

## Chapter 3

# The Thirty Years' War: a space of transformation in the nature of war

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287602502.03>

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**Abstract:** War, as a social fact, has been transformed by adapting to the contexts and intentions of the peoples who have used this tool to achieve their ends and impose their interests. In this sense, one of the most interesting periods to study this phenomenon occurred in Europe in the seventeenth century, when political, social, economic, cultural and religious changes imprinted a dynamic that until now had not been observed in war conflicts, and as a result of which the concept of the modern nation state would be strengthened and the theocentric approach would be changed to one based on the humanist view of society.

**Keywords:** Peace of Westphalia, war, State, international system, politics.

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**APA citation:** Ardila Castro, C. A. (2023). The Thirty Years' War: a space of transformation in the nature of war. In S. Uribe-Caceres & D. López Niño (Eds.), *Theoretical Approach to Notions of War and Strategic Leadership* (pp. 59-75). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287602502.03>

### **THEORETICAL APPROACH TO THE NOTIONS OF WAR AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

ISBN (print): 978-628-7602-49-6

ISBN (online): 978-628-7602-50-2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287602502>

### **Security and Defense Collection**

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2023



## Introduction

The need to find spaces where conflicts caused by the need for societies to impose their own interests could be resolved generated, as Diamond (2018) states, an entire state infrastructure that would support war efforts. Thus, in the primitive societies of farmers and ranchers, military bodies were created that at the beginning had a purely defensive purpose, and that mutated into a military apparatus that allowed power to be projected beyond the borders of those primitive States. The transformations in this activity that have accompanied the different war scenarios have generated a great opportunity in academic spaces to, from scientific studies, understand the variables that contribute to the construction of theories and concepts that allow evidence of transformations throughout history.

Conflicts are a space where, historically, human societies have sought to fulfill their interests. According to authors such as Macmillan (2021), it is affirmed that war has been a space of transformation, by generating a series of changes that have contributed to the consolidation of some human groups and the disappearance of others. In this sense, it is pertinent to affirm that empires such as the Roman consolidated their lordship through the projection of power using, for that matter, their legions as the main means of warfare. The European kingdoms, heirs of the Roman tradition, resumed this practice and improved it. For example, the Holy Roman Empire, for almost a thousand years managed to influence the political and military scene in medieval and modern Europe.

The Thirty Years' War, which took place between 1618 and 1648, is an example of how a warlike conflict provides elements that allowed the transformation of the nature of war, since in the development of this conflict political, economic, social and religious variables were integrated that, in turn, served to overcome a predominantly military space and move to one where other and diverse characteristics of

European society of the time converged. And this is how we can appreciate, taking up Diamond (2018), that human conflicts have become complex, and that for their understanding a multidisciplinary look is required.

This document aims to demonstrate the contributions generated, from the nature of the war, by the aforementioned conflict, which confronted European States. To achieve this purpose, a look at the aforementioned conflict will be made from the conflict. A) as a *social fact*, where the change that was generated in Europe is evidenced, and which led to the end of the view centered on gods, and gave way to a view that aims to achieve the objectives of the societies that make war. B) as a *war event*, *seeking to identify the causes of the conflict and the contributions that are made* from this field to the nature of war. And finally, C) from the analysis of a case, in which it will be possible to show how a strategic leader contributed to the understanding of some changes in the nature of war from the merely tactical to the strategic.

## The social fact: Europe in the Modern Age

The various changes that were generated in the old continent with the consolidation of the nation states and the overcoming of the medieval order, and that materialized in 1492, with the Discovery of America by the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, led to the birth of Modernity. But this was not uniform: in some regions we can observe that "The endemic fragmentation of central Europe inherited from the Middle Ages and harassment due to the asymmetrical romanization of this region was doomed to break out at some point" (Calvo, 2021, p. 166). This caused tensions that were tried to overcome with the intervention of the old and new political entities that emerged on the continent.

The overcoming of the legacy of the Middle Ages meant a series of changes, which began from the political, when the former feudal lords lost power to the monarchs. An example of this situation occurred in Spain, where Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon integrated different kingdoms and lordships that constituted the peninsula around a common cause and against the Muslim invaders. As Calvo (2021) explains, the war for Spanish unification generated a new form of political system, based on the central power of the monarch and his imposition on the warlords, who had ruled throughout the medieval period. But this phenomenon also occurred in Portugal, France and England, which, in turn, led to the first European nation states. The State, and not the fief, was the space where the social

contract was celebrated that the subjects and the rulers built together to achieve mutual well-being.

One of the great political tensions that arose at the beginning of the seventeenth century was the loss of power of the Holy Roman Empire, which emerged in the tenth century, and which picked up the legacy of the Carolingian Empire and the Western Roman Empire. As a political entity, the Holy Empire went through various changes, ranging from the fall of the feudal order to the emergence of the international system and the nation state. The power of this empire was based on the power that the Catholic Church granted it by being a partner in the divine government on Earth, following the theory of the two swords, as expressed by Dyer (2022). And the loss occurred in the face of the new States emerged by geographical discoveries in America, Africa and Asia, which increased the resources of Spain, Portugal, France and England and made them new actors with power in the old continent.

The new situation generated a series of alliances that aimed to increase the power of each of the actors within the European context. This is how the Spanish Empire, with the coronation of King Charles I of Spain and V of Germany, consolidated for the Habsburg house the control of the Holy Empire and consolidated a political unit that influenced Europe for approximately 200 years. This, in turn, caused tensions; especially with the monarchies of France and England, and these tensions led to support for the Danes, Swedes and Dutch, and even some German principalities, turned against the empire. And most paradoxically, strengthening the Ottoman Turkish Empire, the main threat to the existence of Christian Europe.

Within the social fact, everything related to religion should be highlighted, and that is that the political order since the Ancient Age was defined by religions, in the sense that it was God who was in charge of granting sovereignty to the monarch, who, in turn, being his representative on Earth, contributed to the salvation of his subjects. This idea was perfected by the Catholic Church, and in it she founded her own power, which she imposed once the Western Roman Empire fell and the medieval order emerged. The Catholic popes influenced political decisions throughout the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the Modern Age. The friction between the new European monarchs and the Vatican was reflected in a religious movement that transformed the view of God. And that led to an attempt to blame religious causes for the policies:

Religious passions were real, so wars were fought by governments or churches. Accidentally but inevitably, a unified system of European countries was emerging in which everyone participated in the same game on a continental

scale. A balance of power system in which each increase in strength automatically meant a loss of security for others. (Dyer, 2022, p. 274)

Finally, we find as a social fact everything related to the balance between the interaction that the different States of the time maintained and the existing disputes for power. Three conflicts can be evidenced in this context. A) The tensions between the Habsburg empire in its Spanish branch and in its Austrian branch against the Ottoman Turkish Empire, which since the fifteenth century, after the capture of Constantinople, wanted to expand towards Europe; in the same way, taking what was described by Wilson (2018). B) The second conflict occurred between the Spanish monarchy and the Kingdom of France, increased by the disputes of the closeness between the two and by the tensions in Italy - especially, for the possession of Naples, and in France itself, for the Franche-Comté. And finally, C) The disputes with an England that had intentions of snatching the predominance from Spain as a power, and the constant rebellions in Flanders and the Netherlands, all of which gave rise to the famous black legend in which Spain was branded as a despotic and retardant regime. Finally, the problems that Spain had in preserving the regional balance were reflected in the fact that

The outbreak would soon take place, since the Pax Hispanica had barely managed to contain the latent local, national, and universal quarrels. So much so that in the first fifteen years of the seventeenth century various peace agreements that had been signed precariously were shown for what they were: mere truces or breaks to regain strength and return to the load once prescribed. (Calvo, 2021, p. 166)

## The war event: the Thirty Years' War and its contributions

Among the causes of the conflict that can be considered the first of the wars on a global scale - because it involved not only the European powers, but their colonies throughout the globe - two were already dealt with: political and religious. It is therefore necessary to highlight the economic aspect, linked, in turn, to the great need that these powers had for the new paradigm based on mercantilism, which implied that each of these States depended on their colonies to obtain raw materials and

sell their processed products. In turn, all of them needed to consolidate their own trade routes, which allowed them to reach their nascent economies globally.

It is important to highlight the progress that England had made in terms of control of maritime routes, to the detriment of what was achieved by Spain and Portugal during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. English advances brought considerable losses to the coffers of the Spanish Empire, and forced it to seek other means of connecting with its colonies; especially those of Flanders and the Netherlands. Hence the expression "Poner una pica en Flandes", through the consolidation of the Spanish road. Likewise, it was impossible to underestimate the constant threat of the Turks, since they had blocked normal trade with the East; above all, with China: one of the main customers of the silver that the Spaniards extracted in the new kingdoms in America.

The confluence of political, economic and religious causes led to the emergence in this conflict of *what is posed as the Thucydides trap*. This leads a dominant power to confront an emerging one, which will dispute its power by all means. The above can be conceptually evidenced:

A Harvard University project has enunciated what is called the 'Thucydides Trap', in honor of the author of *History of the Peloponnesian War*. From his famous phrase about how the growing power of Athens and the fear of Sparta led to war, a rule is elaborated that, he says, almost always ends up being fulfilled: when a rising power puts pressure on an established power, there is a good chance that a war will break out. (MacMillan, 2021, p. 853)

In the particular case of study, the aforementioned trap led Europe to a confrontation from which a new world order would emerge, where the emerging powers managed to impose themselves on the traditional ones.

The war developed in several phases. It began as a local revolt within the Holy Roman Empire, and spread to central Europe and its periphery, to become what Calvo (2021) has called the first world conflagration. That first phase, which spanned from 1618 to 1625, took place in Bohemia: A kingdom that had traditionally had disputes with the Habsburg emperor, based in Vienna; and Ferdinand II sent emissaries there, who were thrown out of a window of the royal palace. The so-called Defenestration of Prague was thus constituted, which led to the beginning of the conflict. Immediately, the emperor sought support from his Spanish cousins to help him quell the revolt, which was resolved in 1625, with the victory of the troops of the Holy Roman Empire against the Bohemians and their allies in the German principalities.

The second phase came with the intervention of the Danes, from 1625 to 1629. The Danish monarchy, backing its German Protestant allies, initiated a series of campaigns in order to neutralize the advances of the Habsburgs, and to consolidate a strong geostrategic position on the Baltic littoral. This phase was not very successful, since the imperial troops managed to neutralize the intentions of the Baltic kingdom and put the balance in favor of the empire again.

The third phase was fought from 1630 to 1635. It is a very interesting stage, since Gustav Adolf, King of Sweden, generated a revolution in military affairs by adapting his armies organizationally and allowing, through the unit known as the *brigade*, to gain mobility and maneuver. Similarly, with the technical improvement of weapons and their articulated use, he managed to enhance the combat capacity of his troops. But, finally, none of this materialized in the strategic space, since Gustav Adolf died facing Marshal Albrecht von Wallerstein at the Battle of Lutzen.

Finally, the fourth and last part took place with the intervention of the French monarchy, from 1635 to 1648, and in which the reason of state was imposed on French interests to undermine Spanish power in Europe. This position went against the universality of the Catholic Church and Spain itself, as it increased the individual power of the State against the aspirations of a kingdom of universal salvation proposed by the Pope and his Habsburg allies. We can see it in

France, which is finding its place in Europe through a cynical policy when it finally realized the potential that its great resources offered it. A Spain that showed itself at decisive moments, no matter how many thoughts it was decadent. The increasingly belligerent united provinces of Holland... and England always an enigma for the continental ones. (Calvo, 2021, pp. 167 – 168)

The French achieved their strategic objective and forced both Spain and the Holy Roman Empire to make a peace, formalized in the treaties of Münster and Osnabrück, which are generically known as the Treaties of Westphalia. These treaties constitute a significant contribution of the Thirty Years' War: they were the beginning of the consolidation of the modern nation-state and the classical international system. The States were given a non-confessional character, far from the power of the Vatican in the internal decisions of the States. Such a change would be the germ of the liberal revolutions that began in the United States and continued in France. Likewise, the republic was reborn, which, with the constitutions, led to a new social contract between the rulers and the ruled.



## Gustav Adolf as a leader and his contributions to the nature of war

In the history of strategic thinking and leadership there are characters who have marked a turning point for their ability to manage knowledge in this field of human knowledge. King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden is one of them, because he managed to articulate an effective transformational leadership, which allowed his State to defend its own vital interests by generating a successful articulation between ends, means and ways, and with this, transform the thinking of his time. Gustav Adolf is a paradigm of military leadership, due to his management to transform the strategic conception of his time, by generating new scenarios between the interaction of the leader with his producers of information.

One of the main challenges of a strategist is to harmonize the elements that build any strategy. In this sense, it is important that said leader, according to Freedman (2016), has an accurate situational awareness, so that he can know where he is, where his adversary is and, finally, what his own operational context is, and thus identify the variables that affect him. For this, the leader, in any field of state power, counts on strategy as a tool that articulates ends, means and ways to achieve the ends of society.

In an ideal situation, sufficient means are available, which, effectively managed, give to achieve the ends imposed on organizations. But in the vast majority of opportunities, this ideal scenario is not achieved. Therefore, the strategic leader must overcome this problem by enhancing the ways in which he manages resources. One such mode is reflected in two capabilities. The first of these is the successful management of employees, managing to generate a convergent space, where all wills are founded in pursuit of achieving organizational goals. The second is the successful communication that the strategist must develop with those who provide the necessary knowledge, which, according to Kent (1978), facilitates decision-making at the highest level.

Gustav II Adolf of Sweden embodies, according to Avolio et al. (1999), a leader who, through a leadership that transforms, managed to generate a process where moral and material factors interact that allow his followers to develop a convergence of values and beliefs, which allowed him to become a reference in his time. And which even today has been taken as a model to develop the paradigm of *transformational leadership*.

Landscape and context frame the main characteristics of human beings. In this sense, our character is not detached from these two variables. Gustav Adolf was born in Stockholm, Sweden, on November 16, 1594, as the grandson of Gustav Vasa, founder of the Vasa dynasty, which, in turn, introduced the thought of Luther and Calvin into his kingdom; that is, Protestantism. Similarly, his father, Charles IX of Sweden, was a great defender, along with the German princes, of the protestant faith in the face of attempts by the Holy Roman Empire to crush it. According to Parker (2004), the conflict between Protestants and Catholics would occupy the efforts and resources of the European imperial houses, headed. On the Catholic side, by the Habsburgs, and on the Protestant group, by the German princes, the English monarch, the monarchs of Sweden and Denmark and, finally, by the powerful Bourbon house, in France. This context became an important factor in Gustav Adolf's thinking.

On the other hand, we find the *landscape*, understood as this term, from geopolitics, as the influence that geographical factors play in the definition of personality characteristics. And it is important to highlight that the Kingdom of Sweden occupies an important territory within the Baltic States, which instills in it a maritime conception that gives advantages for commercial development and prosperity, and which, in turn, are reflected in the ability to concentrate resources for its defense. On the other hand, it is important to note that its Scandinavian character is also a determining factor in the formation of the Swedish landscape. This is reflected, according to Rodríguez (2007), in the difference between the Viking worldview and the thinking of the other European kingdoms of his time, from whose main branch the Nordic perspective departs, with a particular way of conceiving politics and religion.

According to Rodríguez (2007), for the Scandinavians –and among them, the Swedes– there is a causal connection between political conception and faith, and related to the fact that the territories that today comprise Norway, Finland and Sweden, not being under the influence of the Roman Empire or the later Carolingian Empire, developed a political ethics based on the freedom to choose their rulers and autonomously determine what their conception of sovereignty is.

For much of Sweden's history, its rulers were elected according to Nordic traditions, by decision of a council of nobles and with the approval of the people. On many occasions, these leaderships were due to the capacity that the rulers had to inspire, according to Bass (1985), beliefs, values and principles that motivated

society to overcome obstacles and to a greater performance in the achievement of strategic ends as a society.

Taking Weber (2006) as a reference, in the religious aspect, the Protestant ethic, influenced by the thoughts of Calvin and Luther, infused the kingdoms that embraced this faith with a different way of building their political spirit. A social commercial form, since in it a church was not needed to consolidate the relationship with the Creator. Consequently, the intermediation to achieve salvation was an undertaking of a personal nature. According to Keagan (2015), this religious conception instilled in the leaders an anthropocentric vision that requires the leader to concentrate efforts on generating a charisma that manages to instill respect and makes the social goals shared by the group, including heroic leadership. The transformational leadership proposed by Avolio et al. (1999).

There is a factor that in Gustav II Adolf of Sweden is observable, and that comes from Weber's postulates against the Lutheran conception of the profession:

It is evident that in the German word 'profession' (*Befuf*), as perhaps even more clearly in the English *calling*, there is at least a religious reminiscence: the idea of a mission imposed by God. This religious sense of the word is revealed in all its clarity in every context in which it is taken in the fullness of its meaning. (Weber, 2006, p. 69)

It can be said that the strategic leader studied incorporates, due to his Protestant faith, a series of values related to a divine destination, which seeks to become a fundamental axis of the transformations introduced in his kingdom. It is also important to highlight the importance of values in transformational leadership, since, according to Bass (1985), they focus on the actions that the leader must exercise in his organization, and which seek to be the beacon that guides the entire process. For clarity on values, we can note that:

The values of a company or organization are the set of beliefs, principles, and higher rules with which it operates internally. They become the institutional philosophy and are the support of the organization's culture. Its definition establishes the frame of reference that inspires and regulates its life.

The values thus become specific to each company and correspond to its organizational culture, its competitive characteristics, the conditions of the environment and the expectations of its stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, managers and employees, or their equivalents in the military world. (Aznar, 2018, p. 142)

Gustav II Adolf of Sweden managed to consolidate a transformational leadership, according to Aznar (2018), influencing his followers by generating a convergence in the mission, vision and values that made up his strategy, to adapt to the context and landscape that were lived in Europe at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century. In this case, Gustav Adolf managed to instill his own principles linked to his Protestant ethic in the culture of his society, and at the same time, in the States that accompanied him in his great strategic campaign developed during the Swedish phase of the Thirty Years' War. Next, we will delve into the contributions that were developed at that time in the field of strategy, and how they continue to exert influence today.

## Main elements of the strategic thinking of Gustav II Adolf of Sweden

The historical context is very important to determine the elements of the strategy developed by a leader at a certain stage of history. In the case under study, in Europe, the consolidation of Modernity marked a political, social, cultural, and economic scenario, based mainly on the rupture of the old order, dominated by a theocentric vision. And where religion was the main variable to explain all phenomena, towards a new order, where it is the individual and his self-determination that found the principle of modern liberal sovereignty.

This was the scenario in which Gustav II Adolf of Sweden gave his contributions to modern strategic thinking, by articulating the ends of his society with the means and the ways his kingdom had to achieve them. And one conflict in particular allowed these contributions to be made in the rest of the seventeenth-century European terrain. The Thirty Years' War; specifically, the Swedish phase of that conflict, which occurred between 1630 and 1635. It is important to state the reasons why this kingdom joined the conflict: according to Parker (2004), both the Holy Roman Empire, the great heir of the Roman Empire, and the Carolingian Empire had always exercised power over the Baltic kingdoms, seeking through their influence to consolidate the hegemony of the Habsburg house in Europe. Curbing such interference would be the main goal of the Swedish strategy.

According to a certain geopolitical principle, the proximity of one State against another increases the risk of an invasion materializing, in the midst of the attempt at political and economic domination by the stronger against the weaker. And this was precisely what happened in 1630, given the intention of the Holy Roman Empire

to increase its control over Prussia, which (Wilson, 2018) put it on a collision course with Sweden, since the former sought to increase its influence over the Baltic Sea. Similarly, Emperor Ferdinand II intended to ignore the Treaty of Augsburg, of 1555, whereby Emperor Charles V granted the kingdoms the freedom to choose religion according to the faith of their ruler, thus seeking to overcome the political problems generated by the Reformation. This imperial position posed a threat to Swedish political stability, based on its Protestant faith. Defending his political independence from the emperor, and his religious freedom from the pope, became the end of the strategy developed by Gustav Adolf, and the fundamental axis of his transformations.

We can affirm that the means that Sweden had at the beginning of the conflict were represented in the capacity that it had developed in the commercial aspect (Wilson, 2018), to consolidate a network of transactions in the Baltic, which allowed it to consolidate a military power, represented in an army that, in turn, enhanced its operations with the support of a navy that extended its supply lines from its own territory to that of the imperial enemy. This can be seen in

The basis of Gustav Adolf's underlying success lay in his understanding of administration and organization, Sweden could not afford a mercenary army large enough to contend with the combined armies of its enemies, and therefore Gustav introduced a recruitment system, eventually creating the first national army recruited, paid for, fed and equipped by the state. (Montgomery, 1969, p. 266)

Following his strategy, the Scandinavian sovereign optimized the human and material resources he had at the time (Montgomery, 1969) taking as a model the changes developed by Mauricio de Nassau in his war against the Spaniards. In addition, he restructured his infantry from the traditional model, of the Spanish third, to a much more flexible and more mobile unit. It is important to note that within the means used by Gustav Adolf, importance was given to the use of weapons, by generating, first, changes in their technical characteristics that were reflected in their tactical use, as they led to the convergence between infantry, artillery, engineers, and logistics.

Another component of the strategy to which the Swedish king gave more importance were the ways in which he managed knowledge to integrate the ever-increasing ends with the sometimes scarce means in his kingdom. As a first step, it incorporated the spirit of the Renaissance, evidenced in that

In fact, Gustav Adolf was the first great soldier to approach the art of war with the mental attitude of the Renaissance. His ideas regarding organization and tactics were original and brilliant; in addition, he was energetic and efficient in applying them. (Montgomery, 1969, p. 265)

In the formation of the Swedish army, and mutating to the model of the national army, it became essential that the training of both officers and non-commissioned officers and soldiers became a factor generating combat power. In this sense, tasks were developed (Montgomery, 1969) aimed at strengthening this aspect; discipline was the fundamental axis on which these changes were consolidated. According to Aznar (2018), implementing military instruction made the transformational values that Gustav Adolf established radiate to each of his men, and that they were an important factor of cohesion in war, campaigns, and battle, which thus influenced from the strategic to the tactical.

The articulation of his strategic vision, reflected in the convergence of ends, means and ways to achieve the interest of his kingdom, was complemented by knowledge management. It allowed him, as we will see in the next section, to build a solid relationship between those who produced knowledge and those who used it to make strategic decisions.

## Relationship between the strategic decision maker and the knowledge provider

The strategic leader (from now on, *user*) must develop a synergistic relationship with the people and organizations that provide him with knowledge (from now on, *producers*), and even more, in a transformational leadership model, where, according to Aznar (2018), it is necessary to develop a situational awareness that allows them to interpret the moment lived like this:

The great military leaders have been sublime interpreters of the lived moment and through that interpretation they have achieved victory (not necessarily peace, which belongs to politics). There are many examples: Alexander, Hamilcar Barca, Hannibal, Hasdrubal, Caesar, Napoleon, Grant, Patton, Eisenhower... All of them were able to understand the situation faster than their rivals, draw conclusions and apply them before them, demonstrating at the same time sensitivity, practical intelligence and resolution. Each strategic moment may require its leader, understood as a person with a set of qualities especially suitable for it. (Aznar, 2018, p. 263)

Likewise, the user must generate a structure in which the means and modes that configure the producers of knowledge that support their strategic decisions can be articulated. Throughout the history of humanity (Navarro, 2009), a fundamental character has been generated for this work: the *spy*, who develops his activity in secret, behind the lines of the enemy, observing armies and cities, seeking to find secrets that give his user an advantage. One of the principles on which this relationship is based is trust, which allows the user to be sure that the information provided serves their own interests, and that the person who provided it does not betray the trust placed in them.

Similarly, it is important for the user to clearly understand their vision in the face of the goals they perceive; this is achieved, according to Aznar (2018), with assertive communication, where symbols, languages and strategic culture are understood by the parties involved in the process. In the case of Gustav Adolf, this was fully achieved by instilling a deep understanding of his intentions among the producers.

An example of such synergistic interaction, based on trust and understanding, occurred during the battle of Lützen, on November 16, 1632, when the Swedish army, under the command of Gustav Adolf, and the army of the Empire, under the command of Albrecht von Wallerstein, clashed. The exact knowledge provided by the Swedish knowledge producers allowed the strategic decisions of the Scandinavian side to be developed under the deep knowledge of the enemy, of time and terrain, which allowed, according to Jorgensen (2007), that the Swedes maneuvered correctly, that they managed to wear down the imperial troops and foresee each of the maneuvers developed by them during the contest. The result, at the tactical level, was the defeat of the troops of the Holy Roman Empire; and although in the midst of the fighting the Nordic king was killed, the strategic implications, according to Jorgensen (2007), included that the intentions of the Habsburgs to cement their dominance in Germany were stopped.

Gustav Adolf, ahead of his time, was able to understand the problems enunciated by Kent (1978), in the face of the interaction between user and intelligence producer, and thus managed to guide and assertively guide his subordinates at all levels, understandable the ends that guided his own strategy. In the same way and taking what was expressed by Keagan (2004), the external variables that affected decision-making by the Scandinavian sovereign became understandable. And finally, returning to Kent (1978), through the instruction given at all levels of the Swedish military apparatus, various sources could be concentrated and, in this way, overcome the predisposition to believe that there is a single source of information for decision-making.

## To conclude

As a final reflection, it can be evidenced that the Thirty Years' War, as a warlike conflict, generated a series of changes that can be reflected in political, economic, and social aspects. Leading to a transition point that brought Europe, fully, to Modernity, with the consolidation of the current nation state, and with the beginning of the classical international system, fundamental pillars of political Modernity, and which still has repercussions on a global scale today. As a consequence of this, there was also evidence of leadership that contributed to the permanent construction of the nature of war.

It should be noted how the transformational leadership exercised by King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden managed to stimulate, at all levels of state decisions. A relation that is reflected in the creation of common values, behaviors, culture and beliefs, which allowed him to achieve the purposes of his strategy. That in fact was to preserve the independence of his country against the threat of the Holy Roman Empire, and to consolidate the position of the States of the Protestant side, which would lead to the Peace of Westphalia, which put an end to the political-religious disputes caused in Europe by the Thirty Years' War.

In the same way, the articulation of ends, means and ways achieved by Gustav Adolf transformed the vision of medieval strategy, and gave way to Modernity, which is evidenced in the profound revolution in military affairs that has since managed to articulate national armies and the objective of achieving the reason of state, and with it, the beginning of the concept of the *modern nation-state*. The contributions to strategic thinking introduced by Gustav Adolf are still studied in the different academies on a global scale.

Finally, regarding the phenomenon of the interaction of users and producers of intelligence, it was possible to show that the Swedish king was ahead of his time, managing to settle the problems evidenced by Kent (1978). Thereby ensuring that decision-making was based on knowledge management, understanding contexts. Identifying the problems that affect the achievement of strategic ends. Seeking solutions that articulate resources and knowledge. And, finally, transferring the teaching received by learning from what has been learned and learning to unlearn.



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