

SPANISH MILITARY EDUCATION – ARMY OFFICER BASE LINE

HISZPAŃSKA EDUKACJA WOJSKOWA – JAKO FUNDAMENT EDUKACJI OFICERÓW

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Abstract. Spain is having new winds of changes in the field of education and consequently the army is not an exception in the way this institution is adapting new teaching-learning bases. Although the 21st century is bearing to new models and procedures in pedagogy we cannot lose the track and forget how cadets are taught and how cadets are learning, and less now in this new biological atmosphere. The aim of this article is to provide an analysis of Spanish military education and overview its evolution.

Abstrakt. Hiszpania przechodzi nową ewolucję w dziedzinie edukacji, a w konsekwencji edukacja wojskowa nie jest wyjątkiem w sposobie, w jaki ta instytucja dostosowuje nowe bazy nauczania i uczenia się. Choć XXI wiek ma wpływ na nowe modele i procedury w edukacji wojskowej, nie możemy jednak zapomnieć tradycyjnego nauczania kadetów, ukazując ich obecny stan, który również dotyczy obecnej sytuacji pandemicznej. Ten artykuł zawiera analizę hiszpańskiej edukacji wojskowej i przekrojowo przedstawia jej dostosowywanie się do nowej rzeczywistości..

Keywords: Spain, education, military education, security.

Słowa kluczowe: Hiszpania, edukacja, edukacja wojskowa, bezpieczeństwo.

Introduction

COVID-19 has changed our view of the world and will bring quite a few changes to our Western countries. One of the most whole meaning for the survival of our society is education and it is changing dramatically. New ways of teaching-learning processes are on screen. There will be no progress if knowledge is not transferred generation after generation accordingly.

To analyze these ideas, let's constraint the analysis from the Cold War to today's world, the one we share with our close friends and allies.

By the end of the Cold War, Spain had already started the changes to become an avant-garde society since its Constitution was approved in 1978; however, a long and winding road to democracy was in the horizon but with the hopeful sign that

a great nation was building its future. The organization of the country into autonomies was the new challenge to cope with domestic matters and the integration within the international organizations, such as NATO or the European Union (EU), required more international diplomacy. Thanks to the leadership of the Head of the State, His Majesty King Juan Carlos I and then, under his heir King Felipe VI, the country has been led into what it is today, a modern country.

Even before foreseeing the end of the Cold War, Spain headed the changes to come in all aspects of society. This specific background may not look important considering the framework, but it is strongly needed to understand what Spain was since the beginning of the 20th century to what it is today.

Some decades before the uprising problems that brought the World Wars (WWs), Spain was embedded in its inner problems: how to retain the last territories of the former empire and how to cope with its internal disputes. Spain was voluntarily setting out its international influence and leaving apart the rest of Europe. In between WWs, Spain hosted a 3-year civil war whose end upraised a new non-democratic political period in a regime that, after WWII, was understood as a threat from the other side of the Pyrenees. As a consequence, Europe considered the Spanish isolation as the best solution to fight against fascism.

By the birth of the UN, Spain suffered from a kind of political and economic alienation. That meant that the start point in the country recovery was different from the other European nations. It was in 1953, when the US President Dwight D. Eisenhower noticed the importance of bringing Spain into the Western bloc in spite of its European allies' resistance. The US broke the isolation of Spain by supporting its armed forces in bilateral relation: the US democratic regime shook hands with the Spanish non-democratic system.

It was then when the Western alliance realized about the fact that a bigger threat than 'fascism' was arising: the 'communism'. With a low pace, the Spanish political context was not perceived by Europe so harmful. Spain was not a NATO member yet, but it was starting to be seen as a strategic enclave on the Western defense background. Thus, the Spanish (SP) air force shared some of its installations and procedures with the US air force in *Zaragoza*, *Torrejón*¹, and in *Morón de la Frontera*. The SP Navy started to have a close brotherhood with the US navy in *Rota*, up-today. Several US command, control and communications systems were spread deployed in the Spanish geography. The army was not so far behind, and equipment and procedures already received from the US allowed the growth of the Spanish capabilities.

By the end of 1975, democracy slowly but surely set off in Spain. The political background was changing very fast, and the armed forces couldn't stay behind. However, although the Spanish Constitution was approved in 1978 by almost

¹ Until 1992.

ninety percent of the population via referendum², the Spanish armed forces were still seen as part of the previous regime. Fortunately, the armed forces understood the message the new society demanded and today, they are a reference from which the society has a high opinion.

Two single events help to change politicians and society minds and realize that the armed forces were reliable: the *coup d'état*, where the armed forces stay loyal to the democratic regime, and also the response against terrorist groups who have assassinated hundreds of people.

The role of King Juan Carlos I was also vital for the population. They saw that although he had been fully trained in the old regime, including the Service Academies, he was also the person who had put the democracy and the armed forces in the hands of society. If the previous values were ever considered a threat, now they were thought to be a vantage point to support the new democracy. The civil and political rights were being quickly achieved and, for the first time in years, Spain was looking out of its boundaries with a clear intent to be integrated in Europe and in the world as a key player. So, in the 80's Spain entered NATO³, and what it is understood as the European Union⁴ today. By the year the Berlin Wall fell down, the armed forces had already started their full updating. The territorial defense structure was converted into the one that had to defend the rear area of NATO in the Cold War. However, Spain needed more efficient and prepared members to be capable of handling high technology systems. In a deep process of reorganization, the armed forces started introducing female (Law 17/1989) members even as first line⁵; professional soldiers were filling the vacuum of the conscription lists; and, new and modern equipment as well as cutting edge weapon systems completed its frame. The armed forces had to reach the same capabilities as their EU and NATO partners, and so the officers were asked to have tactical skills and also a solid background in many different types of conflicts as well.

² http://www.congreso.es/consti/elecciones/referendos/ref_consti.htm (read on 15 Jan, 2019).

³ Referendum 12 March, 1986, <http://www.exteriores.gob.es/RepresentacionesPermanentes/OTAN/es/quees2/Paginas/Espa%C3%B1aOTAN.aspx> (read on 12 Nov, 2018).

⁴ 12 Jun, 1985. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/spain/es/sala_de_prensa/communicados_de_prensa/pr-2015/pr-2015-junio/30a.html (read on 12 Nov, 2018).

⁵ Caballud Hernando, M. B. *Culture of defence. Contribution of military women in the Spanish armed forces to defence and security*. Member of the Military Observatory for Equality of the Ministry of Defense, Spain. Women's contribution to national defense and security has become established as a matter of law, effectiveness, efficiency and operability, benefiting the security of all. Twenty-five years have passed since the Armed Forces opened their doors to women (since 1988). The regulatory process has been gradual and late compared to neighboring countries, but has evolved rapidly. Today, Spanish military women can access any existing professional destination in the Armed Forces. However, there is still a long way to go to achieve effective equality between women and men in the Armed Forces. <http://arbor.revistas.csic.es/index.php/arbor/article/view/1901/2119> (read on 15 Jan, 2019).

Getting in the 90's, Spain was able to host meetings bringing together European, Latin American, Arab or North American Allies to discuss their problems. An outstanding example is the Israel-Palestine peace talks started in Madrid in 1991. Facts like the Olympic Games taking place in Barcelona being Prince Felipe, the heir of the crown, the Captain and Flag bearer of the Spanish delegation or the Universal Exposition in Seville introduced a new and modern Spain into the world. Step by step the authorities fed the idea that troops should be prepared to act in international missions; they were sent to intervene in several demanding scenarios such as the Balkans' conflicts or after the first Gulf War to relieve the humanitarian crisis in the north of Iraq. Spain contributed once more to the UN as a two-year Security Council Elected Member since 1 Jan, 2015⁶. For more than twenty years, Spain has been operating in Antarctic campaigns of investigation; and more recently, Spain has been appointed to host the EU's Operational HQ for Atalanta. Thus, we can say very proudly that being involved within NATO and the EU, Spain has gained experience, acquired high readiness, obtained the appropriate grade of disposal and laid out a great reaction capacity.

The 9/11, 2001 attacks struck on all NATO and EU members, and introduced new threats and risks to the Western countries. It was also a new challenge for the Spanish armed forces. Right after the Al Qaeda attacks, Spain decided to join the international coalition against the Taliban and, before the end of that year, the first troops were sent to Kabul and Bagram.

Troops sent to Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Mali, Central Africa, Somalia, and many other places have proven the efficiency and values of the Spanish armed forces model. If the terrorist attack in Madrid in 2004 was assumed by part of the population as a consequence of the international military actions, those happening in Barcelona in 2017 were not understood as tied to any of those deployments, they were only tied to the Global War on Terrorism. As an outcome we can assess that the population is more concerned about the risks coming from outside and the need of an efficient and capable armed forces.

Felipe VI de Borbón y de Grecia was enthroned on 19 June 2014 upon the abdication of his father, King Juan Carlos I⁷. The handover in the Head of the State Office is understood by some analysts as a key event in Spain. King Felipe VI is, according to the Constitution⁸:

“(...) the Head of State, the symbol of its unity and permanence. He arbitrates and moderates the regular functioning of the institutions, assumes the highest representation of the Spanish State in international relations, especially with the nations of its historical community, and exercises the functions expressly conferred on him by the Constitution and the laws”

⁶ http://www.defensa.gob.es/misiones/en_exterior/ (read on 15 Jan, 2019).

⁷ “Felipe takes over as king of Spain”, BBC News, 18 June 2014, London.

⁸ Title II, Article 56, Subsection 1.

King Felipe VI is also the Commander-in-chief of the Spanish Armed Forces and actively takes part in a high number of military exercises. Also, he is recognized as a corner stone and role model at all ranks.

Winding back, it can be asserted that the education of Felipe as a Prince was painstaking. The military plan was filigree up to the last detail attending an academic year per Service Academy. He was able to overcome the difficulties in the military through strong effort in the army, crossing the seas in the ‘Juan Sebastian de Elcano’⁹, and becoming an excellent pilot in the air force. Not only is he respected for his position but also for being another member of the armed forces. He attended high school at Lakefield College School in Ontario; studied Law at the *Universidad Autónoma* de Madrid and obtained a Master of Science in Foreign Service at Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University (Schumacher 1986).

King Felipe VI wants a renewal Monarchy for the twenty-first century. In the ticking away of time, Felipe has gained the Spaniards’ confidence and he is today a high status reference both in national and international affairs. Thus, the Monarchy is respected and valued¹⁰ and from an institutional point of view, the officership and brand new strategic lieutenants have a clear-cut reference in King Felipe VI.

King Felipe VI followed a tight military program starting at the *Academia General Militar* (AGM)¹¹. The Academy has evolved from the previous military schools and colleges of the Spanish Empire. The evolution of the consecutive syllabuses has come with the hand of several regulations. To mention some: The education and training from the previous officers and the experience from 92 plan graduates were little by little adapting the model to the real threats that reached Law 39/2007, about the Military Career that was decisive to be fully integrated into the Bologna Process. The Cadets would acquire a university degree for officers; upper grade of vocational training for NCOs and grade of vocational training for enlisted personnel.

With these premises, we would like to hammer out in the following lines the necessary concepts, attitudes and procedures that are going to boost the appropriate trail-blazing system (BOD 2016) to educate the Spanish lieutenant strategic mindset to facilitate more comparable, compatible and coherent systems (Declaration 2010).

⁹ Spanish training vessel.

¹⁰ From SocioMétrica for EL ESPAÑOL. The Monarchy, the Guardia Civil, the Police, and the Armed Forces are the first institutions on the hit parade of the Spanish society. https://www.elespanol.com/espana/politica/20180103/policia-ejercito-monarquia-instituciones-valoradas-partidos-congreso/274223162_0.html (read on 14 Oct, 2018).

¹¹ BOD nº 29, 12 Feb, 2015, Order DEF/166/2015, by which the basic organization of the Armed Forces is developed. BOD nº 127, 2 Jul, 2015, Order DEF/1265/2015, by which the basic organization of the Army is developed. BOD nº 13, 21 Jan, 2016, Instruction 7/2016, by which the organization of the Army is developed. The AGM’s educational chain of command is the Directorate of Education, Training, Drilling and Assessment (DIREN) depending on the Training and Indoctrination Command (MADOC).

The Bologna process is tied down within NATO. The Spanish National Defense Directive points out that Spain must have good and reliable allies, and must also behave as a loyal and supportive actor within the collective security environment (BOE 2005). For those reasons, it can be said that one of the main Spanish objectives with our allies is to promote the multinational officer-cadets' education and training, by improving cooperative exchanging programs, sharing knowledge, and debating opinions with regard to military academic development, also in values. Spain has strong relationships with several other academies around the world.

The AGM's most important final objective is to have its teachers' cadre 'fit to fight' to manage his or her teaching-learning process to conduct the officer-cadets to good term. This reference will give the clues to develop the teachers' teaching process strategy (Saiz, Gordo 2001, 2003) and the officer-cadets' learning process tactics (Skehan 1998). Both processes will be personalized, which means that the teachers will carry out teacher and tutor competences so that the officer-cadets will receive top-notch didactic renewal to map out their own part in the tuition realm.

It is widely consensual in present armies that we are currently living times of great change. The onus is now on developing what is termed the collaboration of armed forces whose missions are in complex unlike scenarios, both domestic and international or military and social.

These ideas will be framed into four sections. The first one to be fleshed out is entitled: "Lay out training demands to foreseen and unexpected defense and security threats". The defense and security concepts have been enduring bottomless changes since the Iron Wall was broken down: political, technological, media, social, economic, military and ideological changes have been fold out. Therefore, it is compulsory to circumscribe the defense, and the security concepts worldwide due to the never-ending proliferation and spread of unbounded threats. This menace has a couple of strong points: an easy access to information technology and an awe-inspiring communications development.

It is vital to understand that, opposite to apparent decadent societies, a greater capacity to cope with the problems should be there inside the strategic lieutenant trying to give sense the chaotic emerging conflicts. Education must facilitate the anticipation, flexibility and agility to solve a conflict; also, how to face it and solve it with the appropriate training, or being so open-minded and instructed to overcome it¹² as if a new unforeseen threat were around.

"No matter how clearly one thinks, it is impossible to anticipate precisely the character of future conflict. The key is not to be so far off the mark that it becomes impossible to adjust once that character is revealed" (Howard 2010). David Warlick, a civilian

¹² The officer-cadets receive information and knowledge about: a. the DDN: Directive of the National Defense; b. DPD: Directive of the Politics for Defense; c. CEFAS: Concept of Employment of the Armed Forces; d. DPM: Directive of Military Planning; e. POCAM: Proposal Objective for Military Capacities; and f. OCM: Objective Military Capacities.

educationalist boosted: “For the first time we are preparing students for a future we cannot clearly describe.” (Pace 2009) It implies that neither in the military nor in the civilian fields accurate approaches in education will never be nearby; and more important, real life is faster in changes and more unpredictable than the, let’s say, most planned events. An important factor in today’s combat is ‘Surprise’; i.e.: non-weapon objects that can be used as weapons. No extra explanations or examples are needed if recalling the 9/11.

In this very first conclusion, we know where we are (in the middle of a great variety of conflicts, some known some unpredicted) and where to go according to our first premise. It is not much but it is all. Thanks God, strong pillars and references can be built to train our strategic lieutenants. Now, every country’s armed forces have to handle the situation by ‘plucking the daisy’.

The technological process adds uncertainty to a future operational environment and matches the capacity of our foe due to they have access to the same type of technology. Our alleged technological advantage, opposite to the one of our adversary opponent, can disappear at any moment, so innovation is what we have ready to keep up our privilege position. This atmosphere will grow multi-polarity and dispute in getting the power. It is clear that those who want to hammer the societies will surely use surprise where no antidote can be available. That means that it is essential to have on the one hand, a ‘Smart defense’: it is a concept that encourages Allies to cooperate in developing, acquiring and maintaining military capabilities to meet current security problems in accordance with the current NATO strategic concept. Therefore, this type of defense means pooling and sharing capabilities, setting priorities and better coordination¹³. The army readiness has to evolve according to the rhythm of the events and try to foresee the probable future by applying a continuous prospective process of analysis and research to be able to give the right response to our troops and units’ organization, doctrine, and training.

At the Military Academies, new risks and new players are in deep study. With expertly guide, the officer-cadets are trained from more controlled to freer activities, fostering a direct link between the four wall learning to what goes on beyond its confines: Cyber threats or energy vulnerability are some of the taught fields. To this regard, the former Spanish Minister of Defense said at the closing ceremony of the *III Jornadas de Ciberdefensa*¹⁴: “The Cyber-Defense has to be present in every military planning process”. Besides, the constant growth of terrorism in all its greatest harshness due to political or religious causes is not only limited to the various military-political separatist groups or Islamic factions, but also highlighted by the deadly *lone wolves*. The enemy cohorts have a magnificent impact of their actions meanwhile the difficulty of facing such perils is growing exponentially.

¹³ NATO web page, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/topics/en/smart-defence.htm> (read on 4 Dec, 2018).

¹⁴ 24 May, 2018.

These constant emerging threats, who make extensive use of the *global commons*, are exploiting the initiative that oblige us to barter newer and newer conflicts and risks which cannot be foreseen and overcome with our national armed forces in sole actions. *Ergo*, the collaboration with the domestic forces is vital as well as the cooperation integrated in international organizations such as the United Nations, the NATO or the European Union or with other armies in bilateral agreements, security and defense organizations in *comprehensive approach*. To accomplish the mission it is vital our strategic lieutenants can have a full view about *Global Strategic Trends, Future Operational Environments and Scenarios*, and a clear *Concept of Employment of Combined Joint Forces*.

The second area is entitled: "Comprehensive education". The scientific, technical, humanistic, and physical education provide the needed integration and synergy to have a whole-meaning officer. The students, who join the army thanks to their marks obtained in the national education general system and an exam to access the Academy, run five years of university and military education to reach the degree. The University Center for Defense (CUD) is an institution that belongs to the Minister of Defense but operates under the standards of the University of Zaragoza through institutional agreements. To reach this milestone, the corresponding study plan has been written and adapted to the last trends in tuition compatible to cope with today's tech threats. It grants a personalized of every officer-cadet's cognition, analysis and synthesis capacities within an appropriate taxonomy. Across five years of college education, the officer-cadets will simultaneously get their degree and military skills¹⁵. The brand new strategic lieutenants, will be supported by the last academic word coming from the university, and the army has the resort of being totally updated with the information and material coming from the university.

Internal Promotion has been boosted to enable Non-Commissioned Officers and enlisted personnel, with or without a university degree, to have the chance of becoming an officer.

Society demands a new way to perceive the troops, so the officers' training has to act accordingly. The teaching system quality provides the bases set up at the Bologna Plan taking into account that competences will be evaluated and accredited by the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA). Vocation is a key element, and the new lieutenants will have to assume a lifelong¹⁶ leadership with the necessary professional competence to cope with the ordered missions.

The AGM also has the Cervantes Chair whose responsibility is cultural and academic. Within its frame, there are twelve top-lectures throughout the academic year. It also organizes the International Course for Defense in *Jaca* (Huesca), at

¹⁵ The Guardia Civil officer-cadets follow a two-year program at the AGM and a three-year program at the Guardia Civil Academy.

¹⁶ There is not a formal retirement system in the Spanish army.

which expert personalities in different areas lecture the audience. The Cervantes Chair is involved in the AGM publications such as the *Armas y Cuerpos* magazine and its monthly supplement where all interesting pieces of news are written mainly in Spanish, but includes some articles in English and occasionally in French. Finally, it is responsible for organizing the election of the *Caballero Cadete Honorífico* or *Dama Cadete Honorífica* (Honorary Knight/Lady) who is a person that selflessly has contributed with the AGM interests. The Academy is proud of them because they are the herald of the Academy away its borders. The AGM awards the best doctoral thesis that is of great interest for the Defense and to the best student records from the different faculties of the University of Zaragoza. In addition, the AGM's officer-cadet, also receive awards from several institutions national and abroad.

The third area is "Values, leadership, and gender perspective". These values are concepts considered as the 'ideal way to behave'. Not only have they belonged to the nation, but to the supra-organizations. In short, training and practicing in values is vital for the important role the AGM has to commission future officers in close connection with the values of those friendly foreign lieutenants.

Several aspects were selected to achieve this goal: the values of the Spanish society; values enshrined in the Spanish Constitution; the precepts gathered in the *Land Forces Doctrine*; those military values shown up in the Royal Ordinances; ethical principles, and the behavioral rules shown in the Cadet Honor Code; songs, traditions, etc. Three main values have been identified: Patriotism, Honor and Exemplariness.

In March 2011, a working group of Leadership experts¹⁷, was created to identify the most appropriate synergy between leadership and values required to future officers, define them and implement lines of action to achieve them.

The current curricula carried out offers the opportunity to procure the competences, skills and the know-how needed in their future roles as leaders. However, the 'military values and leadership acquisition' is based on role modeling.

A Leadership Plan has been designed to be involved across every activity in the AGM. It helps the officer-cadets to internalize, mature and put into action the proposed military values. The lines of action are as follows:

- *Training Military Values*, to assume the military profession.
- *The Plan for Instructors* that is based on 2nd lieutenant officer-cadets¹⁸.
- *The Tutorial Action Plan* between the CUD and the AGM cadres. The Department of Educational Guidance is a back seat driver.
- *The Reading Plan* is a military cultural education program.

¹⁷ Including foreign institutions as West Point, Harvard, Sandhurst Military Academy, Sant Cyr, and other Spanish Universities.

¹⁸ Rank they host from the third year at the academy.

- *The Academic Páter/Máter Program*. A senior officer-cadet whose mission is to be the closet support and guidance to his or her *filio/a* member in the first year.
- *Team sports* a natural way to develop leadership in competition.

Generally speaking, drill-practice goes down as follows: Military training and instruction of 4th year officer-cadets; Barrack's duties; Security guard duties; Platoon and squad leader readiness and the Call-to-arms plan; Unit leaders on Flag-raising formations, etc. To complete this section, The Working Group for Gender Perspective (WGGP) set off¹⁹ under the AGM Commandant's order and within the frame of the Military Observatory for the equity in the Armed Forces. This group is to foster activities²⁰ to make officer-cadets be aware of the different aspects about gender perspective.

The fourth area corresponds to "New technologies". The advantages of thumb drive in every day's life are unquestionable. So these technologies and their pedagogical models have been assumed in teaching. The AGM uses the different simulators not only into the tactical level, but also to face complex scenarios were more than just the combat skills are relevant.

Face-to-face teaching its complemented with a Learning Management System (LMS) that permits them to communicate with their professors following the pedagogical philosophies *Just-in-time* and *Just-for-me* (Traxler 2009).

These four points will cover the most important aspects in our officer-cadets' training. The foundations to get the best strategic lieutenant are in the above lines.

- There are some positive hypothetical milestones to know that the training of our strategic would-be lieutenants is the most appropriate in the fields²¹ of Defense, Security, Peace, Disasters and Tuition²². The educational system is in the process of being fully assessed and some solid data can be highlighted right now to show us the route. On the one hand, it is remarkable that there

¹⁹ 27 Feb, 2017.

²⁰ Some actions have been taken to reach these objectives. Firstly, several lectures have been given to either commanders or fifth year officer-cadets; secondly, the WGGP has presented two comunicués in the seminars "Woman, Peace and Security at the Navy College in the United States in 2017," and "UN resolution 1325 at the AGM" in 2018; thirdly, several military teachers have attended the "Gender Adviser Course in the Armed Forces" in the Training and Indoctrination Command (MADOC); fourthly, some lectures about the topic have been included in the annual cycle of conferences "Miguel de Cervantes Chair" at the AGM; fifthly, some articles have been written in different media being the most relevant the ones in *Revista de Defensa and Ejército review*. Finally, to say that the WGGP members are attending the International Course "A Comprehensive Approach to Gender in Operations" devoted to middle management civilian and military professionals.

²¹ Both NATO Doctrine and the Spanish Doctrine (PD-001) take into account offensive, defensive, stabilization and support to civil authorities operations.

²² The Assessment Section (NEVEN) of DIEN is responsible for the educational system assessment. The objective lies on the operational syllabuses and not on the officers' learning capacity.

has not been a disruption with regard to the old system. The brand new lieutenants are in complete synergy with those who belong to the previous classes and who followed the preceding training system, which was proved to create a strategic understanding of the world and a broader mindset than just the Iberian Peninsula. To understand it, they can be compared, metaphorically speaking, with the traditional ‘Long Gray Line’ of West Point. Throughout the years, there have been different syllabuses embedded in the same spirit and principles to have the best officers graduating for the army, the armed forces, and the society they serve. On the other hand, some drawbacks have been detected in the final product and minor changes are in evolution within the current syllabus.

- There is also a deep thought about when the educational system efficiency will be determined; it will not be hundred percent reliable until today’s strategic lieutenants become field officers and are posted to train the new classes. It can be added that the Spanish Personnel Directorate has changed the rules to evaluate the officers in order to be promoted to the extent that favors, even more, the education in other realms. That implies a better understanding of the strategic interconnections between the different fields; i.e.: to figure out in what terms the army can be involved in agriculture matters to solve specific problems in the long run.
- As far as Defense is concerned, the armed forces follow the track of their traditions and values, and their adaptation capacity, not only in terms of materiel, instruction, organization, etc. but also in terms of mentality. The society the armed forces serve, the international missions, the fast changing world and the surprising new threats that can come along are the foundations for the lieutenant education. This type of education benefits the officer readiness thanks to two pillars: the solid foundation the University Center for Defense provides according to the Bologna Process; and the military training that is carried out in the academies. The former, due to the special integration into the pedagogical aspect of the national educational system (civil-military) as well as in the social aspect, the parallelism between the civilian and military grades that enables better synergies in the armed forces with the society. The latter, thanks to the many of their activities developed as part of the operational units where the officer-cadets have the opportunity to apply and broaden their knowledge. Also, the increasing cooperation with other foreign educational centers via Erasmus+ or via bilateral agreements is really worthy. The officer-cadets gain the experience of studying in different countries and academies, and learning about their cultures, customs and languages²³.

²³ Les Écoles Militaires de Saint-Cyr and the West Point Military Academy have currently bilateral agreements with the Academia General Militar.

However, the most important aspect is that they are the ones that they will meet to make important decisions in terms of common defense in the near future. That increases SP future officers' interest in world current affairs.

- What is on the loop is the never-ending improvement of the Spanish educational system as it can be read in the reports about our officers, and also can be perceived due to the understanding other societies have of them. In the last two years all the Spanish officer-cadets at West Point have been awarded according to their academic merits in recognition of their integration with the US officer-cadets and others from several nations. West Point also requests cooperation from them to solve current real problems and more seats into the Spanish Educational Centers for their Cadets²⁴.
- Taking into consideration the high readiness capacity of acting in international organizations such as NATO, EU, from the very starting point, Spain has been integrating procedures in the frame of a communal doctrine. Up today, the Spanish forces have been taking part in all NATO and European Union missions.
- About Security, the Spanish armed forces have fitted together the most appropriate combination of values, leadership and gender perspective that are producing fruitful results in the research of conflict solving. Apart from the defense tasks, these concepts have a place in the security concept in conjunction with the Guardia Civil and other police organizations and State institutions. The Spanish army has carried out a survey among the battalions and company-sized leaders about the recently graduated first lieutenants to try to compare their training and formation with the former system. Initially, neither weaknesses nor strengths in their capacities have been detected. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model suits the Spanish army needs, especially in terms of tactical considerations²⁵.
- As for Peace, the strategic lieutenants are deployed in different international scenarios such as Afghanistan, Mali, Lebanon, etc. They are in charge of peacekeeping tasks but with combat capacity; also, they act as analysts at operational headquarters. The background of their performance is appropriate to the mission and it allows the rearrangements and adjustments necessary in the military educational programs for future lieutenants. There, they also have to pay visits to locals to see cooperative ways to improve the population's standard of living. The local inhabitants receive from our units not only material support in basic needs such as medicines, stationary or water treatment, but also immaterial support; i.e: Spanish learning under the "Instituto Cervantes" umbrella, which is responsible for spreading the Spanish language and culture abroad under the control of the Minister of Education.

²⁴ Increasing numbers by more than three times the past ones.

²⁵ As discussed, the system was previously assessed as successful for strategic mindset.

- In reference to Disasters, the Military Emergencies Unit (UME) cannot be forgotten. It was created in 2005 and it is responsible for providing disaster relief in Spain and abroad if required. It has a wide variety of missions. In short, it is an extraordinary unit able to support the population in the hardest conditions, but requires from it a deep understanding of the situation. So the lieutenants are introduced into strategic scenarios to solve tactical problems.
- In accordance with tuition. To our regard, another trace that the educational systems empower this strategic scope is the “Service Personnel Action Plan”. The current career profile invites the best captains to be members of the board of military trainers, but just after having finished their unit command having taken part also in several international missions. That would allow them to be transferred, in a fast and straight-ahead interconnection in the world. Thanks to this tipped up tutorial, the officer-cadets can have an accurate approach to the real problems the world is involved and discuss reasonable solutions.
- The Language Department of the Academia General Militar has prepared the English Readiness Plan²⁶ to increase the language culture, and of course motivation²⁷.

Lifelong critical enquiries will help teachers and officer-cadets to know the strongest and weakest points to apply old knowledge to new unexpected knowledge in changeable educational situations. This viewpoint will allow them to introduce new ideas, methodologies, contents and types of assessment. Conceptual shifts are all around and profound teacher training, methodologies and procedures will be able to provide the appropriate knowledge delivery.

To this point, the Spanish military educational system able to educate the best 1st lieutenants for our society and friendly countries is completely seamlessly mainstreamed.

The COVID crisis has forced us to widen the pedagogical spectrum from physical buildings to the virtual world. The educational systems must be reviewed and updated to make them feasible and models must be changed aiming at our military education.

²⁶ The objectives are as follows: To increase the linguistic profile (Language Acquisition – RE). To reach the appropriate competences to teach military subjects in English (Language Usage - CLIL). To motivate, encourage and develop awareness in both teachers and officer-cadets to learn applied English at the AGM (ESP).

²⁷ To this regard, see wide bibliography by Professor María Luisa Pérez Cañado, Universidad de Jaén.

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