

qualitative methods—to assess cross-national military inequality against measures of battlefield performance. Hypothesized expectations include, for example, that as the coefficient of force inequality increases, tactical and operational sophistication will decrease, battlefield fatalities will increase, defections will increase, and coercion and fratricidal violence within the force will rise.

Lyall's detailing of a well-researched conflict in the latter 1800s is particularly illustrative and serves as a preliminary test of his hypothesis. In brief, Muhammad Ahmad (known as the Mahdi) built an inclusive and egalitarian political community from diverse tribes, clans, and ethnic groups in what is primarily present-day Sudan. He assembled an army that defeated Egyptian and Anglo-Egyptian forces during the first Mahdist war (1881–1885). Following the Mahdi's early and unexpected death in 1885, his successor initiated sweeping changes that infused poisonous identity politics into the community. Some tribes and ethnic groups were favored, some were not, and some experienced state-sanctioned repression. In due course, the Anglo-Egyptian forces returned and claimed a resounding victory during the second Mahdist war (1896–1899). Numerous accounts for this reversal of events exist, including arguments about improved weaponry and technological advantages that favored the British. Lyall's careful matching of covariates and contextual variables, however, along with insights from primary and secondary source material, successfully illustrates the "relationship between inequality and battlefield performance."

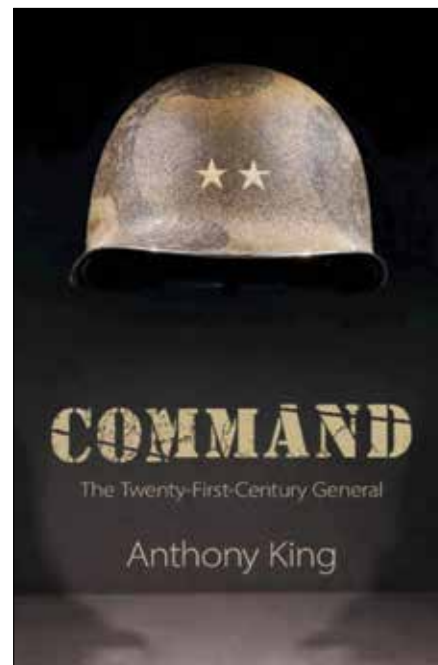
*Divided Armies* is an inviting and challenging read, one that necessitates and rewards thoughtful investment. Readers who are unfamiliar with notions of independent variables, covariates, paired comparisons, and regression analysis may find some elements of the discussion obscure and possibly off-putting despite the author's solid and generally successful efforts to deliver a book with minimal technical jargon. Some will also undoubtedly critique the emphasis on land-based operations in

the case data; however, the conclusions are applicable across the joint force. Regardless, the book is well-written and worth the intellectual bandwidth required to parse through the meticulous research.

The joint force will find much to consider in *Divided Armies* as the national security enterprise adjusts to confront 21<sup>st</sup>-century challenges. Lyall's work suggests inclusivity as a way forward, especially in uncertain times. The future of war is unknown in many respects, but absent full-on technological destruction, one can predict that the tensions between globalization and nationalism will continue, variously propelling and repelling the desirability of diversity within national and international communities. Yet Lyall has convincingly demonstrated that the most successful armies will not only *be* diverse, but they will also *embrace* diversity as strength and use that strength to repel and defeat armies unable to overcome their own inequalities. JFQ

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Dr. Larry D. Miller is the Director and Professor of Communicative Arts at the U.S. Army War College.



## Command: The Twenty-First-Century General

By Anthony King

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Reviewed by Allan R. Millet

*Command* is two loosely connected books. One book is about generalship in combat in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a focus on hybrid conflicts. The second is about imagining generalship as a collective enterprise and the challenges of employing a division of differently sized units with unique capabilities. A division might be limited to units that shoot and destroy and heavy in units that simply collect and process information with such speed that no single commander could possibly make timely decisions. Drawing on his prior work on unit cohesion and military culture as a British army contractor, Dr. Anthony King offers an updated look at generalship and division command for an increasingly complex battlefield.

*Command* provides a review of how ground combat divisions developed from World War I to the present, spiced with

examples of “good” division commanders and, less convincingly, why some generals were not so good. King does useful comparative work on the armies of Great Britain, the United States, France, and Germany, stressing system problems not rooted in generals’ personal style. He emphasizes operational challenges in actual combat, and he acknowledges that different enemies pose different challenges to a division commander.

The second part of *Command* applies multiple theories of leadership and staff organization to the difficulties of planning and controlling current operations. King does not offer up technological silver bullets as solutions, although he is rooted in a cyber world, so he cannot quite dismiss the notion that we will someday pin stars on an artificial intelligence device and salute it—but the HAL 9000 is not yet here.

Professor King recognizes the power of personality and example by making a distinction between command and leadership. However, this is a distinction without a difference. Lower ranks and citizen soldiers do not know enough to judge professional-operational competence, so sheer courage impresses. Professional troops want a steady flow of ammunition and accurate, prompt artillery fire. They know that even generals in hovering helicopters can be shot down. Today’s OH-58 is yesterday’s white horse.

Professor King has his own Valhalla of modern major generals, who commanded through delegated authority and undelegated responsibility, shaped by team building. It resembles British battalion “O” groups at a higher level. King’s exemplars are General Rupert Smith, General Nick Carter, and General James Mattis. All three, according to King, created centralized decisionmaking systems that still provided subordinate commanders with decisionmaking latitude through vertical and horizontal networks for information-sharing. King champions the “Decision Point” system, which stresses the constant measurement of operations against the newest Rosetta Stone, the commander’s intent. The social science jargon aside, all this sounds like “feel good” decision by committee, but King

asserts that focused staff training makes the dispersion and reduction of headquarter staffs more effective and allows better intercommand communications.

*Command* has many laudable features. One theme deals with a real problem: the evolving exercise of command in complex operational environments that cannot be easily characterized as force-on-force engagements decided by massed firepower and/or technological advantages (for example, information domination). King’s guidance to senior commanders is to use decisionmaking systems that produce useful, timely information before crises occur.

However, King fails to address several important 21<sup>st</sup>-century issues that division commanders do not face often, for example, questions of appropriateness and proportionality in waging war. A division commander would certainly be aware of his own casualties and would try to estimate the effect of enemy casualties. Commander’s intent is derivative from strategy, which depends on the goals of the highest political authority. It might be far easier to remove a dictator than to replace him, as General Smith learned in Basra. Smith became an arbiter of an Iraqi civil war, a role no amount of gaming could have solved. I believe General Mattis would agree that his command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division during the Iraq War was a drive in the sun compared to General Carter’s problems in Afghanistan.

*Command* would also benefit from a more thorough assessment of the problems of air mission tasking. King admires the Marine Corps system of force integration (protected by Title 10, *U.S. Code*) without explaining that the headquarters of a Marine Air-Ground Task Force provides a single commander for three elements: a ground combat element, an air combat element, and a Service-support element. The operational capabilities of each element depend on the mission. They may range from destroying an enemy armored force to rescuing flood victims in a foreign country. King’s national system of command, as conceptualized, might allow rapid deployment but does not provide air-ground integration.

Another complication King might have addressed is the domination of rules of engagement (ROE). I had the good fortune to participate in the exercises Bold Guard and Northern Wedding as a Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic watch officer (twice), to observe the annual Ulchi Focus Lens exercise at Command Post Tango in South Korea, to go on patrol with a British battalion in Ulster, and to discuss at length operations in Bosnia and Kosovo with General Wesley K. Clark while he was still Supreme Allied Commander Europe. In all these situations, however diverse, the ROE shaped operations, not strategy—and for no apparent reason.

Written with senior leaders in mind, *Command* offers useful waypoints for a further discussion of the evolution of generalship, decisionmaking, and division command in increasingly complex environments. It also provides useful nuggets for less senior joint force officers as they consider their own leadership and command style on the 21<sup>st</sup>-century battlefield. JFQ

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Colonel Allan R. Millett, USMCR (Ret.), Ph.D., is the Ambrose Professor of History and Director of the Eisenhower Center for American Studies at the University of New Orleans.