the Prussian Army in the years between 1807 and 1813. The transformation of warfare unleashed by the French Revolution was the major experience of Scharnhorst's life which he never ceased to study for the rest of his career. The campaigns of the First Coalition against Revolutionary France, in which he personally distinguished himself as an officer in the Hanoverian service, showed him the deficiencies of traditional military institutions and the power of the French nation-in-arms. Step by step, he worked his way through an understanding of the new conditions and gradually developed a concept of comprehensive military reforms, based upon two cornerstones — intellect and sound organization.

Scharnhorst's reform concept, both in part and in whole, were well thought out and eventually proved effective during the Wars of Liberation. If careers were to be open to men of talent as the *Reglement* of 1808 stated¹⁶⁸ and if the transformation of warfare and its increasing complexity re-

quired officers with initiative, judgement, and flexibility, then they would surely have to be thoroughly trained and educated. Scharnhorst reorganized Prussia's military educational organization to become an integral part of his general staff system. His goal was to select, train, and scientifically educate the best minds in the Prussian Army, and then to promote and assign them to key positions in the general staff. This combination of intellect and military organization, Scharnhorst hoped, would create the power to meet the challenge of the changing military environment.

Today's armed forces are facing a similar challenge to which the Prussian Army confronted two hundred years ago. The transformation of war is a continuous process, making military affairs more and more complex. The traditional operational factors of space, time, and forces required not only to be synchronized in a multi-dimensional and non-linear way, but also to be handled with increasing speed, and in consideration of steadily increasing amounts of information. Military commanders must not become overwhelmed by the vast amount of information and detail available. To cope with this challenge, the commander needs to take full advantage of a competent and effective staff system, which supports and enhances their decision-making. Besides a profound professional knowledge, principle staff assistants require a keen awareness of the world around them and recognize how political, social, cultural, economic, and ethical factors impact on military affairs. Therefore, extensive training and education are essential. Selection of the best minds for this educational programme and their assignment to key positions remain paramount to the success of an army.

With his notions, Scharnhorst had anticipated features of an achievement-

orientated society that later was copied in military and other realms. His greatness lay in the ability to see the new dimensions of warfare after the French Revolution and to develop the educational and organizational institutions to meet the challenge of the transformation of war. Scharnhorst recognized that higher commander's leadership could be improved by the assistance of specially trained- and scientifically-educated general staff officers. His concept to amalgamate intellectual power with sound organization resulted in the Prussian-German general staff system. Indeed, by doing so, core elements of Scharnhorst's reform of the Prussian Army still possess enduring relevance. It becomes essential now to adapt Scharnhorst's programme to the future. Future operations will most likely be within a coalition context. Besides technological interoperability, it will mainly be the degree of organizational, doctrinal, and cultural interoperability, which determines the level of successful coalition command. Thus, leadership education needs to be further developed from a joint approach today to a combined approach tomorrow. In an alliance like NATO, for example, the creation of a combined command and staff college would be the next decisive milestone to improve multinational command and control, and it would be in accordance with Scharnhorst's views on the need for developing a keen military mind and intellect.

NOTES

¹Meinecke, Friedrich. *The Age of German Liberation, 1795-1815*, trans by Peter Paret and Helmuth Fischer (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: California UP, 1977), pp 57-8.

²Stadelmann, Rudolf. *Scharnhorst: Schicksal und Geistige Welt* (Wiesbaden: Limes Verlag, 1952), 36 (trans by the author).

³A 'Brinksitzer' is a tenant farmer who had, according to the existing caste system, a low social status.

⁴“Quartiermeister” (quartermaster) was the high-est rank for non commissioned officers.

⁵Fiedler, Siegfried. *Scharnhorst: Geist und Tat* (München: Schild-Verlag, 1958), pp 56-7.

⁶Stübig, Heinz. *Scharnhorst: Die Reform des preußischen Heeres* (Göttingen/Zürich: Muster-Schmidt Verlag, 1988), p 10.

⁷Stadelmann, p 37.

⁸The decision of the “Oberappellationsgericht zu Celle” as of 24 June 1771 can be found in: Georg Heinrich Klippel, *Das Leben des Generals von Scharnhorst* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1869/71), Vol 1, p 38.

⁹Major sources for this paragraph are: Hans Klein, *Wilhelm zu Schaumburg-Lippe: Klassiker der Abschreckungstheorie und Lehrer Scharnhorsts* (Osnabrück: Biblio, 1982); Stadelmann, pp 132-44 and Fiedler, pp 65-79.

¹⁰Count Wilhelm, for example, spoke five languages (German, French and English as well as later Italian and Portuguese) and masterfully played the piano.

¹¹Stadelmann, p 19. For example, Count Wilhelm relinquished magnificence, reduced the state debt, established industries, built an orphanage and reformed the school system. Furthermore, he gave the poor, who were fit for work, the opportunity for employment, and he compelled beggars to work in his factories. He also introduced a kind of fire and health insurance.

¹²Two notable intellectuals were Thomas Abt and Johann Gottfried Herder.

¹³Stadelmann, p 19.

¹⁴Stadelmann, p 20 and Charles Edward White, *The Enlightened Soldier: Scharnhorst and the Militärische Gesellschaft in Berlin, 1801-1805* (Westport/Connecticut/London: Praeger, 1989), pp 3-4.

¹⁵White, p 3.

¹⁶Stadelmann, p 20 (trans by the author).

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸Comparing the results of Scharnhorst’s entrance examination in 1773, where he was examined as below average, with the results of his final exams in 1777 illustrates how much he succeeded. On 28 August 1777 the following subjects were examined: theoretical and applied mathematics, civil and mili-

tary engineering, campaign planning of offensive and defensive operations, economics, physics, geography, questions to a topic of choice, French and English. And, with the exception of his translations, which were marked as “pretty good”, Scharnhorst received in all other subjects the best mark, “good”. Subsequently, he was honoured for this outstanding result. (*Ibid*, pp 17-8.)

¹⁹On the syllabus and methods of learning, see: Klein, pp 262-9.

²⁰White, p 5.

²¹Scharnhorst, “Von den Militär-Anstalten des verstorbenen Grafen von Schaumburg-Lippe,” in Klippel, Georg Heinrich, *Das Leben des Generals von Scharnhorst* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1869/71), 1:185; quoted in: White, p 6.

²²Stadelmann, p 132.

²³Scharnhorst, Gerhard. “Characterzüge und Anekdoten von dem verstorbenen Grafen Wilhelm von Schaumburg=Bückeberg.” *Neues Militärisches Journal*, Vol 1, 2nd ed (1799), p 123 (trans by the author). This periodical was first published in 1788. Until 1796 in total 7 volumes had been published.

²⁴*Ibid* (trans by the author).

²⁵Hornung, Klaus. *Scharnhorst: Soldat-Reformer-Staatsmann* (Esslingen/München: Bechtel Verlag, 1997), p 34.

²⁶Stübig, Heinz. *Scharnhorst Die Reform des preußischen Heeres* (Göttingen: Muster-Schmidt Verlag, 1988), p 20.

²⁷Hornung, p 34.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid*, p 36 (trans by the author).

³⁰*Ibid*, p 37 (trans by the author).

³¹*Ibid.*

³²Fiedler, p 227. Scharnhorst invented the micrometer telescope in 1780.

³³Hornung, p 39; Stübig, p 31; White, p 9.

³⁴There is no exact equivalent of “Bildung” in English. A common translation of *Bildung* is education. Education, however, is only one part of *Bildung*; culture, and self-cultivation are other parts. *Bildung* in Scharnhorst’s understanding is “the perfectibility of the individual’s character and intellect through education” (White, p xii). Consequently,

Bildung is somewhere in between education and enlightenment.

³⁵Scharnhorst's article with the original title "Anleitung zur Lectüre. Von dem Nutzen wissenschaftlicher Kenntnisse, den Vorurtheilen gegen dieselben und dem gewöhnlichen Studiren" was published in *Militär-Bibliothek* (Hanover, 1782), Vol I, pp 5-13. It is printed in: Ursula von Gersdorff, ed, *Gerhard von Scharnhorst: Ausgewählte Schriften* (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1983), pp 2-7.

³⁶According to White (12) one explanation for stopping publishing the *Militair Bibliothek* is that Scharnhorst was sharply criticized by the editor of the rival *Bellona* "for his presumption in reviewing a book written by a superior officer". For Stübig (32), however, it is also possible that business reasons were responsible for Scharnhorst's decision.

³⁷Hornung, p 40.

³⁸Hornung, p 40; Stübig, p 32; White, p 15.

³⁹Hornung, p 40.

⁴⁰Stübig, p 32.

⁴¹ Hornung, pp 40-1; Stübig, pp 32-3; White, p 15.

⁴²Hornung, p 38.

⁴³White, p 14. The *Militärisches Taschenbuch* was published in three editions and was also translated into English in 1811 as the *Military Field Pocket Book*.

⁴⁴Hornung, p 41.

⁴⁵von Clausewitz, Carl. *On War*, trans and ed by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1989), p 170.

⁴⁶Hornung, p 44.

⁴⁷Their eldest son Gerhard Wilhelm (his second Christian name was reminiscent of Count Wilhelm) was born in 1786; their daughter, Clara Sophie Juliane, was born in 1788; their second daughter, Sophie Ernestine, was born in 1791; their second son, Friedrich Gerhard August, was born in 1795; and finally their youngest daughter, Anna Sophie Emilie, was born in 1796.

⁴⁸Hornung, p 47. The Hanoverian Corps was approximately 13,000 men strong. That was almost half of the Hanoverian Army.

⁴⁹Hornung, pp 47-8; Stübig, pp 36-7; White, p 16.

⁵⁰Fiedler, p 158.

⁵¹Hornung, p 48; Stübig, pp 37-9; White, p 16.

⁵²Fiedler, p 159. The Austrian Emperor, for example, praised in a personal letter to Hammerstein the battle of Menin as an "outstanding military action".

⁵³Hammerstein's report is ed in: Carl von Clausewitz, "Ueber das Leben und den Charakter von Scharnhorst", *Historische Politische Zeitschrift*, Berlin: 1832, p 2.

⁵⁴Stübig, p 39.

⁵⁵Letter of 24 May 1773; Hansjürgen Usczeck and Christa Gudzent, eds, *Gerhard von Scharnhorst: Ausgewählte militärische Schriften*, (Berlin: Militärverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1986), p 75 (trans iaw White, p 17).

⁵⁶Letter of 28 August 1793; ed in: *Ibid*, p 86.

⁵⁷Letter to an unknown addressee of 5 June 1793; ed in: *Ibid*, p 83 (trans by the author and iaw White, p 17.)

⁵⁸Letter of 1 June 1793; ed in: *Ibid*, 78 (trans by the author).

⁵⁹*Ibid* (trans by the author).

⁶⁰This essay is ed in: Gersdorff, pp 47-110.

⁶¹*Ibid*, p 84.

⁶²*Ibid*, pp 58-9.

⁶³*Ibid*, p 81.

⁶⁴Hornung, pp 66-76.

⁶⁵Paret, Peter. *Clausewitz and the State* (Princeton/New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1976), p 65.

⁶⁶*Ibid*.

⁶⁷Stübig, p 45. Although, Scharnhorst belonged as general quartermaster to the Hanoverian general staff this was rather counter productive for his further career. At that time the general quartermaster staff was an isolated group of specialists. There was almost no personnel exchange between the quartermaster staff and the rest of the army. Accordingly, it was very unlikely for Scharnhorst to leave this staff again and to get a command posting.

⁶⁸Stübig, p 45. As general quartermaster Scharnhorst had an annual income of 900 Reichstaler. After the Prussian offer Hanover paid him an additional allowance of 550 Reichstaler per year.

⁶⁹Hornung, p 81.

⁷⁰Paret, pp 65-6.

⁷¹Clausewitz, "Ueber das Leben und den Charakter von Scharnhorst", p 21.

⁷²Letter of 24 July 1801; ed in: Gersdorff, p 128. Scharnhorst described in this letter the conflict between the commander of the Prussian artillery, General von Meerkatz, who was reform oriented, and his regimental commander, General von Tempelhoff, a traditionalist who "preferred to be in company with the respected aristocracy."

⁷³Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army 1640-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p 26.

⁷⁴Queen Louise of Prussia in a letter to her father in 1808, quoted in: Ralph Thiele, *Jena-Auerstedt 1806: Die Schlacht und ihr Vermächtnis*, (Frankfurt/Main: Report Verlag, 1996), p 49.

⁷⁵Görlitz, Walter. *Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabes von 1650-1945* (Augsburg: Weltbild Verlag, 1997), p 27.

⁷⁶Paret, p 66.

⁷⁷Fiedler, p 230.

⁷⁸Höhn, Reinhard. *Scharnhorsts Vermächtnis* (Bonn: Athenäum Verlag, 1952), p 114.

⁷⁹Scharnhorst to Lieutenant General von Geusau, 16 August 1802, Acta, Heeresarchiv Potsdam, Nachlass Geusau, Nr. 16; quoted in: Höhn, p 130.

⁸⁰Stadelmann, pp 65-6. According to Stadelmann, the annual budgets were 21,000 Thaler for the "Ecole Militaire", 7,000 Thaler for the "Militärakademie der Artillerie", and 1,000 Thaler for the "Lehr-Anstalt für junge Infanterie- und Kavallerie-Offiziere".

⁸¹*Ibid*, p 66.

⁸²*Ibid*.

⁸³The title of the document is "Verfassung und Lehreinrichtung der Akademie für junge Offiziere, und des Instituts für die Berlinische Inspection", issued in 1805. It is ed in: Fiedler, pp 192-209.

⁸⁴Stadelmann, p 145.

⁸⁵Scharnhorst, "Über die Bildung der Offiziere und Unteroffiziere"; ed in: Höhn, p 110 (trans by the author).

⁸⁶Scharnhorst wrote an article about the degrading ignorance of the military in the first volume of the *Militär Bibliothek*, 1782. This statement is quoted in Stadelmann, p 150.

⁸⁷Höhn, pp 106-7.

⁸⁸Scharnhorst. "Ohne Bildung der Offiziere in der Kriegskunst kann der Staat keine gute Ausführung von seinen Armeen erwarten"; quoted in: Höhn, p 131.

⁸⁹At that time Lieutenant-General Levin von Geusau was Prussian's general-quartermaster and inspector of the "Akademie für junge Offiziere". He was holding numerous other responsibilities in the Prussian Army and was relieved when Scharnhorst was willing to take over responsibility for the school. Geusau was supporting Scharnhorst's plans to transform the school into a real academy and gave him almost carte blanche.

⁹⁰According to the Articles 1 to 10 of the "Verfassung und Lehreinrichtung der Akademie für junge Offiziere, und des Instituts für die Berlinische Inspection", issued in 1805; ed in: Fiedler, pp 192-4.

⁹¹Fiedler, p 145.

⁹²Scharnhorst. "Promemoria: Die Notwendigkeit einer Instruction für den Unterricht der Junker und jungen Offiziere bei den Infanterie- und Cavalerie-Regimentern betreffend"; ed in: Höhn, p 117.

⁹³This principle can also be found in the statutes of the *Militärische Gesellschaft* (Article 1) where Scharnhorst described the purpose of the society. It is ed in White, pp 191-9.

⁹⁴Scharnhorst. "Plan einer Lehranstalt für die Junker und jungen Offiziere der Infanterie und Cavalerie-Regimenter, nebst einer Instruction für die Lehrer derselben"; ed in: Höhn, p 117 (trans by the author).

⁹⁵Scharnhorst. "Über den Nutzen und die Etablierung einer Militärschule für die jungen Offiziere überhaupt, insbesondere die von der Artillerie"; quoted in: Höhn, p 118 (trans by the author).

⁹⁶Scharnhorst. "Plan einer Lehranstalt für die Junker und jungen Offiziere der Infanterie und Cavalerie-Regimenter, nebst einer Instruction für die Lehrer derselben"; quoted in: Fiedler, p 125.

⁹⁷*Ibid*.

⁹⁸Scharnhorst. "Promemoria: Die Notwendigkeit einer Instruction für den Unterricht der Junker

und jungen Offiziere bei den Infanterie- und Cavalerie-Regimentern betreffend”; quoted in: Höhn, p 119.

⁹⁹Scharnhorst. “Ohne Bildung der Offiziere in der Kriegskunst kann der Staat keine gute Ausführung von seinen Armeen erwarten”. Nachlass Scharnhorst No 58, Sheet 68; quoted in: Fiedler, p 133.

¹⁰⁰Scharnhorst. “Plan einer Lehranstalt für die Junker und jungen Offiziere der Infanterie und Cavalerie-Regimenter, nebst einer Instruktion für die Lehrer derselben”; quoted in: Höhn, p 118 (trans by the author).

¹⁰¹Clausewitz. “Ueber das Leben und den Character von Scharnhorst”, p 21 (trans by the author).

¹⁰²von Clausewitz, Carl. *On War*, pp 100-2.

¹⁰³Paret, p 71.

¹⁰⁴Stadelmann, p 142 (trans by the author).

¹⁰⁵Scharnhorst. “Ueber das Studium der Kriegskunst”; quoted in: Höhn, p 122.

¹⁰⁶Scharnhorst. “Verfassung und Lehreinrichtung der Akademie für junge Offiziere, und des Instituts für die Berlinische Inspection”, Article 26; ed in: Fiedler, p 202.

¹⁰⁷Stadelmann, p 141.

¹⁰⁸von Clausewitz, Marie “Erinnerung an den General Clauswitz und sein Verhältniß zu Scharnhorst”, quoted in: White, p 101.

¹⁰⁹Clausewitz. “Ueber das Leben und den Character von Scharnhorst”, p 30.

¹¹⁰Höhn, p 147.

¹¹¹Letter of 24 July 1801; ed in: Gersdorff, p 130.

¹¹²The “Extract from the Organization and Statutes of the Militärische Gesellschaft in Berlin Following the Revision in January 1803” is ed in: White, pp 191-9. The quoted article is from page 191.

¹¹³Scharnhorst. “Bemerkungen über die Veranlassung und den Zweck der Militärischen Gesellschaft und über die Mittel zur Erreichung desselben; bei Gelegenheit des Schlusses der Gesetzrevision im Januar 1803”; ed in: Usczeck and Gudzent, pp 191-7. The quoted passage is from page 194.

¹¹⁴*Ibid*, p 195.

¹¹⁵*Ibid*.

¹¹⁶Höhn, p 150.

¹¹⁷“Statutes of the Militärische Gesellschaft in Berlin”, Article 3, ed in: White, p 192.

¹¹⁸According to Clausewitz’s characterization of Rüchel in “Nachrichten über Preussen in seiner grossen Katastrophe, in Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften”, Heft 10 (Berlin: Mittler & Sohn, 1888), p 435, quoted in: White, p 39.

¹¹⁹Höhn, p 154.

¹²⁰White, p 49. All members of the Militärische Gesellschaft are listed in White, pp 203-11.

¹²¹Görlitz, Walter. *Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabes ...*, p 29.

¹²²*Ibid*.

¹²³Wilhelm, King Frederick III. “Instruction für den General-Quartiermeister-Stab”. Berlin, 26 November 1803.

¹²⁴In detail, the staff consisted of three quartermaster-lieutenants (in the rank of major general or colonel), heading the brigades, six quartermasters (in the rank of major), six quartermaster-lieutenants (in the rank of captain), and six adjutants.

¹²⁵Paret, p 77. The different approaches of Phull, Massenbach and Scharnhorst are described in: Höhn, p 153.

¹²⁶Görlitz. *Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabes ...*, p 22.

¹²⁷Görlitz, Walter. *History of the German General Staff, 1657-1945*, trans by Brian Battershaw (New York: Praeger, 1959), p 25.

¹²⁸Letter of 7 October 1806; quoted in: White, p 127.

¹²⁹Scharnhorst describes his battle experience in a letter to his daughter of 16 October 1806; ed in: Gersdorff, pp 211-2.

¹³⁰Stübig, p 64. Prussia lost approximately half of its territory and population, had to pay huge reparations, and was forced to support a large army of occupation.

¹³¹This illustrates that Frederick Wilhelm III recognized most of the severe defects of the traditional administrative and military institutions as clearly as did the reformers. However, he never developed his own concept and acted only after the

defeat of the Prussian Army at Jena and Auerstedt.

¹³²Letter of 27 November 1807; ed in: Gersdorff, pp 255-7, the quoted passage is from page 255.

¹³³Paret, p 141.

¹³⁴Meinecke, p 46.

¹³⁵Letter of 27 November 1807; ed in: Gersdorff, pp 255-7 (trans by the author).

¹³⁶The original title of the memoranda is: “Vorschläge zur künftigen Einrichtung des Generalquartiermeisterstabes der preußischen Armee” (Proposals for the future establishment of the general-quartermaster staff of the Prussian Army).

¹³⁷Hornung, p 196.

¹³⁸Scharnhorst. “Vergleichung der ehemaligen Geschäftsführung der militärischen Oberbehörden mit der jetzigen”, ed in: Gersdorff, pp 297-309.

¹³⁹See quote Walter Görlitz on page 35 of this paper.

¹⁴⁰Scharnhorst. “Vergleichung der ehemaligen Geschäftsführung der militärischen Oberbehörden mit der jetzigen”, in: Gersdorff, p 297.

¹⁴¹Walter Görlitz, for example, translated the original German term “Truppengeneralstab” with “Operational General Staff” (Görlitz, *History of the German General Staff...*, p 34). However, this term could cause confusion with the term “operational level of war”. The “Truppengeneralstab” describes general staff appointments on the tactical level of command — army corps, corps, divisions and brigades. Therefore, in this paper the translation “troop general staff” will be used.

¹⁴²Scharnhorst. “Über den Nutzen für die Armee, daß den Offizieren ein Unterricht in der Kriegskunst mitgetheilt würde”, quoted in: Höhn, p 312.

¹⁴³“Reglement über die Bestzung der Stellen der Portepée-Fähnriche und über die Wahl zum Offizier bei der Infanterie, Kavallerie und Artillerie”, quoted in White, pp 136-7.

¹⁴⁴The “Allgemeine Kriegsschule” was opened in Oktober 1810 and was the precursor of the “Kriegsakademie” (War Academy).

¹⁴⁵General Adolf Heusinger (1897-1982) was the first Chief of Staff Bundeswehr, from 1957-1961.

¹⁴⁶Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Fü B I 1, Az 10-20-12 (Bonn: 8 September 1959), (“*Heusinger-Erlass*”).

¹⁴⁷For the figures see: Christian Millotat, *Das preußisch-deutsche Generalstabssystem: Wurzeln — Entwicklung — Fortwirken*, (Zürich: vdf Hochschulverlag, 2000), pp 23-5.

¹⁴⁸For the selection process for the general staff and admiral staff training see: Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, P II 1 — Az 16-30-00/22, *Verwendungsauswahl und- planung der Berufsoffiziere des Truppen-, Sanitäts- und militärgeographischen Dienstes; hier: Streitkräfteeinheitliche Auswahl der Teilnehmer am nationalen Lehrgang General-/Admiralstabdienst (LGAN)*, (Bonn: BMVg, 5 September 1997), as well as official Briefing Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr as at December 2002.

¹⁴⁹der Bundeswehr, Führungsakademie. *Lehrplan für den LGAN 1998* (Hamburg: FüAkBw, 30 June 1998); in accordance with official briefing Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr as at December 2002.

¹⁵⁰There are always two courses at the same time at the Führungsakademie, a “younger” and an “elder” one.

¹⁵¹Millotat, pp 33-4.

¹⁵²der Verteidigung, Bundesministerium. *Heeresdienstvorschrift Truppenführung (TF)*, HDv 100/100 (Bonn: BMVg, 15 October 1998), Nr. 327.

¹⁵³der Verteidigung, Bundesministerium. *Heeresdienstvorschrift Führungsunterstützung*, HDv 100/200 (Bonn: BMVg, 15 October 1998), Nr. 416.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid*, Nr. 422.

¹⁵⁵At page 36 of this paper it is described how Scharnhorst left the battlefield after the Prussia’s defeat at Auerstedt.

¹⁵⁶Görlitz, *History of the German General Staff* ..., p 27.

¹⁵⁷Clausewitz. “Ueber das Leben und den Character von Scharnhorst”, pp 5-6 (trans by the author). Clausewitz describes in his essay Scharnhorst’s effort in Blücher’s corps. Blücher’s report to King Frederick Wilhelm is also quoted in this essay.

¹⁵⁸Görlitz, *History of the German General Staff* ..., p 27.

¹⁵⁹White, p 149.

¹⁶⁰With Scharnhorst, Gneisenau was appointed first general staff officer (so called “Ia”) in Blücher’s corps.

¹⁶¹Letter of 21 May 1813; ed in: Gersdorff, pp 503-4.

¹⁶²General Hans von Seeckt and General Count

Alfred Schlieffen later underlined this tradition with their statements: “General staff officers do not have a name.” (Hans von Seeckt, *Gedanken eines Soldaten* ((Berlin: 1929)); and: “Get a lot done, without bringing to much attention to yourself – be more than you appear to be.” (Friedrich von Boetticher, *Schlieffen* (Göttingen, Muster-Schmitt, 1973).

¹⁶³Görlitz, *History of the German General Staff* ..., p 39.

¹⁶⁴In 1996, 57 percent of the colonels and commanders, and approximately 80 percent of the generals and admirals in the Bundeswehr had attended the two-year general staff and admiral staff course at the Führungsakademie of the Bundeswehr (Millotat, p 161).

¹⁶⁵See page 30 of this paper.

¹⁶⁶In 1996, 43 percent of the colonels and commanders, and almost 20 percent of the generals and admirals in the Bundeswehr had not attended the two-year general staff and admiral staff course at the Führungsakademie of the Bundeswehr (Millotat, p 161).

¹⁶⁷der Verteidigung, Bundesministerium. *Bunde-swehr 2002, Sachstand und Perspektiven* (Bonn: BMVg, 2002), pp 46-7.

¹⁶⁸See pages 40-1 of this paper.