



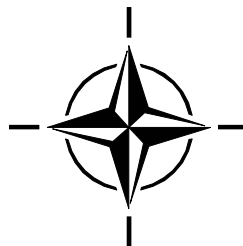
**RTO TECHNICAL REPORT**

**TR-HFM-120**

# **Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors**

(Les opérations militaires multinationales  
et les facteurs interculturels)

This Technical Report documents the findings  
of Research Task Group 120.



Published November 2008





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Edited by:

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# The Research and Technology Organisation (RTO) of NATO

RTO is the single focus in NATO for Defence Research and Technology activities. Its mission is to conduct and promote co-operative research and information exchange. The objective is to support the development and effective use of national defence research and technology and to meet the military needs of the Alliance, to maintain a technological lead, and to provide advice to NATO and national decision makers. The RTO performs its mission with the support of an extensive network of national experts. It also ensures effective co-ordination with other NATO bodies involved in R&T activities.

RTO reports both to the Military Committee of NATO and to the Conference of National Armament Directors. It comprises a Research and Technology Board (RTB) as the highest level of national representation and the Research and Technology Agency (RTA), a dedicated staff with its headquarters in Neuilly, near Paris, France. In order to facilitate contacts with the military users and other NATO activities, a small part of the RTA staff is located in NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The Brussels staff also co-ordinates RTO's co-operation with nations in Middle and Eastern Europe, to which RTO attaches particular importance especially as working together in the field of research is one of the more promising areas of co-operation.

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- HFM Human Factors and Medicine Panel
- IST Information Systems Technology Panel
- NMSG NATO Modelling and Simulation Group
- SAS System Analysis and Studies Panel
- SCI Systems Concepts and Integration Panel
- SET Sensors and Electronics Technology Panel

These bodies are made up of national representatives as well as generally recognised 'world class' scientists. They also provide a communication link to military users and other NATO bodies. RTO's scientific and technological work is carried out by Technical Teams, created for specific activities and with a specific duration. Such Technical Teams can organise workshops, symposia, field trials, lecture series and training courses. An important function of these Technical Teams is to ensure the continuity of the expert networks.

RTO builds upon earlier co-operation in defence research and technology as set-up under the Advisory Group for Aerospace Research and Development (AGARD) and the Defence Research Group (DRG). AGARD and the DRG share common roots in that they were both established at the initiative of Dr Theodore von Kármán, a leading aerospace scientist, who early on recognised the importance of scientific support for the Allied Armed Forces. RTO is capitalising on these common roots in order to provide the Alliance and the NATO nations with a strong scientific and technological basis that will guarantee a solid base for the future.

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Over the course of its 3-year mandate, the RTG-120 held meetings hosted by contributing nations in Toulon, France; Strausberg, Germany; Fort Leavenworth, United States; Kösice, Slovakia; and Ottawa and Montreal, Canada. The directors of these establishments are gratefully thanked for the hospitality and logistical support provided.

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# Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors (RTO-TR-HFM-120)

## Executive Summary

### Problem and Purpose

Since 1990, there has been a significant increase in the number of military operations that have required North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) nations to contribute forces as part of a multinational coalition or alliance. Moreover, the range of mission types has broadened to include peacekeeping, peace-support, and humanitarian operations. This trend is expected to continue. There is evidence to suggest that subtle differences in the organizational and national cultures of the countries that contribute personnel to missions can have an impact on the overall operational effectiveness of the multinational force. There exists, therefore, a requirement to consider and integrate the intercultural issues and factors that surround and influence multinational military collaboration, particularly at the operational level of command.

### Scope and Limitations

Owing to the complex nature of this research area, it was seen as highly desirable that a multinational perspective be developed regarding the most important topics for investigation. Thus, in the autumn of 2003, the NATO Human Factors and Medicine (HFM) Research Task Group (RTG) on Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors (RTG-120) was formed. The membership of the group comprised of specialists in the field of team studies, military command and control, military training and selection, and cross-cultural and social psychology. The present report was not meant to be comprehensive and exhaustive, but rather its aim was to highlight and raise the profile of intercultural factors, and to help drive forward developments in this area. Thus, the primary objective of this report was to increase awareness and understanding of the impact of intercultural factors on multinational military operations, and to identify some of the important culture-related lessons learned from multinational military operations.

### Procedure

Selected literature relevant to the impact of intercultural factors on multinational military operations was reviewed. The review was organized around seven major topics: organizational factors; leadership and command; teams; pre-dispositional and psychosocial factors; communication; technology; and societal factors.

### Results and Recommendations

Although covering diverse terrain, there were a number of common conclusions reflected throughout this report. One of the most compelling was the call for efforts to instil greater cultural sensitivity and awareness through pre-deployment programs and training for all military personnel. This is perhaps nothing new for some countries, but it does not appear to be an integral aspect of the military training of all nations. Possible strategies for addressing this need include pre-deployment training and resources available during deployment that are relevant to the specific deployment context. Joint or multinational training would also help develop skills in working with members of diverse cultures and nations. However, specific courses in multicultural awareness are not enough. Cultural issues should be integrated

into all military training courses starting at the most basic levels. Centers of excellence in such training already exist, for example, in Mannheim, Germany; the Pearson Peacekeeping Center in Canada; and Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Other ways in which to provide hands-on training include Multinational Experiments (MNEs), which serve to identify issues and problems in simulated operational environments.

It is hoped that the theoretical and applied knowledge generated on these topics will further an understanding of diversity in the areas of human culture, organizations and technologies of relevance to multinational military operations, and ultimately contribute to the effectiveness of their collaborations.

# Les opérations militaires multinationales et les facteurs interculturels (RTO-TR-HFM-120)

## Synthèse

### Problème et objet

Depuis 1990, il y a eu une importante augmentation du nombre des opérations militaires auxquelles les Nations de l'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord (OTAN) ont dû apporter la contribution de leurs forces dans le cadre d'une coalition multinationale ou de l'Alliance. De plus, l'éventail des missions s'est élargi à des opérations de maintien de la paix, de soutien de la paix et humanitaires. Cette tendance devrait se confirmer. Il paraît évident que les différences subtiles entre les cultures nationales et organisationnelles des pays qui fournissent du personnel pour les missions peuvent avoir un impact sur l'efficacité opérationnelle globale de la force multinationale. Il existe, pour cette raison, une demande pour prendre en compte et intégrer les questions interculturelles et les facteurs qui entourent et influencent la collaboration multinationale militaire, en particulier au niveau du commandement opérationnel.

### Etendue et limitations

En raison de la nature complexe de ce domaine de recherche, il est apparu comme fortement souhaitable de développer une perspective multinationale pour définir les sujets les plus importants. Ainsi, à l'automne 2003, fut créé le Groupe de recherche (RTG) Facteurs Humains et Médecine (HFM) de l'OTAN sur les Opérations multinationales militaires et les facteurs interculturels (RTG-120). Le groupe était constitué de spécialistes du travail en équipe, du contrôle et du commandement militaire, de la sélection et de la formation militaire, et de la psychologie interculturelle et sociale. Ce présent rapport ne prétendait pas être détaillé et exhaustif, mais son objectif était de souligner les facteurs interculturels, de commencer à tracer une esquisse, et d'aider à entreprendre des développements dans ce domaine. De ce fait, le premier objectif de ce rapport était d'accentuer la prise de conscience et la compréhension de l'impact des facteurs interculturels sur les opérations militaires multinationales, et aussi d'identifier quelques unes des leçons culturelles importantes acquises lors des opérations militaires multinationales.

### Procédure

Une littérature sélectionnée ayant un rapport avec l'impact des facteurs interculturels sur les opérations militaires multinationales fut passée en revue. Cet examen fut organisé autour de sept sujets primordiaux : les facteurs organisationnels ; l'exercice du commandement et le commandement ; les équipes ; les facteurs socio-psychologiques et de prédisposition ; la communication ; la technologie et les facteurs sociétaux.

### Résultats et recommandations

Bien que ce rapport couvre des sujets variés, un certain nombre de conclusions communes en est ressorti. La conclusion qui s'est le plus imposée fut une demande pour que soit inculquée à tout le personnel militaire une plus grande sensibilité culturelle avec une prise de conscience au travers des programmes de pré-déploiement et de formation. Même si ceci n'est pas nouveau pour certains pays, il apparaît que ce n'est pas un aspect intégré dans la formation militaire de toutes les nations. Parmi les moyens possibles pour traiter ce besoin, il y a la formation au pré-déploiement et les ressources disponibles et appropriées

dans le contexte de ce déploiement. L'entraînement interarmées et multinational devrait aussi aider à développer des savoir-faire dans le travail avec des personnes de cultures et de nations différentes. Cependant, des cours spécifiques sur la prise de conscience multiculturelle ne sont pas suffisants. Les questions culturelles devraient être intégrées dans les cours d'entraînement militaire au niveau le plus basique. Des centres d'excellence sur de tels entraînements existent déjà, par exemple à Mannheim en Allemagne ; le Centre de Maintien de la Paix de Pearson au Canada et Fort Huachuca en Arizona. Parmi d'autres façons de fournir une formation pratique, il y a les Expérimentations Multinationales (MNE) qui servent à identifier les questions et les problèmes dans des environnements opérationnels simulés.

Il est à souhaiter que les connaissances théoriques aussi bien qu'appliquées sur ces sujets apporteront une compréhension de la diversité de la culture humaine, des organisations et des technologies dans les domaines appropriés aux opérations militaires multinationales et contribueront finalement à l'efficacité de la collaboration.



## **Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION**

by

**Brian McKee, Angela R. Febraro, and Sharon L. Riedel**

### **1.1 RESEARCH TASK GROUP STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION**

Since 1990, there has been a significant increase in the number of military operations that have required North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) nations to contribute forces as part of a multinational coalition or alliance. Moreover, the range of mission types has broadened to include peacekeeping, peace-support, and humanitarian operations. This trend is expected to continue. There is evidence to suggest that subtle differences in the organizational and national cultures of the countries that contribute personnel to missions can have an impact on the overall operational effectiveness of the multinational force. There exists, therefore, a requirement to consider and integrate the intercultural issues and factors that surround and influence multinational military collaboration, particularly at the operational level of command.

Owing to the complex nature of this research area, it was seen as highly desirable that a multinational perspective be developed regarding the most important topics for investigation. Thus, in the autumn of 2003, the NATO Human Factors and Medicine (HFM) Research Task Group (RTG) on Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors (RTG-120) was formed. RTG-120 consisted of representatives from a variety of NATO countries including the United Kingdom (UK), Canada, the United States (US), the Netherlands, Slovakia, Germany, and France. Over the course of its 3-year mandate, the RTG-120 held meetings hosted by contributing nations in Toulon, France; Strausberg, Germany; Fort Leavenworth, the US; Kösice, Slovakia; and Ottawa and Montreal, Canada. The membership of the group comprised of specialists in the field of team studies, military command and control, military training and selection, and cross-cultural and social psychology. Participants included researchers from Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and QinetiQ in the UK; the Army Research Institute and the Naval Underwater Warfare Center in the US; Defence Research & Development Canada (DRDC) – Toronto, DRDC Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, and the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute in Canada; TNO Human Factors in the Netherlands; the Bundeswehr in Germany; and the Department of Aviation Medicine in Slovakia.

The original proposal for RTG-120 stressed that it was important that a cross-national and cross-cultural forum be developed in order to fully utilize individual nations' current understandings of the issue of multinationality in military operations. It further specified that with the growing number of nations within NATO and the interaction with Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations, the collective knowledge base and guidance within such a forum could only serve to strengthen current NATO understanding of and preparation for future operations. It was intended that the work of the group would allow nations to build on the findings and recommendations from the final report and develop complimentary research programmes to ensure an improved appreciation of the problem area and contribute to appropriate intervention strategies.

Although the initial intention of RTG-120 was to develop a comprehensive review of the literature in this area, this was found to be an impossible task, given the recent accelerated rate of growth of work undertaken on this issue. Thus the present report is not meant to be comprehensive and exhaustive, but rather its aim is to highlight and raise the profile of intercultural factors, and to help drive forward developments in this area. The primary objective of this report is to increase awareness and understanding of the impact of intercultural factors on multinational military operations in the following areas: organizational factors, leadership and command, teams, pre-dispositional and psychosocial factors, communication, technology, and societal-cultural trends. The work of the RTG on these substantive areas comprises the content of this report. It is hoped that the theoretical and applied knowledge generated by the contributing nations of RTG-120 on these topics (or reviewed in this report) will further an understanding of diversity in the areas of human culture,

## INTRODUCTION

organizations and technologies of relevance to multinational military operations, and ultimately contribute to the effectiveness of their collaborations.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND

As stated earlier, most NATO nations have been responding increasingly to international crises and conflicts in the post-Cold War period through support for multinational operations. An example of this can be observed in Figure 1.1, which illustrates the Canadian commitment in the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As can be seen, over an approximately 25-year period, Canada committed to more operations, more frequently, as time passed. Furthermore, almost all of these Canadian Forces (CF) operations were multinational coalitions.

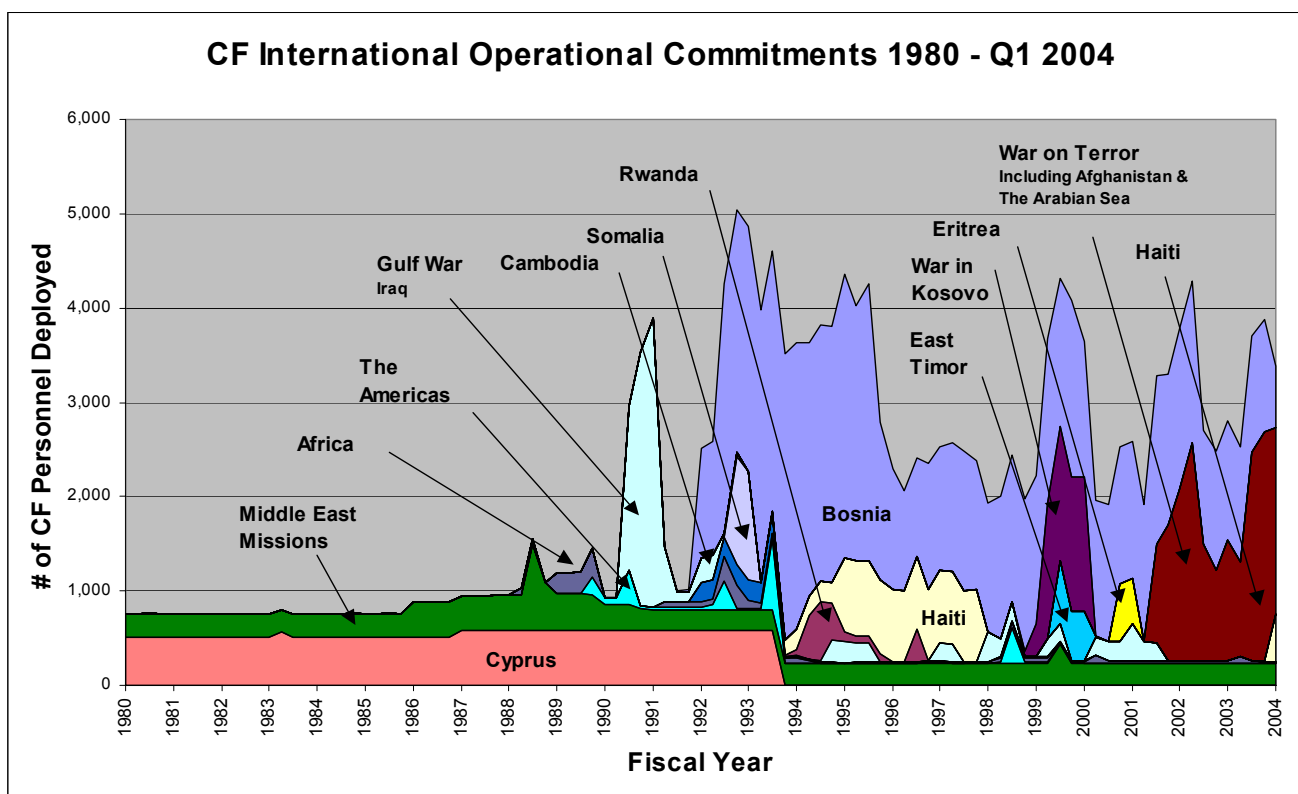


Figure 1.1: Increase in Canadian Operations 1980-2004 (McKee & Hill, 2006).

The increase in multinational missions has led to the identification of a number of potential areas of conflict or stress between collaborating countries that stem from inter-group relations and dynamics, which themselves emanate from differences in culture, language,<sup>1</sup> religion, class and gender customs, work ethics, military values, political systems, levels of expertise, and standards of living, to name a few (Plante, 1998). Bowman (1997) identified “ten points of friction” that have historically affected coalitions: differences in goals, logistics, capabilities, training, equipment, doctrines, intelligence, language, leadership, and cultural practices (see also Stewart, Bonner, & Verrall, 2001). Further, although differences in language, terminology, military doctrine, equipment, capabilities, and command organization may all have been present in previous coalition operations, they may be exacerbated by the level of interaction among units and limited preparation time available to most coalitions today (Marshall, Kaiser, & Kessmeier, 1997).

<sup>1</sup> Although the United Nations, for example, has six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish), most missions have used English, or to a lesser extent, French or Spanish, as the official working language (Gillespie, 2002; Plante, 1998).

In the present post-Cold War global context conflicts are more likely to be the result of internal state disintegration (“failed states”) or civil war than the result of interstate conflicts, as has been true in the past (Winslow, Kammhuber, & Soeters, 2004). As threats to international peace increase, military forces may find themselves challenged by more diverse, complex environments than ever before, environments which include many other actors such as representatives of the United Nations (UN), the media, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Often they must face these challenges in a foreign cultural environment. Such conditions demand a high degree of intercultural competence in dealing with the ethnic-cultural and linguistic diversity of the local population, the cultures of other militaries, and the cultures of other international organizations (Winslow et al., 2004). In addition to military operations, multinational forces are often used during operations other than war, a class of mission that has grown over the post-Cold War era. Such operations include goals as diverse as deterring hostile actions, combating terrorism, and providing relief from natural disasters. These missions, like other military operations, are undertaken by coalitions from diverse national cultures but also involve NGOs and private voluntary organizations.

Such a change in global context demands new understandings of interoperability, or “the ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units and forces and to use these services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together” (Blad & Potts, 2004, p. 149). The traditional NATO understanding of interoperability, for example, has been largely based on technical issues such as common message formats and data presentation protocols (Blad & Potts, 2004). However, such an understanding is unsuited to post-Cold War multinational operations. An emerging US concept, which describes the richer conceptual depth of the interoperability needed, is “co-operability” (Blad & Potts, 2004). This term describes the shared understanding that cognitive and doctrinal interoperability can provide. In the UK, this is termed “interoperability of the mind;” a similar German concept is “*einheit im denken*,” which means literally “unity in thought” (Blad & Potts, 2004). This term implies a depth of common military education and training to produce officers who approach problems in the same way with confidence and mutual understanding based on shared military education and values (Blad & Potts, 2004). Although an understanding of interoperability that takes into account dimensions such as doctrine, command and control, rules of engagement, standardized operating procedures, training and logistics (the so-called “hard” dimensions of interoperability) appropriately goes beyond technical issues, it still neglects the so-called “soft” dimensions of interoperability, such as language, ethics, and social beliefs, that pertain more to culture (McFate, 2005). Indeed, Winslow and Everts (2001) argue that it is not only system interoperability but operational and particularly “cultural interoperability” – the shared way by which multinational military coalitions or alliances “do business” – that contributes to mission success. Similarly, cultural differences (e.g., in beliefs about information sharing) may affect the ability to advance from technical interoperability to “intercooperability,” and may reduce the ability of different elements within a coalition to achieve “intercooperation” (Handley, Levis, & Bares, 2001).

### 1.3 DEFINING CULTURE

As the previous discussion shows, the focus of this report centers on issues arising from the interaction of groups of people from different cultural backgrounds. It would therefore be useful to begin by first briefly defining the concept of culture.

Throughout the past century, many definitions of culture have been developed. One of the most frequently cited conceptualizations of culture is by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), who state that culture consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting. Schweder (1991) suggests a set of shared meaning systems, and Goodenough (1971) proposes a set of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, communicating and acting. Parsons (1951) explains culture as patterned systems of symbols that direct the orientation of action, and Schein (1985) defines culture as a pattern of basic assumptions with which problems can be coped. Trompenaars and Turner (1993) state that culture is the way in which a group of people solves problems, and Hofstede (1980, 1991) defines culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group (nation) from another (nation).

Simply put, culture describes the learned patterns of behavior and thought that help a group adapt to its surroundings. As such culture operates at many different levels and reveals itself in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of groups of people. At a societal or group level, culture is important in helping to explain distinctness between groups of people. At a very general level, culture unifies groups of people and distinguishes them from others. Culture constitutes the vehicle for the perpetuation of identity and for the mitigation, synthesis, and rationalization of change. The fact that culture is such an all-inclusive, multi-faceted concept means that it serves many varied functions, among them marking off a group and so including some and excluding others.

### 1.3.1 Organizational Culture

This report focuses specifically on interactions of organizations across nations and so it would prove informative also to discuss the notion of organizational culture and national culture. Traditionally the term culture has been used by anthropologists and sociologists in the analysis of social and national groupings. However, the utility of the concept in explaining and understanding organizational dynamics and differences has led increasingly to its adoption by business developers, analysts, and human resource professionals. Below, for instance, is a definition of organizational culture proposed by Schein (1984):

Organizational Culture is the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration and that have worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (Schein, 1984, p. 4)

Organizational culture should not be viewed as a static, never changing concept. In any given situation, actors may employ different aspects or components of the culture, manifesting the same culture in different ways in different situations. Furthermore, as the society and the economy in which the organization operates change over time, so too do the constituent institutions. Often such changes are imperceptible to the actors involved; however changes can also be dramatic and sudden, especially where an organization has resisted such changes in the past.

Culture has an historical and tested aspect; it has allowed and allows an organization to effectively meet its needs and the challenges that it faces. It involves more than simply structures but includes ways of thinking and acting. It is incorporated into a socialization process for new members to ensure its continuation, and it marks the organization from others. Culture then is a complex whole that goes beyond what can be observed in the hallways of the organizational headquarters. It is more than the logo, the mission, or the chain of command, although these are all part of the culture and are visible cues of organizational culture. As Hagberg and Heifetz point out, “the culture of an organization operates at both a conscious and subconscious level” (2000, p. 2). Organizational culture is a complex phenomenon that includes symbols and symbolism, relationships, behaviors, and values (Alvesson, 2002).

Organizational culture permeates the host institution and operates at many different levels, from the highly visible to the collective unconscious. Schein identifies, for the purpose of analysis, three levels of organizational culture: artifacts and creations, values, and basic underlying assumptions (1985, p. 15).

These levels of culture allow us to build up a series of layers of analysis, as can be seen in Figure 1.2. In much the same way as an archeologist must dig through layers of sediment to uncover older finds, so too the researcher and planner must dig deeper and deeper within the organization to uncover core components of the culture.

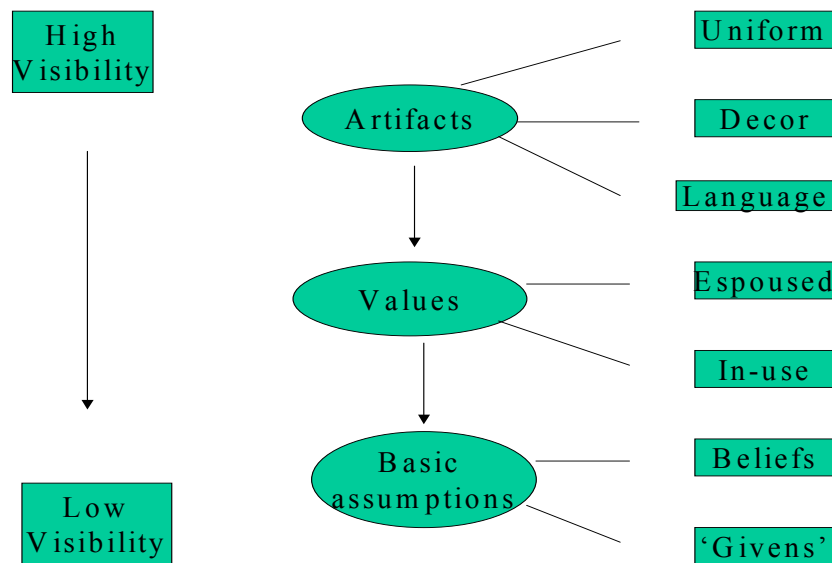


Figure 1.2: Layers of Organizational Culture (adapted from Schein, 1985, p. 15).

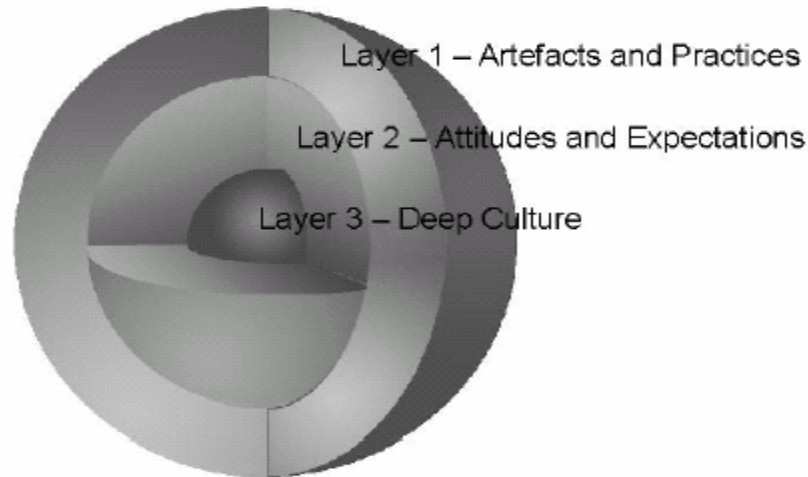
The most visible manifestations of organizational culture are the artefacts and creations, which include “the constructed environment of the organization, its architecture, technology, office layout, manner of dress, visible or audible behavior patterns and public documents such as charters, employee orientation, materials and stories” (Schein, 1984, p. 4). Identifying these attributes of the organizational culture involves, among other things, analysis of corporate documentation and organization charts, as well as observation of architectural features, employee dress, language, and behavior.

Much less obvious are the values of the organization or the next layer of culture. For Schein, the reference to values is intended to include only espoused values, “what ought to be, as distinct from what is” (1985, p. 15). Others have modified this concept to include actual values, which are seen as having a more direct influence on steering or guiding behavior (Sathe & Davidson, 2000). These values offer rationalization and justification for action and although normally invisible to the actors involved, they can be identified and articulated.

The most abstract layer of culture identified by Schein (1985) involves the basic underlying assumptions. Values derived from actions taken in the past that have allowed the organization to persist become givens. They “sink below the conscious level of culture and become taken-for-granted assumptions that organizational members use to guide their behaviors and attitudes” (Sathe & Davidson, 2000, p. 280). Identification of these elements of the culture requires much more sophisticated and probing analyses of the organization. It might further be argued that this cultural layer is the foundation for all others. For this reason, it is frequently the hardest to identify, and the most resistant to change.

For Rutherford (2001), much of the focus of the literature on organizational culture emphasizes its role as a tool for inclusion. Attention is paid to the cohesive aspects of culture “as a defence against the unknown and a means of providing stability” (Rutherford, 2001, p. 372). These elements of culture provide parameters around the institution that allow people to operate effectively and comfortably within the system, socialize or regulate the absorption of new members, and maintain an identity over time. The other face of this aspect of culture, often ignored, is that it can function to exclude. At times the same processes and cultural elements may be brought to bear to either include or exclude others. Culture then is dynamic and situationally dependent, allowing for opposing roles of unification and differentiation.

Trompenaars and Turner (1993) developed the QinetiQ model of organizational culture (Bradley, Mylle, Strickland, Walker, & Wooddisse, 2002). The model provides another conceptual framework to understand organizational culture, which again is made up of three layers (see Figure 1.3).



**Figure 1.3: Conceptual Framework for Organizational Culture (Trompenaars & Turner, 1993).**

- 1) *Layer One – Artifacts and Practices.* This is the observable behavior and tangibles of an organization. This includes such things as groupings, hierarchy, and uniform. Processes and procedures can be thought of as Layer One. Essentially, the surface layer is easily changed and easily adapted by the people in the organization. It represents the explicit culture.
- 2) *Layer Two – Attitudes and Expectations.* These are the attitudes and expectations that make individuals feel that Layer One is right. It is more conceptual than tangible, and consists of doctrine, customs, and traditional practices. It represents those truths held by the organization, which resist change but which can be adapted in time.
- 3) *Layer Three – Deep Structure.* This is the source and structure from where attitudes and expectations are generated. It is difficult to attribute specifics to this layer, but it may consist of such things as the relationship between command and subordination. Essentially, this inner layer represents basic assumptions that have underpinned the culture of military forces for centuries. This is the layer of implicit culture.

The value of this model as suggested by its proponent is that it provides insight into the management of change. Changing Layer One is relatively easy as long as Layer Two and Layer Three remain unchanged. Changing Layer Two is very difficult and takes time and firm leadership. Changing Layer Three will be very difficult but not impossible. In some cases a change to Layer One may, on the face of it, be very sensible or insignificant, yet may affect a much deeper cultural instinct or value.

### **1.3.2 National Culture**

In the 1980s, Geert Hofstede made a comprehensive attempt to capture national value and cultural differences through a cross-cultural classification scheme of work-related values in organizations. Despite criticism, his five-factor model of culture value dimensions remains the most robust and influential model on culture. Initially, Hofstede (1980) identified four cultural value dimensions. Later work with the Chinese Culture Connection added a fifth dimension based on a study of Asian cultures, a region largely excluded from Hofstede's earlier work (1991). These five dimensions are elaborated below and figure prominently throughout this report:

- 1) Power distance is the degree of inequality among people that the populace of a country considers normal.
- 2) Uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which people in a country prefer structured over unstructured situations. Structured situations are those in which there are clear rules as to how one should behave.
- 3) Masculinity-femininity is the degree to which values like assertiveness, performance, success, and competition (which in nearly all societies are more associated with the role of men) prevail over values like the quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity (which in nearly all societies are more associated with the role of women).
- 4) Individualism-collectivism describes whether one's identity is defined by personal choices and achievements or by the character of the collective group to which one is more or less permanently attached.
- 5) Long-term vs. short-term orientation is based on the values stressed in the teachings of Confucius. Long-term orientation focuses on the degree to which a culture embraces, or does not embrace, future-oriented values, such as perseverance and thrift.

### 1.3.3 Hofstede's Dimensions and Military Culture

One important contribution of these five dimensions is that they afford an opportunity to test specific hypotheses about cultural differences that influence such things as organizational and team effectiveness. Soeters (1997) conducted a study applying these cultural dimensions to the military. He used samples of cadet-officers of military academies in 18 countries as respondents (see also Soeters & Recht, 2001). To demonstrate the relevance of Hofstede's work more clearly, Soeters connected the four original dimensions (long-term orientation was not included in this study) to the well known institutional-occupational model (Moskos & Wood, 1988).

Moskos and Wood (1988) examined the attitudes of soldiers toward their work in the military. On one hand, attitudes may be institutional reflecting a vocational (i.e., professional) orientation, exemplified by patriotism and a total dedication to the military organization. On the other hand, attitudes may be occupational reflecting an attitude toward working in the military as just another job (Moskos & Wood, 1988). This latter attitude implies that military personnel are not solely focused on the internal labor market of the military. Soeters (1997) found that high degrees of individualism, indicating that the cadets feel fairly independent of the organization, and masculinity, reflecting the wish to earn high salaries, are indicators of occupationalism.

The other two cultural dimensions, power distance and uncertainty avoidance, were found to be indicators of certain types of organization: high degrees of power distance and uncertainty avoidance were seen as manifestations of the classic "machine" bureaucracy, or hierarchical, formal rules-based organizations. Low degrees of these cultural dimensions were indicative of more modern flexible results-oriented organizations.

Soeters' study of military academies showed that, compared to their compatriots in the civilian sector, the cadet-officers in general yielded higher scores on power distance and lower scores on individualism and masculinity. These results confirm common notions about differences between civilian and military workers and organizations. In the military, hierarchies and power distances are known to be more elaborated and fundamental to the structure of the organization than they are in the business sector. Also, in the military, collectivism (i.e., group orientation, interdependency and cohesion) is a more important concept than it is among typical civilian organizations. Finally, in the military earning high salaries and striving for individual merit is not valued as much as it is in business corporations. The dimension of uncertainty avoidance (rule orientation, formalization, the wish to continue to work for the military) showed mixed results: some academies, such as those in Germany, Italy, Denmark, the UK, and especially the US, exhibited higher degrees of this dimension, which had been expected, but there were also a

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number of academies (the Netherlands, Canada and Norway) that scored lower on this particular dimension (Soeters, 1997).

By and large, the results were consistent with common knowledge about cultural differences between the civilian and the military sectors. These results clearly demonstrate that in the military – contrasted to civilian organizations – something like a supranational culture exists. This supranational military culture is more collectivistic, more hierarchical and less salary-driven than the average civilian working culture. The consequence of this is that military personnel of different origins can often function and get along with each other without too many problems (e.g., Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1999). Moskos (1976, 2001) even claims that military personnel from different countries seem to be better suited to work together than they are with civilian personnel from NGOs or local agencies from their own countries.

Page (2003) undertook a similar study applying Hofstede's cultural dimensions to samples of military personnel. These career officers (or officer-equivalent personnel) at the time of the study were mostly attending international courses or conferences in Europe. Included were a number of NATO countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Norway, the UK, and the US) as well as a number of PfP countries (Georgia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia). The results from this study largely confirmed the earlier academy findings of Soeters and Recht (Page, 2003). There was one clear exception. Page found that German career officers displayed higher levels of power distance and masculinity when compared to the German student-officers in the Soeters (1997) study. As was found in the Soeters study, the US military proved to be high on masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. As to long-term orientation, which was not measured by Soeters, no significant differences were found in long-term orientation between countries or between military and civilian organizations.

### 1.3.4 Military Culture

As can be seen from the preceding discussion, the organizations involved in this study are somewhat different from most other public and private enterprises. Thus, in addition to understanding national and organizational culture, an existing body of literature analyzing military organizational culture needs to be briefly examined. This will allow readers some insights into the importance and relevance of culture in military operations.

Military organizations are unlike any other public or private institution. While sharing the same fundamental cultural influences as other organizations within a given country, they view themselves, and more importantly, are viewed by many others, as very different. As Soeters points out; “uniformed organizations are peculiar. They represent specific occupational cultures that are relatively isolated from society” (2004, p. 465). The very nature of the principal mission for which militaries are intended also sets them apart from other public or private institutions within a society. As Snider puts it, “Military cultures derive from the purpose or tasks for which society raises militaries” (1999, p. 5). At the same time, military cultures also reflect the cultures of the broader societies in which they exist.

While it could also be said that all organizational cultures derive from their purpose, military institutions remain alone in their primary purpose, seen by Snider as warfighting, which he argues “still determines the central beliefs, values and complex symbolic formations that define military culture” (1999, p. 5). Rather than engage in a debate over the appropriateness of this function as the central element in the military mission, suffice to say that warfighting can be viewed as a critical, and historically important, military purpose. However, given the changing nature of security it might be more appropriate to define warfighting as upholding or securing peace and security by the use of arms.

Although modern militaries are involved in a range of activities or operations other than war, a more encompassing definition of the core military function still has as its central focus the notion of the legally and societally sanctioned use of weapons. In this case, use of weapons is not only to wage war but also to defend or maintain peace either within or outside of national boundaries. Snider articulates four essential



elements of military culture; these include ceremonial displays and etiquette, discipline, professional ethos, and cohesion and esprit de corps (1999, p. 6). In these elements we can still recognize Schein's layers of culture such that ceremonial displays may relate to the most visible (artifacts) and esprit de corps and ethos to the least visible aspects (basic underlying assumptions) of organizational culture.

Zellman, Heilbrun, Schmidt, and Builder neatly summarize the core elements of military culture as "conservative, rooted in history and tradition, based on group loyalty and conformity and oriented toward obedience to superiors" (1993, p. 369). Defined in this way, the potential gulf between military and civilian organizational culture is all the more apparent. The emergence and increased domination of relatively new, non-traditional, "flat" organizations espousing more egalitarian views stand in stark contrast to this admittedly traditional definition of military organizational culture. However, such articulations of the constituent elements of military culture may be said only to accentuate existing differences. For this reason, much thought has been given, particularly in the US, to the acceptable gap between the military and civilian worlds (for US sources, see Snider, 1999; Williamson, 1999; Hillen, 1999; for UK sources, see Dandeker, Higgs, Paton, & Ross, 1997).

That militaries the world over share some common elements, beliefs and ideas is evident; however, this should not imply that all military cultures are the same, a notion that may have influenced the lack of preparations for multinational operations in the past. As Sharp and English have pointed out, the historical development, political and economic background, and national cultural differences that impact on each military has led to marked differences in national military organizations (2001, p. vi). As will be seen, these military intercultural differences are important to consider; otherwise, they can lead to problems and issues in the conduct of multinational operations.

## 1.4 ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

This report examines the influence of culture on multinational military operations in a number of critical areas relating to operational effectiveness. The next chapter (Chapter 2) deals with organizational factors and looks at the impact of the structure of individual coalition or alliance partners as well as their varying policies and programs on cooperation and morale. Chapter 3 examines research on the different cultural perspectives regarding leadership and command that may be problematic in a coalition or alliance setting. Further chapters examine the research conducted on teams and team building (Chapter 4), cultural predispositions and psychosocial determinants (Chapter 5), communication (Chapter 6), and technology (Chapter 7). Not all key factors fit neatly into these section headings and so Chapter 8 looks at a number of important societal issues such as public opinion, casualty tolerance, and conscripted as opposed to volunteer forces. Once more the analysis focuses on the impact of these national cultural differences on the ability of militaries from different countries to work effectively together. The report concludes with some suggestions to assist in resolving differences and allowing for greater understanding and cooperation within the context of multinational military operations (Chapter 9).

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## **Chapter 2 – ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS**

by

**Brian McKee**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Between military contingents involved in multinational operations, there often exist basic organizational and cultural differences, such as the ways in which personnel are treated, the parameters within which people must work, and the very function and structure of the military organization. The management of human resources within each respective organization is often dependent on national norms and practices, as well as the unique history, tradition and modus operandi of the military forces themselves. These factors influence the way that things are done within any given national organization, the rules and regulations that are enforced, normal or expected patterns of behavior, and even the structure of the organization. The net result of these differences may be marked discrepancies between partners involved in international operations in terms of personnel policies, services and programs, doctrine, and operational functioning. Such differences could potentially hinder the success of the mission and directly or indirectly impact operational effectiveness.

This chapter deals with what are generally referred to as organizational issues, that is, issues which relate to the structure and functioning of the institution. For ease of analysis, these can be broadly divided into two general areas: personnel issues and operational issues. The former corresponds to a wide range of people-related factors pertaining to the functioning and culture of a military organization. The latter subsumes a variety of procedural and structural processes and practices that are often so embedded in the organizational culture that they prove hard to change and can create inter-group tensions in a multinational setting.

### **2.2 PERSONNEL ISSUES**

The first section of this chapter looks at the existing literature on different human resource (HR) management and personnel policies among allied nations and their impact on international operations. The differential treatment of personnel performing the same functions may have a negative impact on overall mission effectiveness, as people performing the same tasks, under the same conditions and threats, receive different treatment or rewards. Furthermore, military members may also develop negative opinions and perceptions of their own forces while deployed that might result in dissatisfaction in the short-term and retention issues in the long-term. The net result of these factors may be to inhibit the development of a healthy organizational climate, which in turn may impact the coalition's performance and the effectiveness and success of the operation (Easter, 1996).

For ease of analysis these factors can be regrouped under four broad headings: HR policy and practice, professional/organizational structure, well-being, and professional conduct:

- 1) Under the category HR policy and practice are those topics relating to national human resource practices and procedures, both formal and informal in nature, that directly affect deployed personnel. They include: general HR policies, rotation and posting policies, unionization, and financial differences.
- 2) The professional and organizational structure category includes: occupational structure, serving status (regular and reserve), role of women, and composition (ratio of gender and other diversities).
- 3) Well-being can be broadly defined to include those factors impacting the physical and mental health of personnel, either directly or indirectly. Factors included under this heading are: welfare,

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mental and physical health and well-being policy, living conditions, psychological contract, and perceived social support.

- 4) The final category labelled professional conduct relates to the maintenance of discipline and professional conduct within a military force and encompasses criminality and the military; discipline and disciplinary procedures; alcohol, drugs, and pornography; honours and awards; and ethical issues.

The recent nature of truly joint multinational operations has meant that research on the issues and problems arising from these operations have been somewhat scant. However, owing to their increased frequency a body of research has been building that has dealt with most, if not all, the factors listed above. Although limited, this work allows for the identification of the more pertinent issues and problems affecting such missions. This chapter will look at these topics and summarize some of the more relevant work pertaining to each, pointing to areas in need of further research.

### 2.2.1 HR Policy and Practice

Deploying nations participating in common international missions have often developed different human resource management policies and programs in response to different economic, political, and social considerations within their own societies. Once developed, these policies become part of the terms and conditions of employment for personnel and can be difficult to change. This may be due to legal and moral constraints or to the fact that such policies become standards that personnel and bureaucracies are familiar with and are frequently loathe to change. However, as Gareis et al. (2003) point out, these factors can affect “multinational interaction through the mechanism that soldiers and co-workers, in daily interaction, will tend to compare their own national systems with each other, and may in many cases react with, at least, partial dissatisfaction” (pp. 52-53).

Many studies on multinational operations have discussed the potentially negative impact of the gap in salaries and allowances between coalition partners (Bernardova, Strobl, Falar, & Palanova, 2001; Gareis et al., 2003; Winslow, 1999). Personnel from different countries performing the same or similar work alongside each other will tend to compare financial and other rewards. While in some cases, researchers noted that discussion of salaries was carefully avoided it is likely that people will find out who earns what within the collaborative setting of a multinational operation (Gareis et al., 2003).

One obvious negative impact of differential pay scales is that those who are paid at a lower rate may feel undervalued by their governments and militaries. Disaffection with a member’s own force can lead to serious morale problems both in the field and on return home. Furthermore, the work performance of lower paid personnel may be negatively impacted. These people may feel that they need not perform at the highest standard or do as much as those who are paid more. Their motivation and commitment may be undermined (Gareis et al., 2003). While no research has been conducted on the long-term impact of this exposure to differential rewards, it may be the case that retention rates are lower among personnel returning from deployment where such differences were apparent. This could be due to the effects on morale or general dissatisfaction with existing salary and benefits of their own nations.

The relatively poorer financial situation of some militaries may also impact interaction between deployed groups. Those who have lower salaries may not be able to afford to engage socially with members from other, better paid contingents. As Gareis et al. (2003) point out, this was the case with Polish members of the Multinational Corps Northeast. Informal socializing can be an important contributor to better understanding between nations and a better working relationship between contingents. Where this socialization is absent, overall effectiveness may be undermined. Limited social interaction may also lead to the reinforcement of stereotypes or make it more difficult to break down preconceived notions regarding other nations.

Resentment between national contingents may arise due to disparities in salaries and benefits. Feelings of relative deprivation may give rise to varying levels of animosity focussed on other nations, particularly if negative stereotypes already exist. These negative feelings will inhibit the building of trust, mutual respect, and cooperation between the coalition partners and affect the establishment of a healthy organizational climate. As Easter points out, “A pervasive sense of equality helps to create a positive organizational climate” (1996, p. 10).

Incentives, both non-monetary and financial, given to deployed troops can vary considerably between nations. For Czech personnel deployed in Kosovo, the average income was up to five times greater than that at home (Bernardova et al., 2001). Winslow (1999) reported that Canadians deployed in Kosovo received additional financial incentives that they viewed as highly important since “It can help you get out of debt, buy a car or make the down payment on a house” (p. 11). Forces from other countries may see no difference in income from deployment or may be relatively worse off as was the case with British troops redeployed from Germany to Kosovo. Differential commitment to the mission may be an unwanted result of this disparity.

Between various coalition nations there may be differences in working hours, vacation allowances, and other non-monetary benefits. These factors can have a negative impact on group cohesion, morale and effectiveness by further highlighting disparities in treatment. They can also present serious administrative and logistical challenges to coalition leaders trying to ensure proper staffing levels to meet all aspects of the mission. In the Multinational Corps Northeast, for example, rules varied between the members of three nations (Poles, Germans, and Danes) regarding travel time to their home country for vacation and personal reasons (Gareis et al., 2003). This one difference in itself may not significantly impact group effectiveness but it is not difficult to see how in larger, multinational coalitions, the cumulative effect of a myriad of allowance and leave rules can pose serious challenges.

In terms of group interaction, there may also be negative feelings owing to disparities in allowances and benefits. Winslow (1999) reports that in interviews with Canadian soldiers in Kosovo, some commented that “other contingents think we are soft because we give our people three weeks leave and extra money for deploying overseas” (p. 17). As Winslow suggested, issues such as this may reinforce notions that some national contingents are not as professional as others and cannot be relied on to do the job.

While rules and allowances differ between nations, there may also be noticeable national differences in the application of the rules. Some nations may have a tradition of flexibility while others may have more rigid codes (Gareis et al., 2003). HR policies and practices will vary depending on the national standards of each of the contributing forces to the coalition. It may be difficult for personnel from one contingent to understand why they face relatively inflexible rules while other partners appear to enjoy a more liberal regime. Some contingents may also allow for an appeals process in the application of rules and procedures while others may not.

### **2.2.1.1 Unions**

One important contributing factor to the development and implementation of differential HR policies and practices between national militaries may be the existence of military forces unions or professional associations. While many European countries allow for the unionization of military personnel, few, if any, militaries elsewhere in the world permit such associations. In six European countries alone (Sweden, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands and Belgium), there were some 60 military organizations in 1993 (Stites, 1993). These associations had a varying ability to negotiate terms and conditions of employment. The Dutch and German unions, for example, were limited to a consultative role while the Swedish forces had full collective bargaining rights (Stites, 1993).

The existence or lack of such associations may reflect national differences in how the military is viewed. As Stites (1993) points out, military unionization would appear to indicate a less authoritarian organization

and one that reflects the notion of an occupation rather than a profession. Within a multinational context, non-unionized militaries may view those with unions as less disciplined, more poorly organized, and having less of a military culture. These attitudes in turn can affect the way in which various contingents interact with each other and in the establishment of trust in the competency and commitment of others.

On the practical side, the existence of unions will undoubtedly mean that militaries organized in this way will have rules for grievances and appeal that will not exist elsewhere. Terms and conditions of employment will also be contained within collective agreements and may not be open to change or amendment to suit changing circumstances in theater. It may be the case that such agreements constrain coalition commanders who may have to utilize some contingents to a greater extent rather than contravene collective agreements. At the very least, there will be administrative challenges in coordinating mixed unionized and non-unionized contingents. However, there may also be complaints of unfair or preferential treatment given to those with collective agreements over those without such legal safeguards.

### 2.2.1.2 Deployment

Length of deployment and frequency of rotation vary quite significantly by country. In some cases, nations will post personnel into multinational operations for as little as 4 months. Other countries have requirements for 1-year deployments. As Elron, Shamir, and Ben-Ari (1999) have pointed out, “Such rotation further increases the challenge of achieving high coordination, swift trust, and smooth operation in a culturally diverse workforce” (p. 83).

It is argued that longer deployments are necessary to allow for greater familiarization with the theater of operations and permit greater stability for the multinational force. Lengthier tours of duty also ease the pressures of training and relocating replacement troops on the part of donor countries, particularly those with limited resources. Even senior United States (US) Army officials have expressed concerns that the Army at its current size and configuration cannot meet projected requirements for Iraq and Afghanistan unless active duty and reserve troops spend 12 months in combat zones (Shaker & Schmitt, 2004).

Shorter stays, on the other hand, can prevent problems that arise due to boredom and routine. This is especially true in operations where there are limited facilities and troops are offered few outlets for relaxation. Furthermore, sustained exposure to hostile populations, as in Somalia and Iraq, can lead to a sapping of morale and the emergence of psychological problems among troops. The fact that the stay is of limited duration may assist in alleviating these potential problems. Further, shorter deployments may be easier on families, and in general, different tour lengths can have varying implications for families. Shaker and Schmitt (2004), reporting on the US Army’s experience with 12-month deployments, state that many senior army officers have reported a potential erosion of the Army’s ability to recruit and retain personnel unless tours of duty are shortened to 6 to 9 months.

Administratively and logistically, important issues arise from the varying lengths of tours of each national contingent. Systems and practices worked out with one rotation will often have to be worked out anew with the next rotation from that donor nation. Personal relationships and informal friendships and networks built up between national contingents will have to be renegotiated after each change in personnel due to the differing times of rotation and differing lengths of postings. The impact of these networks and relationships on operational effectiveness should not be underestimated. Coming from many different cultures, speaking a number of languages, and governed by varying military traditions, coalitions can be awkward and unworkable without the informal grid of relationships that build up between individuals.

Multinational coalitions often face the problem of multiple languages being spoken among contingents. Using a common language such as English to overcome this language barrier can assist in ensuring effective communications. However, as others (e.g., Stewart, Bonner & Verrall, 2001) have pointed out, working in a second language can be difficult even for more fluent speakers of the other language given the use of slang



and technical terms. Furthermore, this communication problem can exacerbate the normal stresses and strains of working in theater. As Ryan (2000) and Gillespie (2002) have shown, within the context of multinational operations, even individuals who are native speakers of the same language may miss nuances and subtle meanings because of dialects, pronunciation and unfamiliar nonverbal cues. Exposure over a period of time to particular expressions of verbal and nonverbal communication of commands and orders within a coalition can ensure more effective response and smoother operations (see also Riedel, Chapter 6). If personnel change on a frequent basis then they may not be able to achieve the necessary levels of comprehension to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission.

Phased rotation of troops, as Palin suggests, would certainly help ease transitions and avoid the loss of experience and knowledge (1995). However, each nation in a coalition has control over its own contingent. National governments may be unwilling to relinquish this control to a coalition commander from another country, making the likelihood of such planned rotations very slim.

One seemingly effective mechanism for getting past this problem is through the training and use of liaison officers (Ryan, 2000). These personnel could be placed for longer periods of time than their national contingents and could establish initial networks and working relationships that then could be more fully utilized by their deploying troops. Palin (1995) and Gillespie (2002) offer an alternative solution of greater use of liaison officers administratively and at the headquarters level. By clearly defining terms and describing courses of actions, uncertainty may be minimized even where contingents normally use different languages. For Gillespie, a good example of what might be effective is the NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGS) which “incorporate the lexicons from the alliance forces, and translate them into a common technical language that is readily understood” (p. 18).

### **2.2.2 Professional and Organizational Structure**

Most militaries throughout the world have adopted a hierarchical command structure. In multinational operations, therefore, one would not anticipate too many problems or issues between contingents in terms of command and control. However, there can be quite marked differences between forces in terms of the degree and extent of hierarchical control. Indeed, many militaries have become “flatter” organizations. This has been due in part to societal pressures. This trend can also be attributed to the development of technology and non-traditional concepts such as a networked force, which requires less control from the center, and has led to the opening up of traditional structures.

Regardless of current trends, some forces have had a more open, egalitarian structure than others for some time. At one end of the spectrum, the Swedish Armed Forces have traditionally been more open and flatter than, for example, the British or American militaries. This variation in rigidity leads to varying types of interaction among ranks. In comparing Dutch and Germans in the Multinational Corps Northeast, Gareis et al. (2003) observed that “German soldiers indicated that the tone in the Dutch armed forces was more loose and friendly than in the Bundeswehr” (p. 32). Conversely, the same study showed that the Dutch contingent saw the tone in the Bundeswehr as “rougher and more rigorous” (Gareis et al., 2003, p. 32). Winslow (1999) noted that in Kosovo there were significant differences between contingents in the relationships between officers and senior non-commissioned members that occurred within contingents. During Operation Desert Storm, the American military personnel “reported a remoteness between soldiers, NCOs, and officers in the Saudi military” (Luft, 2002, p. 262).

In multinational operations, members of one national contingent may find themselves at odds with officers from another contingent because of differences in style stemming from historical and traditional patterns of interaction. This may work in different ways, in that people may be equally offended by over-familiarity as by formality. Furthermore, these differing styles may prevent the development of trust and cohesion between groups. Personnel who are used to more formal interaction with officers may not have the same respect for officers from other countries with less rigid traditions. Informality may be viewed as unprofessional (Luft, 2002).

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Attitudes towards other contingents can also be affected by the serving status of contingent members. In many cases military forces will be composed of conscripts. These personnel are often viewed differently from enlisted members of a force, who are seen as more professional. Even though troops may be competent and have adequate training and experience, the fact that they are conscripts rather than volunteers may influence opinion and interaction (Winslow, 1999; see also Browne, Chapter 8).

Similarly, personnel belonging to the reserves may be seen as not at the same standard of professionalism as those in the regular forces (Winslow, 1999). Many countries have had to use reservists increasingly in deployed situations due to the increased tempo of operations and the over-commitment of regular forces. This has been the case for some time with the Canadian Forces and is evidenced among US Forces deployed to Iraq. The notion that part-time soldiers have acquired the same military skill sets as those in full-time service may not be subscribed to by many of the latter group.

The increased tempo of operations in the past few years has been coupled with an increased complexity in missions. Troops now use more technologically advanced equipment and deal with a wider range of ethnic groups, social issues and legal problems. The expertise necessary to successfully complete a mission may be missing from a contingent without the assistance of reservists. Using their specialist skills on an as-needed basis will undoubtedly mean that reservists will become more commonly deployed. Clearly, this necessitates the development of new strategies to deal with the observed negative attitudes of regular forces to reservists.

In the Canadian case, as Winslow (1999) points out, younger reservists were supervised by senior regular force personnel in order to ensure that work was carried out properly and as a way of helping to integrate them into the team. In interviews with personnel in Kosovo, it was recommended to Winslow that reservists also be given greater opportunities to work with their battle groups prior to deployment. In this way, reservists could establish relationships and gain the confidence of the regular forces that would be deployed with them, prior to being put into harm's way.

Increasingly, multinational operations involve contingents from very diverse backgrounds. Creating a harmonious working relationship between national contingents may be something of a challenge if they are composed of members from ethnic or religious groups with an historical animosity. Care needs to be taken, therefore, to ensure that potential points of conflict are avoided throughout the course of the operation. The same is true for dealings with local populations who may be distrustful of some national contingents, again owing to historical ethnic, cultural, political and economic differences.

Even where contingents have little or no history of conflict, stereotypes may interfere with the smooth accomplishment of a mission. The negative impact of stereotyping on group cohesion has been noted in a number of studies (Gareis et al., 2003; Ryan, 2000). What is clear, however, is that continued interaction between contingents can, in some cases, lessen the validity of stereotypes and help to minimize possible negative outcomes.

The composition of national forces, to a greater or lesser degree, will reflect the demographic reality of each nation. The Canadian Forces, for example, is committed to broad ethnic and gender representation and aims to bring the Forces more in line with the demographic and ethnic profile of the working population. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the most recent Canadian defence statement, expanding the forces by up to 8000 personnel, specifically targets Canada's ethnic population for recruiting priority (Department of National Defence, 2005).

Avoiding inter-ethnic issues between contingents may be even more difficult within ethnically heterogeneous contingents. It may prove impossible and unreasonable to take some members out of their contingent because of their ethnic background and the possibility that this may result in tension with the local population or other contingents. Issues around color or religion of contingent members may exacerbate these possible dangers.

The composition of military contingents will also vary on the basis of gender. Many nations still restrict women's involvement in, or exclude them completely from, military service. Owing to cultural and religious prohibitions, women in most Arab and many developing countries have few roles to play in the military. At the other end of the spectrum, some countries (e.g., Canada and Sweden) permit women in all branches of the forces and in all roles, including combat (Davis & McKee, 2005).

However, even countries with restrictions on women's involvement in military operations have found themselves employing women to help supplement overstretched resources. Women make up 20% of the US military (Marshall, Kaiser, & Kessmeier, 1997) and though officially they are not allowed to play combat roles, it is estimated that some 26,000 women served in Operation Desert Storm (Luft, 2002). These numbers may have been surpassed in the current deployment of troops to Iraq.

The increased use of women in theater has been precipitated not only by national pressures but also by the very nature of many coalition operations. Working in traditional societies such as Iraq and Afghanistan, coalition forces have realized the need for women in dealing with the women of the host populations. In Afghanistan, the US Army used women in combat zones to conduct searches of Afghan women so as not to offend the local population, in spite of the fact that this contravened official policy (Stars and Stripes, 2002). Furthermore, in tense situations which arise in the complex missions of many coalition operations, some countries have found that the use of women can defuse potentially hostile situations (DeGroot, 1996).

Regardless of the roles that women play in militaries, an increasing reality of many multinational operations is the presence of women within national contingents. For some, the involvement of women can be offensive, unless there is a real physical separation of the sexes. Jewish law (Halacha) forbids the sharing of close quarters by unrelated males and females, something which may occur within military operations (Jerusalem Post, 2001).

The relatively subordinate role of women in some societies also makes it difficult for some military personnel to take orders from females and can offend local populations. Luft (2002) notes that in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm, Saudis were embarrassed by the fact that women were protecting them. Furthermore, Saudi soldiers lost some respect for their American counterparts when they observed them taking commands from women (Luft, 2002). Indeed, the role of women in the US forces in Saudi Arabia became a diplomatic issue when local women began emulating female American personnel who regularly drove trucks and cars. This led to the issuing of an order by the Saudi ruler: "US female military personnel in uniform are not women when driving military vehicles" (Luft, 2002, p. 285).

Female personnel coming from less traditional societies where women enjoy equal rights with men may experience particularly trying situations in more traditional, host countries. While their male counterparts may be allowed to socialize with locals, leave bases, or fully enjoy free time, the same freedoms may not be extended to female personnel. The impact on morale among mixed-gender contingents of such differential treatment may interfere with effective operations and successful mission accomplishment. Furthermore, if female personnel find themselves restricted in terms of their jobs so as not to offend the sensitivities of other contingents or the indigenous population, then they may feel less prone to remain in the forces on return to their home country.

Interaction between contingents may also be affected by the presence of women in one force and their absence in others. Even when contingents come from less traditional societies where women have assumed a wide variety of roles, there may be difficulties for some troops who are unused to women in uniform and in combat. Seeing female casualties, taking orders from women officers, and dealing with women in close proximity in what has traditionally been an all-male environment can cause stresses and strains in a coalition and hinder effective cooperation and the building of good working relationships (Winslow, 1999).

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While negative attitudes towards the presence of women in a contingent can cause difficulties among coalition partners, equally contentious is the fact that some national armies permit openly gay and lesbian personnel. Social, religious, and national taboos and biases against homosexuals can lead to friction between coalition partners and between contingents and the host society. That gays and lesbians are less visible than women or ethnic minorities may serve to lessen tension. However, attitudes between national contingents may be colored by the openness of homosexual participation in one group and the exclusion of gays and lesbians from other militaries (Bateman & Dalvi, 2004).

### 2.2.3 Well-Being

Ensuring the physical and mental well-being of personnel, particularly in a deployed situation is of critical importance to military organizations. In order to cope with the stresses and strains of operations, and to perform the mission, staff must be in good physical and mental condition. Frequently, resources are not as available for some contingents as for others. The more affluent or better funded militaries will be able to provide a wider range of more comprehensive services to their troops. This can include better training equipment, sports facilities and gyms, as well as better social, medical and psychological support programs and services. In many deployments today, for example, Canada will include a military psychologist in the contingent (Winslow, 1999).

Within a coalition deployment, the better equipped partners can often provide support to the other contingents and ensure that there is access to quality services for all. However, with rotation, these same resources can be withdrawn, leaving the coalition in worse condition. As Davis et al. (2003) observed in the Balkans, the pullout of British troops brought with it the loss of important intratheater ground transportation of patients. Among other things, this withdrawal also meant that there were no longer helicopters available for MEDEVAC. With no other partners immediately able to supplement for the loss of service, the mission could have been jeopardized (Davis et al., 2003). While coalition partners may attempt to plan ahead so as to cover these contingencies, the deployment of forces is up to individual nations and not up to the coalition leaders. In the Balkan case, other nations were able to fill the gaps but only after a period of loss of service.

With the diversity between groups of coalition partners being deployed in recent years, the disparities in services offered by various contingents has become greater than ever. Smaller African contingents, for example, have not been able to provide the same level of health services available to their larger US or United Kingdom (UK) counterparts. For this reason, the larger contingents may find themselves under increasing pressure to service non-nationals and other personnel. This can lead to an over-reliance on one partner as evidenced by the example above. This can also lead to undue pressures being placed on the resources of one or a few partners. Prior to deployment, each nation will allocate resources to meet the needs of its contingent. However, when these same resources are called into service for the entire mission, dealing with far greater numbers of personnel than anticipated, it may lead to an undermining of these services or a diminution in the quality of the service provided.

Davis et al. (2003) observed that in multinational coalition forces, there are often lower levels of pre-deployment medical screening, preventive medicine support, and medical and dental readiness. This appears to be most common among soldiers from developing nations and former Soviet Republics. This may mean the incidence of a larger range of health problems which can be greater in deployment than was the case in the past. Medics must deal with conditions, illnesses, and issues that were less prevalent in the past when the deployed contingent was healthier and better looked after prior to going on mission.

The fact that members of different contingents have varying levels of health preparedness prior to deployment may also affect the success of a mission. If a commander cannot rely on some contingents to perform because of overall health concerns, including lack of physical fitness, medical problems or other considerations, then this may lead to a situation where operations are inhibited or where some contingents

are relied upon more heavily than others. The possible over-use of one national contingent may over time lead to the emergence of health issues among these personnel. They could be subject to exhaustion, burn-out, depression and other physical and psychological conditions that result from being called upon more than was originally planned and, for medical personnel specifically, to be required to deal with a greater array of ailments and medical conditions than anticipated (Davis et al., 2003).

Providing medical assistance to troops is vital to the physical well-being of these personnel. However, the fact that such resources exist and can be counted on in time of need is important for the maintenance of the morale of those deployed. As Verrall (2003) states, expectation of, and confidence in, the very best quality medical care realistically achievable in a theater of operations is central to morale. This is particularly the case among contingents from more developed nations. For North American and Western European personnel, for example, standards of health services are very high for the general population, military included. Even in deployment, expectations are that a certain level and quality of service will be provided. Where this is not the case, personnel may feel that they are not being looked after appropriately and may be reluctant or unwilling to go into harm's way. Furthermore, as Verrall points out, lack of services may lead to litigation.

The provision of medical and social services and recreation and fitness facilities, among other things, is necessary to ensure that troops are physically and mentally prepared to meet the challenges of the mission. However, what such programs and policies underscore is the notion that deployed troops will be looked after while in hazardous situations. The unwritten contract between deployed personnel and their military leaders involves establishing trust that the enlisted personnel will conduct operations as ordered and that their leaders will ensure that they have their needs met. That most Western militaries have now developed a wide range of well-being policies and programs testifies to the increased importance of these non-financial supports in maintaining morale and cohesion among forces.

Once more, however, the differential provision of such services between forces in a coalition situation may exacerbate feelings of relative deprivation and animosity or jealousy between contingents. It can also lead to the sense among some contingents that others are pampered, which may impact group cohesion. This can also be the case when there is a notable disparity in living conditions between contingents. The fact that better funded militaries can afford to set up camps where living conditions are more than adequate may reinforce divisions in a multinational coalition similar to those arising from disparities in income and service provision.

As has been said, for some deployed troops, a manifestation of public support for their efforts is the provision of what they would view as adequate services and programs. The impact of such perceived public support on the morale and willingness of some contingents to engage in a mission should not be underestimated. Furthermore, the vagaries of public opinion back home directly impact a mission through the curtailing of activities or even the withdrawal of troops (see also Browne, Chapter 8). Canadian public opinion, for example, has long been favorable to Canadian Forces participation in peacekeeping missions but opposed to coalitions engaged in wars. This has led to selective deployments of Canadian troops over the last few decades and to restrictions being placed on the role played by the Canadian Forces in coalitions. Commanders in the field daily face situations requiring that they assess the risk of an operation and weigh this against public and political opinion back home, especially if casualties may result from the decision. While such considerations are important for militaries from liberal democracies, such may not be the case for those from societies with less open regimes. Commanders from such countries may find it difficult to understand why others do not simply look at the military considerations of an action or plan and act accordingly.

#### **2.2.4 Professional Conduct**

Even seemingly similar nations may differ fundamentally in their outlook and views on moral and ethical behavior. Canada and the US may share the longest open border in the world but there exists a well

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documented gulf in basic values between the populations of the two neighbors (Adams, 1997, 2004). Given the fact that military organizations will reflect the core values and beliefs of their native countries, it comes as no surprise that the US and Canadian Forces are different in a number of important ways, such as the degree of formality between ranks. Within coalition situations, where contingents are drawn from many nations, the differences in values, attitudes, and behaviors can be vastly different from one national group to another. While sharing a “military” culture, national contingents will reveal many other cultural differences. In particular, these militaries will come together with varying notions and perceptions of acceptable behavior. Reconciling these differences may prove difficult, if not impossible, for commanders, and can have a negative impact on operational effectiveness (see Febbraro, Chapter 3).

Nuciari (2002), citing a survey of NATO troops, indicated that one-quarter of those surveyed saw different ethical codes as a source of intercultural problematic relations in coalitions. A number of studies of multinational operations have highlighted the fact that differences in ethical behavior can undermine operations (Gillespie, 2002; Winslow, 1999). Much of this debate, however, comes from a Western perspective on what is acceptable behavior for military personnel and does not take into consideration the cultural background of each contingent.

In the Balkans, it was noted by Canadian troops participating in multinational operations that some foreign forces became involved in the black market (Winslow, 1999). Certain national contingents felt that this was a legitimate way to supplement their income and reflected fairly normal practices in their home countries. Similarly, accepting bribes was commonplace among some troops, much to the annoyance of the Canadian contingent (Winslow, 1999). Such behavior also led to the questioning of the professionalism of personnel from those nations taking part in such activities.

A number of respondents to a Canadian Ethics Survey conducted among military personnel mentioned the fact that among some contingents in deployment in the Balkans, officers would allocate United Nations (UN) food rations by rank and keep some for sale on the black market (Winslow, 1999). Canadian egalitarian values and notions teach that it is the duty of officers to look after enlisted personnel and as such, Canadian personnel were deeply offended by such behavior. Such actions then directly impacted the way in which the Canadians viewed these officers, undermining trust and giving rise to a sense that some people were not to be depended on to protect the troops.

However, in some operations, bribery on the part of locals to extract favors or secure contracts or employment from the international contingent has been quite common. In Kosovo, people seeking work frequently attempted to bribe the Canadian officers in charge of assigning contracts (Winslow, 1999). The local population deemed this as an acceptable and normal form of behavior. However, for the Canadians this was viewed as unethical and caused them to question the morality of the population. This culture clash between the contingent and the local population that they were seeking to protect can clearly undermine relationships and cause personnel to question what they are doing in the host country.

Involvement in black-marketeering and bribery are only some of the manifestations of varying ethical codes among contingents in multinational operations. Gillespie (2002), referring to actions in Kosovo, speaks of sexual harassment and abuse towards the indigenous population on the part of some troops. For these personnel, their behavior may be viewed as an acceptable practice as measured by the values of the host country or their country of origin.

However, not all unethical behavior should be attributed to cultural differences. Indeed, some activities may be deemed as unethical or improper in the country of origin of the perpetrator. Furthermore, a host of other explanatory factors may be at work to help explain behavior. In Lebanon, for example, pilfering by UNIFIL troops was commonplace (Plante, 1998). However, UN officials in that country argued that “this could not only be considered as a way of compensating for low salaries but as a confluence of additional factors that included motivation and training for UN peacekeeping services, deficiencies in

military leadership and cultural variations concerning what was or was not acceptable behavior” (Plante, 1998, p. 4).

The fact that some types of behavior are universally considered inappropriate, unethical, or wrong, can lead to the development of some fairly broad principles of ethical behavior for adoption by international coalitions. To elaborate a detailed or extensive code of ethics that would fit all nations would be ambitious to say the least. However, setting down some basic principles to be adhered to by all contingents would be a start and allow commanders to exercise some measure of discipline. Such a code, however, would need to incorporate or accommodate cultural sensitivities and religious requirements.

Deciding on what is or is not an appropriate behavior has typically been left up to individual national commanders in the area of operations. In some instances, direct national pressure has led to the development of policy in the field. This was the case when Canada restricted alcohol consumption by imposing limits on military personnel on active duty owing to some high profile incidents that were believed to have been precipitated by alcohol. The fact that Canadian soldiers had a two-beer limit while deployed did not sit well with many personnel. This is particularly the case in more difficult postings where troops have few if any other recreational outlets (Dunn & Fleming, 2001).

Alcohol consumption offers a clear example of the difficulties in developing a policy applicable to all contingents around acceptable behaviors. For religious reasons, many nations forbid alcohol completely. In others, alcohol is part of the way of life. As Dzvonik, Retzlaff, and Popa (2004) show in a study of US, Romanian, and Slovak aviators, attitudes to alcohol consumption varied markedly among these national contingents. Romanians and Slovaks had a “more positive attitude to and tolerance of alcohol consumption” than their American counterparts (Dzvonik et al., 2004, p. 5).

A clearer consensus may exist around the inappropriateness of the use of drugs in the field. Almost all nations have sanctions against recreational drug use. However, in practice, some are more lax at imposing these rules in operations, as witnessed by the prevalence of drug use among American soldiers in Vietnam. Furthermore, while use of any drugs may be frowned upon, some countries impose lesser penalties for the use of marijuana, while others do not make distinctions between various drugs.

Commanders of international coalitions, in seeking to impose discipline, are presented with a myriad of national rules and regulations, accepted behaviors, and values that make this task virtually impossible. However, commanders must be seen to be fair to all and differential imposition of penalties and restrictions will not be viewed favorably by personnel from the various contingents. Canadian military personnel in Kosovo, for example, felt that they were being hard-pressed because of limitations on alcohol consumption while other national contingents had either no limits or had higher limits for their personnel (Dunn & Flemming, 2001).

Not only do contingents have a different sense of acceptable and unacceptable behavior, when people do infringe on regulations, punishment can vary depending on the national customs and practices of the military concerned. In some cases, what would solicit a rebuke in one group may warrant much more serious action within another. Theft, for example, is viewed harshly in some countries and can result in the imposition of serious penalties, such as the severing of a hand. In others, depending on the amount taken or the value of the item, theft may be seen as a petty crime and warrant only a fine. Similarly, drunkenness can be viewed in some militaries as harmless and acceptable while in others it may be seen as a serious religious and moral infraction.

### **2.3 OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

While impacting contingent members within the organization and affecting what they do and the way they do it, organizational factors are seen as operating at a different level from those listed under the category

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of personnel. Rather than dealing with human resource issues, these factors pertain to processes and practices within the military organization and between the military and other stakeholders and actors.

For ease of analysis, these topics can usefully be categorized into those that are related to the internal working of an organization, or internal operations, and those that impact relationships with others and might be classified under external relations. These are not seen as entirely discrete divisions but rather as a useful way of organizing what would otherwise be a diverse and wide range of issues. This should assist in the identification of problems and possible solutions. Internal operations factors, therefore, would include: organizational structure (perceived and real), organizational processes (tempo, complexity, quality), and centralization/decentralization. External relations, while still referring to some internal organizational issues, nevertheless may be said to more directly impact the way in which that organization interacts with other militaries, civilians, and enemies. These factors then include: doctrine and concepts, rules of engagement, pooling resources, sharing capabilities, specialization, CIMIC policy (i.e., policy affecting civil-military co-operation), and media/military interface.

In other sections of this report, a number of these listed factors are addressed either in part or whole and are therefore only briefly alluded to here. Furthermore, as elsewhere, the relative recency of research in this area means that some of the listed topics are not fully explored in existing references. However, where possible, some speculative comments will be made regarding potential problematic areas based on experience in other organizations and situations.

### 2.3.1 Internal Organizational Processes

The way in which military organizations are structured may appear on the surface to be similar regardless of the nation concerned. However, history, tradition, and cultural and national differences have imprinted themselves on all militaries and have led to what are sometimes quite stark differences in structure. Furthermore, the dominant economic and political beliefs of each country will lead to the emergence of specific types of organizations reflective of these underlying values. Liberal democracies tend to give rise to more open, flatter organizational structures which allow for communication up and down the chain of command. Decision making is similarly open and transparent. Paths for promotion and upward mobility are clearly laid out and governed, or at least protected, by law so that those with grievances have avenues for appeal both within and outside of the organization. Obviously, this structure is one that is not apparent in more totalitarian societies or in those with strong class or caste systems. Furthermore, in some nations, it may be acceptable to have biased hiring practices, less objective promotion systems and a greater tendency to secrecy and exclusion. All of these differences apparent in civil society will also be observable among military organizations.

The influence of the US and the UK, among others, on the militaries of developing countries is certainly visible when one looks at the outward manifestations of military culture (e.g., ceremonies, uniforms, and rank structure). However, much of this similarity is only superficial. Underneath the surface, the many cultural adaptations and modifications that may differentiate contingents mean that we are not dealing with the same kinds of institutions. However, because of external similarities, there may be expectations that all coalition partners will act in the same way and adhere to the same organizational structure. When this is not seen to be the case, there may be a reinforcement of racial and ethnic stereotypes that may have a negative impact on the mission.

As mentioned before, the more strictly hierarchical militaries of the developing world and former eastern bloc countries produce an organizational structure that can be less flexible and open to change. Particularly in an operational setting, some nations have a tendency to relax the hierarchical chain of command. This not only provides flexibility but helps retain solidarity and a high level of camaraderie. To others who may view these same nations as lax in terms of rules, such informality may only hinder the building of trust across contingents. So, for example, the notion of the strategic corporal is one that has



become accepted within many militaries and has been accommodated through structural changes. Such a concept would appear to be anathema to a number of military organizations who might see independent actions on the part of junior enlisted soldiers as insubordination.

In building an organization to control and coordinate multinational contingents, thought must be given to the differential structures of various military contingents. If an organization is to be developed that will run smoothly, commanders must be sensitive to the processes and procedures of each partner (see Febraro, Chapter 3). While some may be uncomfortable with the way that other militaries structure their organization, they must be prepared to accommodate these differences for the sake of the smooth running of the mission.

One other major concern when setting up a structure to engage in a multinational operation is ensuring inclusion of all coalition partners. However, not all parties in the coalition will have equal access to resources or training, have acquired the same capabilities, or will adhere to the same logistical or administrative doctrine (Marshall et al., 1997). It becomes more important, at some points, then, to have an inclusive organization rather than one structured for maximum operational efficiency.

The fact that some military forces are more fully equipped with modern weaponry than others raises the question of interoperability in multinational coalitions. Trying to build an organization around what can be considerable differences in resources between contingents can lead to frustration and friction. Those who have the resources may find them stretched to the limit as they seek to provide for those that are less well equipped. One way in which this has been handled in the field is through the division of responsibilities on a geographic basis (Marshall et al., 1997). Another possible solution is employing different contingents to fulfil different specific functions for which they are more equipped and capable. In East Timor, Ryan (2000) reported that some contingents unprepared for hostilities chose instead to concentrate on the social reconstruction side of the mission by providing medical and agricultural assistance.

Not only will nations differ in terms of the structure of their military organizations but such differences will also be apparent in the processes adopted by each contingent. Formal meetings with strict agendas, time frames, and terms of reference are the hallmark of most organizations, military and civilian, in the West. As Ryan observes, "Western operational culture emphasizes a brusque can-do approach that is entirely appropriate where all parties understand each other" (2000, p. 93). This is not so in much of the rest of the world. Business is conducted in many countries in a more informal and relaxed manner. Indeed many Western observers might see this approach as unbusinesslike. However, others would view this less rigid approach as part of the way in which to do business well: getting to know people, socializing, and building a relationship. In the context of a multinational deployment, it may be seen by some contingents as rude and unfriendly if meetings are conducted according to a Western business model. As Ryan further comments, "It is no use for Western troops to exhibit impatience with their partners; the cohesion of the force and the potential contribution made by other forces is too important for that" (p. 93).

Again, in many Western societies, business models stress the need for speedy decision making and an increased efficiency in performing work and accomplishing specific goals. Other cultures promote a more measured approach, with less stress being placed on time and more on quality and interpersonal interaction. Within a military operational setting, these differences can lead to tension and misunderstanding. On the one hand, there will be those who feel that decisions are being made too quickly and in an ill-considered manner. On the other hand, there will be those who think that valuable time is being lost in discussion and consultation that would be better spent in action. The diplomatic and political necessities underscoring any international mission make it imperative that these diverse approaches be blended to make for a workable coalition where all partners feel included.

Decentralized militaries allow for a greater degree of decision making in the theater of operations without constant reference back to the country of origin. However, clearly this will not work with those militaries

that prefer a more centralized approach. This may cause delays in theater that some see as unnecessary. In Somalia, the constant need for some contingents to refer orders back to the national command proved to be a problem when operational tempo increased (Ryan, 2000). Furthermore, difficulties may arise in developing a command structure in theater with key actors having diverging views on the appropriate degree of centralization of authority. It may be argued, however, that the very nature of coalitions is one that promotes less centralized authority, allowing varying national contingents the ability to exercise authority in their preferred way. The basis for a workable coalition, however, remains negotiation and compromise.

### 2.3.2 External Relations

How a military organization relates to external agencies, friendly or hostile, is generally governed by the prevailing doctrine. Establishing parameters within which the organization can operate, the appropriate structure, the function of personnel, and the scope of action of those in command and those receiving orders, constitutes the basic military organizational doctrine. Put more succinctly, military doctrine is what we believe about the best way to conduct military affairs (Drew & Snow, 2006).

While some militaries do not have explicit formal doctrine, these guidelines are more frequently being developed and promoted among militaries. This has been due, at least in part, to the need to retain political control of militaries when operating out of country. Where these doctrines conflict between nations, serious challenges are presented to commanders in negotiating and coordinating collaborative efforts. The source of these differences can be due to basic national and cultural influences. Furthermore, while military doctrine should be an evolving set of ideas designed to help commanders and troops respond to changing situations, it may be the case that while some nations actively review and reassess their military doctrine, others do not. When not actively reviewed, doctrine can stagnate and become an unchanging and unchangeable set of rules and regulations (Drew & Snow, 2006). However, in the fast-paced operations of today what is needed is doctrine that is “specific enough to be useful in a particular case, yet adaptable to a wide range of possible operations” (Ryan, 2000, p. 124).

In operations involving a number of national contingents, there may then be a need to develop a joint or multinational doctrine: an agreed upon set of rules that can work within each nation’s own specified doctrine. This, however, is much easier said than done. As Marshall et al. point out, “military doctrine is embedded in the ethos, traditions, heritage and national roles of the various armies of the world. Because of this, common doctrine is not achievable in the short term” (1997, p. 17).

What can be accomplished, however, is the development of protocols and common procedures. As Canna points out, “Over extended periods ... Doctrine, standardization and political consensus characterize alliances” (2004, p. 3). Common procedures become all the more important given the fact that much of the expressed military doctrine is encapsulated in specific terms not readily understandable to other nations. In Somalia, language and cultural differences meant that “US doctrinal terms were not universally accepted or understood” (Marshall et al., 1997, p. 71). Over time, with continued interaction, doctrinal differences can be moderated, mutual understanding can be developed and working relationships can be built.

Not only does the US military have a well-developed doctrine covering operations, but since 1999 the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the US have elaborated on a Joint Doctrine. This specifies the roles, obligations, duties and rights of US commanders and troops in multinational operations where US forces will be working alongside others both as leaders and followers. Such a comprehensive set of doctrinal statements has also been produced by Australia and other nations. The four nations of the ABCA (America, Britain, Canada and Australia) organization have also developed some common understandings, approaching common doctrine (ABCA, 2001).

One area of doctrine that has been highlighted by commanders in the field as of pivotal importance is the Rules of Engagement (ROE) (see Canna, 2004, p. 28; Maillet, 1998, p. 10). It is in this area in particular that national political interests directly intervene in the conduct of international deployments:

ROE are directives to military forces and individuals that define the circumstances, conditions, degree, and manner in which force or actions may or may not be applied....The commander needs to reconcile differences as much as possible to develop and implement simple ROE that can be tailored by member forces to their national policies. (ABCA, 2001, p. 1-19)

For military personnel, the need to have ROE that suit the situation is of paramount importance. However, national differences in the definition of a given situation, political considerations, and other factors often contrive to make for a confusing array of ROE. In coordinating efforts of a multinational operation, such disarray can impose serious problems and issues of safety. However, even at the national level, contingents find their ROE changed. Commenting on an experience in Bosnia, one senior Canadian officer complained that ROEs were changed by Canada, making it impossible to deploy that contingent on operations which would involve shooting (Maillet, 1998). "Just such an operation occurred and I was faced with removing the contingent and replacing it with another nation" (Maillet, 1998, p. 10).

In another reported incident, soldiers disobeyed ROE which limited their ability to offer protection to translators (Maillet, 1998). These troops found that ethically they could not adhere to the rules that subsequently were changed to better reflect their values and beliefs.

An inherent problem with the development of a common coalition ROE is that some militaries view these prescriptively or in a restrictive way while others view them descriptively or in a permissive way (Womack, 1996). The US and other Western nations tend to adhere to the latter interpretation. However, for many other militaries, and it has been argued for UN mandated missions, military contingents must operate within defined limits and cannot change the set parameters without reference back to the central agency (Womack, 1996). Some national contingents also operate in this way even when the operational tempo is increased and decisions must be made in a hurry. This has undoubtedly led to friction between coalition partners, as in Somalia (Ryan, 2000).

Increasingly in both peacekeeping and peacemaking operations, military commanders have become more cognizant of the need to ensure smooth relations between the military and civilians directly or indirectly involved in operations. The fact that the initial decision to participate or not in a given mission is one determined by politicians, who in most cases are sensitive to public opinion, means that commanders must be concerned with civil-military relations to a degree that has certainly not been the case in the past. Not only must forces deal with the local civilian population and do so in a way that militaries have not done in the past, they must also deal with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media. This engagement with civilians has been considered within the category of civil-military co-operation (CIMIC):

CIMIC is the relationship of interaction, cooperation, and coordination, mutual support, joint planning, and constant exchange of information at all levels between military forces, civilian organizations, agencies, and intertheater civil influences needed to achieve an effective response in the full range of operations. (ABCA, 2001, pp. 9-10)

In today's multinational interventions, it is becoming harder to say where the military mission ends and the humanitarian mission begins. For this reason, militaries are as likely now to be trying to win the peace as they are to win the war. What that has meant in real terms is that contingents must now engage in rebuilding economies, ensuring conditions for the development of new political and social structures, and become involved with local populations to win hearts and minds.

Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, for instance, are currently working with other national contingents to militarily defeat the Taliban. To this end they have engaged in traditional warfare, identifying and

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neutralizing enemy positions and strongholds. However, they have also been active members in the reconstruction efforts in Kandahar province, assisting the provincial government in establishing democratic structures and processes. This element of the Canadian Forces involvement is viewed as part of a more holistic approach to resolving conflict and aiding peacekeeping (Capstick, 2006).

Fulfilling a peacemaking role, military contingents have now begun to interact with, and in some instances rely on, an ever increasing number of NGOs to help accomplish mission objectives. Winslow (2000) reports that in 1989 there were 48 international NGOs registered with the UN; by 1998 this figure had risen to 1500. Similarly, Ryan observes, “At least 65 identifiable organizations were active in East Timor during INTERFET’s [International Force for East Timor] command of which 23 were UN agencies. This was an almost manageable number: at one stage in Rwanda 134 were counted” (2000, p. 108).

The interaction between NGOs and the military has not always gone smoothly. Winslow (2000) identifies five areas that have given rise to tension: organizational culture, tasks and ways of accomplishing them, definitions of success, ability to exert influence, and control of resources. Perhaps the key differentiator and source of tension between NGOs and the military is the very different culture prevalent in both organizational types. Among other things NGOs tend to have flatter, more decentralized structures. Their *raison d’être* is the alleviation of suffering through community involvement and reconstruction. Militaries, on the other hand, are typically seen by others in a theater of operations as there to wage war, which certainly was their primary or only role in the past. Their engagement with locals tended to be at best superficial and fleeting, often one of avoidance rather than contact. While this has changed due to the nature of changing operations, the organizational cultural factors such as beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that came with this former type of interaction may still persist within some militaries (Winslow, 2000).

Traditional stereotypes and views take a long time to change. This has certainly been the case with those prevalent among militaries concerning NGOs and vice versa. As Winslow reports, some NGO representatives interviewed saw the military as “Boys with toys, rigid, authoritarian, conservative, impatient, arrogant, civilian phobic, homophobic, and excessively security conscious” (2000, p. 222). As part of another study, the same author notes that in interviewing battalion commanders, the view of NGOs was equally unflattering. In this case, they saw these organizations as “Children of the 60s, flaky do-gooders, permissive, unpunctual, obstructionist, anarchic, undisciplined, self-righteous, and anti-military” (Winslow, 2000, p. 222). Added to these observations, the ABCA Coalition Handbook (2001) identifies other common perceptions including the military’s view that NGOs cannot speak with one voice and lack discipline. These groups in turn may view the military as politically compromised and lacking in understanding of the local cultural context (see ABCA, 2001, pp. 9-15).

As mentioned, the traditional mandate of NGOs in war torn areas has been reconstruction and the alleviation of suffering. To accomplish these goals they have established their own procedures and processes. The military’s primary mission in such areas is still one of waging war or securing peace, a somewhat different mission. Even when seeking to achieve similar ends to those of NGOs, the military will use different mechanisms and strategies, which may be at odds with those employed by NGOs. Previously mentioned organizational culture differences will certainly only heighten the likelihood that tensions will occur.

As Winslow (2000) points out, the different missions of NGOs and military contingents may mean that they define success in different ways. For NGOs who are in the field for the long haul, the goal is to eradicate all suffering and re-establish a fully functioning economy and polity. For the military, even when involved in reconstruction, goals tend to be more short-term. NGOs may view this as a lack of commitment and see the military intervention as inadequate.

In areas of conflict, resources are frequently scarce. One major point of contention between military contingents and NGOs working in such areas is the competition that may arise over access to these

resources. To fulfil their missions both parties require a wide range of local expertise, from translators to trades people, as well as materials, food, and a host of other necessities which may not be in great abundance. Competition for these goods and services can cause prices to skyrocket and cause friction between the two groups (Winslow, 2000).

One way in which NGOs secure funding is through a direct appeal to their compatriots. In developing strategies for ensuring political and financial support, they have mastered the ability to work the political system and have often achieved significant power. NGOs can exert influence over public opinion. Such is not the case for the military which may find itself nationally and internationally presented in a bad light by NGOs with which there has been conflict. This in turn only exacerbates the existing mistrust.

Despite such prevalent negative opinions of each other and many points of potential conflict, NGOs and multinational forces have increasingly begun to work together and achieve marked success. This may be due, in part, to the fact that both military and NGOs in these areas of conflict share similar problems and experiences (ABCA, 2001). These include, “working in an environment with limited direction; operating in a crowded theater; making difficult moral choices; experiencing frustration over their inability to fix problems; concern for personal safety; and competing for local resources” (ABCA, 2001, pp. 9-15).

The relationship between the media and military missions has always been fraught with tension. What the media may see as the right to know, the military may view as prying into security matters. The obvious political power of the media and its ability to affect military missions can also put the press into conflict with the military. In recent years, media representatives have been embedded with military contingents in theater, partly in an attempt to allow them to better understand the military viewpoint. However, this has not stopped the media from reporting on things that the military would prefer not to have broadcast at home. At the same time, the military recognizes the need to ensure that the media report success stories to secure public support for the mission and relay back to their host nation their needs and viewpoint. The ABCA Coalition Handbook further specifies that Public Affairs helps “protect soldiers from propaganda; support open reporting; establish confidence in the coalition; and provide balanced, fair, and credible presentation of information” (2001, pp. 15-2).

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

Multinational operations are complex and sensitive. The bringing together of people from a wide range of nations and cultural backgrounds to achieve a common goal is fraught with many dangers and pitfalls. Not only must commanders understand the cultural differences between contingents, this cultural sensitivity has to go deeper and be fully embraced by all members of a contingent. The fact that troops from the varying nations work side by side, and may even take orders from officers belonging to other contingents, makes it even more critical to the success of the operation that military personnel be cognizant of the differences in beliefs, values and attitudes of other allied personnel.

The same process that may be involved in raising cultural awareness among troops can also assist in combating harmful, preconceived stereotypes. Working alongside personnel from other countries, often in dangerous situations, means that troops in multinational coalitions must be able to trust each other. Frequently national or racial stereotypes can hinder the building of such trust. Preconceived notions that people from one nation are lazy, drunk, or unethical can seriously endanger the mission and the lives of deployed personnel and the local population whom they are seeking to protect.

For commanders, the need to treat people equitably is made more difficult when individual national contingents have their own culturally determined codes of conduct and rewards and punishments. Comparing situations across deployed forces may exacerbate tensions between groups, create dissatisfaction among some contingents, and perhaps lead to issues that may undermine mission

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effectiveness. Such experiences may also influence the decision of those who have been deployed as to whether to remain in the forces or leave on return to their homelands. The impact of cultural issues relating to multinational operations, therefore, can go beyond the deployment itself and affect retention and recruitment of new personnel.

Indigenous populations in the areas of conflict can belong to cultural groups that are unfamiliar to troops from international coalitions. The need for cultural sensitivity among peacekeepers and peacemakers is all the more critical if they are to become part of the solution rather than part of the problem. This is even more important for those situations where members of a contingent belong to ethnic groups that are similar or sympathetic to one or more of the indigenous populations and so may not be seen as impartial.

It would appear that in some circumstances, the greater the frequency of interaction between contingents and militaries from different backgrounds, the greater the likelihood that relationships will develop fostering trust and confidence between personnel (Gareis et al., 2003). Multinational training operations can play a useful role in identifying possible problematic areas, highlighting cultural difficulties, and pointing to possible solutions that can be used in the field. Such operations can be costly and difficult to organize given the constraints and demands on most militaries. However, the net result can be smoother operations that achieve successful outcomes and create greater group cohesion. The impact of a successful operation on the increased propensity of militaries to engage in future operations would also appear to be a benefit of such pre-deployment preparations.

Generating greater cultural sensitivity can take time. However, exposing people to possible problem areas and simply raising awareness can cause people to think twice before acting in a way that others might find offensive. Many contingents now receive cultural sensitivity training prior to deployment. However, as Winslow (1999) shows, some Canadians complained of a lack of any thorough training prior to their deployment in Kosovo. As one respondent put it, “we need cross-cultural awareness ... in relation to the mission area. Sadly, most Canadians are ignorant and make mistakes because of lack of ‘soft’ knowledge” (Winslow, 1999, p. 14).

The Pearson School of Peacekeeping in Canada has begun to offer officer training in cultural sensitivity that goes beyond superficial or rudimentary knowledge and seeks to raise the knowledge level for adaptation to all possible operational settings. Some similar training is provided in the Combat Maneuver Training Center in Germany. Such training can only assist in the development of more cohesive, operationally effective multinational operations in the years to come.

It is also through this type of joint or multinational training that partners in coalitions can achieve better understanding of each other’s military doctrine and rules of engagement. Furthermore, given the increasing scope of missions and the closer involvement of civilian NGOs, government officials, and others security partners, it may prove useful to extend such training to these other important actors in international deployments.

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## Chapter 3 – LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND

by

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

As history demonstrates, the challenge of leading a multinational coalition force or military alliance is not new (Plante, 1998). In fact, it may be as old as war itself. From the time of Troy to the Crusades to the Thirty Years Wars, from the Napoleonic Wars to the alliances of World Wars I and II, and from the Korean conflict to the “war against terrorism” in Afghanistan, nations have associated with each other in order to achieve a common purpose (Lescoutre, 2003; Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1999).

Increasingly, however, and particularly since the end of the Cold War in 1989, the employment of military forces in multinational operations demands a broader range of leadership competencies than previously required of military commanders (MacIsaac, 2000). Contemporary coalition operations often consist of new partners who typically have not trained together and who have very different military traditions and cultures (Marshall, Kaiser, & Kessmeier, 1997). Indeed, cultural bias, deep seated religious prejudices, and long historical memories have made the integration of a multinational force a significant leadership challenge in the post-Cold War era (Plante, 1998). Further, since the Cold War, multinationality occurs lower down in the chain of command, making it an issue for a broader range of personnel, whether at the strategic, operational, or tactical level (Stewart, Macklin, Proud, Verrall, & Widdowson, 2004). Proficiency in command or leadership at the operational level, for instance, requires the ability to integrate the operations of different forces (e.g., within an alliance or coalition) towards the achievement of mission objectives, despite sources of friction such as differences in goals, logistics, capabilities, training, equipment, doctrines, intelligence, language, leadership, and cultural practices (Plante, 1998; Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004). In particular, McCann and Pigeau (2000) emphasize that building an effective coalition force in today’s operations requires that a leader be able to weld together military personnel from different cultures, who have varying abilities and expectations. This ability to integrate diverse forces will become increasingly important as coalition operations become more prevalent and as such operations depend more and more upon effective teamwork among members of diverse cultural backgrounds, each with their own agenda, leadership expectations and style (Bisho, 2004; Bowman & Pierce, 2003; Klein, Pongonis, & Klein, 2000; Plante, 1998). In short, while multinational missions vary in goals, their participants vary in their agendas, leadership and command structures, and cultures (Klein et al., 2000).

Scholarly work on managing global change in the new security environment has been sporadic and scarce, with the exception of research conducted by military personnel or affiliates whose work is not widely published (Graen, & Hui, 1999). Cross-cultural leadership has not been a major topic of research or training in most militaries (Teo, 2005). Further, much of the work on interoperability in multinational military contexts has focused on technological issues and has neglected the role of human, and in particular, intercultural, factors. This chapter, therefore, will focus on three major aspects of leadership in the context of multinational military operations and intercultural factors, with a specific emphasis on the human, cultural dimension. The first aspect pertains to *individual leadership characteristics* (including traits, behaviors, and other attributes) that are important in the context of leading multinational, intercultural military operations. The second aspect concerns the *leadership implications of cultural barriers to multinational teamwork*. The third aspect pertains to *leadership or command structures* that may be used in the context of multinational, intercultural military operations. The final section of the chapter will focus on *recommendations for leadership training and development* in the context of multinational, intercultural military operations and teams, and will be followed by a few general concluding comments.

## 3.2 INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTINATIONAL, INTERCULTURAL MILITARY OPERATIONS

### 3.2.1 Defining Leadership

Karol Wenek (2005), author of *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*, defines leadership as “directly or indirectly influencing others, by means of formal authority or personal attributes, to act in accordance with one’s intent or a shared purpose” (p. 7). Similarly, the United Kingdom (UK) Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations (1999) suggests that leadership is “essentially about the projection of personality and character to get [others] to do what is required of them” (pp. 2 – 4). In the broader organizational scientific literature, no one definition of leadership has been universally accepted, but in reviewing this literature, and echoing the military definitions, Riggio (2000) defines leadership as “the ability to direct a group toward the attainment of goals” (p. 340). Despite the many definitions of leadership that have been put forward in the military and broader scientific literatures (see MacIsaac, 2000), contemporary leadership theorists generally agree that, rather than reflecting universal qualities of effectiveness, successful leadership is contextual, in that different aspects of leadership will emerge as effective depending on the broad organizational or cultural framework (Gurstein, 1999). In the following section, characteristics (e.g., traits, behaviors, or other attributes) of individual leaders or commanders that may enhance effectiveness in multinational, intercultural military contexts are discussed.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.2.2 Leadership is More Challenging in Multinational Military Contexts

Gurstein (1999) argues that the requirements of a leader in the multinational context is similar in many ways to those required of a leader in any other military context: the capacity to motivate; to direct while including; to articulate and instil a sense of common direction and purpose; and to distil, reflect, and project unifying symbols and cultural values. However, each of these requirements is more complex, and more problematic, in a multinational, multicultural, multilingual context, such as the highly political environment that is typical of a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission. For example, abilities in mediation, conflict resolution, negotiation, diplomacy, cultural sensitivity, and behavioral flexibility are all considered central to the task of leading a multinational peacekeeping force; but these are typically not included as criteria in leadership selection and training (Gurstein, 1999). Other analysts have also suggested that the requirements for leading a multinational coalition are more demanding and difficult than the requirements for leading a national force. Bowman (1997) points out that coalition leaders must clearly understand that coalition politics may override coalition military logic, and that coalition leaders must be persuasive, not coercive, and sensitive to national needs. According to Barabé (1999), the multinational force commander faces unique integration and unity of effort issues. Against a diversity of impediments, political and otherwise, the commander must blend the skills of component forces so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Similarly, Elron et al. (1999) suggest that the creation of trust in multicultural military settings may be more difficult to achieve than in unicultural military settings, and that commanders must play an integral role in establishing such trust within a multiculturally diverse

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<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, the terms *leader* and *commander* will be used interchangeably. However, it is important to point out that in a military context, “command” has a legal imperative and commanders have the legal authority and responsibility to direct the actions of subordinates who are subject to a code of service discipline (MacIsaac, 2000). Commanders are “leaders” as a result of their rank, and their practice of leadership is an essential *element* of command (MacIsaac, 2000). Leadership by definition and practice, however, and in contrast to command, does not always include a legal foundation (but may be based on personal authority; see McCann & Pigeau, 2000), and not all leaders are necessarily appointed nor do they all have legal authority to direct followers’ actions (MacIsaac, 2000). These conclusions are particularly pertinent to the context of multinational military operations, as commanders in peace support operations, for example, are often required to exercise leadership not only in relation to subordinates as defined above, but frequently must do so when dealing with groups or individuals not in the formal chain of command (MacIsaac, 2000). Similarly, leaders without formal authority over others may nevertheless be called upon to lead others in a multinational military context, especially where warranted by the philosophy of “mission command” (to be discussed).

force. In short, increased cultural diversity within multinational military organizations will increase the level of complexity in the military commander's task at all levels, multiply the challenges facing military leaders, and require new skills in negotiation, liaison, persuasion, and teamwork (Shamir & Ben-Ari, 2000; see also Stewart, Macklin, Proud, Verrall, & Widdowson, 2004).

### **3.2.3 Unity of Command vs. Unity of Effort/Purpose in a Multinational Military Context**

It has been argued that the achievement of unity of command in World War II was due to the qualities of individual officers, attributes such as confidence (both personal and mutual), logic, loyalty, selflessness, devotion to a common cause, and a generous attitude (Wheatley & Buck, 1999). However, it has also been suggested that unity of command, under a single commander whose authority is clearly defined and absolute, is much less attainable in contemporary multinational coalition operations, largely due to national chains of command reaching into theater headquarters and below (Potts, 2004). Bowman (1997), for example, has argued that the best a coalition commander can hope for is unity of effort rather than unity of command. Similarly, Davis (2000a) has held that because of the political nature of coalitions, the fact that commanders typically have restricted authority to direct and control personnel and materiel, and the fact that doctrinal unity of command is rarely achieved in coalitions, operational commanders must focus on achieving unity of effort towards common multinational objectives. Such unity of effort, or unity of purpose, may be gained through cooperation and mutual confidence between coalition partners and the force commander; through rapport and patience; through respect for different cultures, religions, and values; through an understanding and knowledge of each member's national goals, objectives, capabilities and limitations; through identifying the appropriate mission for participating nations; and through the assignment of equitable tasks in terms of burden and risk sharing (Potts, 2004; Davis, 2000a). Unity of effort requires that everyone works to achieve the same ends within the commander's intent, which must be disseminated and understood throughout the multinational force (Potts, 2004). However, understanding intent will be a more complex issue when compounded by linguistic and cultural differences (Potts, 2004). Recognizing the overriding impact of politics, Davis proposes three strategies to maximize unity of effort within a coalition: innovative command structures that satisfy national constraints; coordination and consensus building leading to the appropriate employment of force; and development of mutual confidence and cooperation within the coalition's senior commanders and staff (i.e., through leader development and education). Potts (2004) suggests that direct personal contact, whenever possible, will be critical to ensuring unity of effort and a common understanding of commander intent.

### **3.2.4 Attributes of Effective Leadership in a Multinational, Intercultural Military Context**

As is evident from the discussion above, many analysts agree that intercultural factors raise unique and complex challenges for leaders of multinational military operations. Gillespie (2002) argues that commanders must be aware of, and have the skills to properly address, the question of culture and diversity and how it affects unity of effort in coalition operations. National interests and differences in doctrine, rules of engagement, language, culture, logistics and technology, can all create frictions that could potentially lead to problems in achieving the sense of unity needed to achieve a common goal (Gillespie, 2002). According to Moelker, Soeters and vom Hagen (2007), who studied German-Dutch cooperation in Kabul, Afghanistan, the role of leadership is critical in maintaining a multinational unit's morale, in keeping good relations with other units in the mission, and in creating cohesion within the unit. Whatever the similarities and differences between various coalition forces, commanders must recognize the difficulty of integrating national forces into a successful coalition (Bisho, 2004). As discussed previously, leaders and planners must ensure a common understanding of coalition political goals in striving for full unity of effort (Bisho, 2004). The coalition leader must build consensus regarding common goals and objectives, for it is this consensus that provides the glue that binds the multinational force together (Davis, 2000a). Further, a multinational coalition must share at least some elements of a common doctrine since this will determine force structure and procedures. As Bisho (2004) suggests, successful coalition leaders will be those who best handle

operational realities by applying the proper blend of vision, determination, patience, tolerance, and flexibility. Further, as Davis (2000b) points out, coalition leadership must be sensitive to the fact that the participating forces in a multinational operation are not always equally capable, and must assign individual forces the missions that they are able to accomplish.

Indeed, the commander of a multinational force must have a thorough understanding of the capabilities and weaknesses of each component and contributing unit, and must be attuned to national and political sensitivities (UK Doctrine on Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999). This calls for political awareness, patience, tact, respect, and mutual understanding based on knowledge of other nations' languages, history, and importantly, culture (UK Doctrine on Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999). Similarly, mutual respect for the professional ability, culture, history, religion, customs, and values of participants will serve to strengthen relationships. The military leader must respect the individual terms of service of the national forces (e.g., leave and promotion rules, decorations policies, restrictions on types of acceptable assignments), which may vary dramatically across contingents (see also McKee, Chapter 2). Finding a means to reconcile these with the accomplishment of the mission is a significant responsibility for the commander of a multinational peacekeeping force (Gurstein, 1999). The commander must weld all the national contingents together into a strong and co-ordinated team, and by personal example, continue to motivate the team. Further, there must be mutual understanding between the operational level commander and component commanders to ensure unity of effort. In multinational operations, elements from other nations may be embedded within each component and are likely to be responsive to their national chain of command. This can cause friction, which the commander must overcome. In short, the force commander must integrate all elements into the coalition force and maximize their contribution regardless of need, size, or special competence (Bowman, 1997).

The present international security environment also involves working with many non-traditional participants or partners, including members of other forces, organizations, and civilians (MacIsaac, 2000). It is in this area that military leaders must assess the personalities and competencies of the individuals involved, determine their specific interests, learn how to gain their support, and, where formal operating agreements do not exist (or force protection/rules of engagement policies or interpretations vary; Potts, 2004), influence their actions to gain unity of effort (MacIsaac, 2000). Leaders must be able to shift from an emphasis on formal agreed upon procedures to an emphasis in which liaison, negotiation, *cultural awareness*, understanding, and patience elicit support (MacIsaac, 2000). Leaders must possess the capacity to develop and adopt innovative solutions and methods for conflict resolution and to apply varied leadership approaches to deal with diverse national aims or individual personalities (MacIsaac, 2000).

Gurstein (1999) has identified nine dimensions of leadership that are important in the context of peacekeeping operations, many of which are applicable to multinational military operations more broadly.

- The first dimension is *communication*, or the capacity to receive and distribute information accurately, promptly, and in a manner that can be understood and acted upon by the receiver. In a national force, one can rely on a shared language and culture and the broadly shared acceptance of the overall mission to facilitate communication; this is not necessarily so in a multinational military operation.
- The second dimension is *human relations*, or the capacity to work with staff in such a way as to motivate, develop, and coordinate their actions and participation. In a national force this activity would be facilitated by the general familiarity and camaraderie that leaders have with their followers and vice versa. In a multinational context, the need to stitch together working teams at the command and operational level from individuals and units with a variety of cultural backgrounds is a significant leadership skill and challenge.
- The third dimension is *counselling*, or the focused concern with the all around well-being of the individual. In the peacekeeping or multinational military context, counseling is the responsibility

of the national battalions. In UN peace forces, however, the counseling that might be expected from senior officers might be inhibited because of national or cultural differences between senior officers and field level troops.

- The fourth dimension is *supervision*, or the ability to coordinate the activities of subordinates and work groups to meet organizational objectives. In this context, the activities of lower level military supervisors to the battalion level would likely be similar to those activities in national battalions. At the higher levels, however, lack of mission clarity may present a barrier to effective supervision.
- The fifth dimension is *technological*, or proficiency in technical operations and procedures. Among the technical skills of particular importance in a multinational context are negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- The sixth dimension is *management science*, or the formal measurement or evaluation element of management activity.
- The seventh dimension is *decision making*. In national forces, decision making is a highly valued leadership quality. However, there may be ambiguities and difficulties in independent decision making by military peacekeepers, for example, in the field.
- The eighth dimension is *planning*, which includes the activities of forecasting, setting objectives, developing strategies, programming, budgeting, setting up procedures, and developing policies. Leaders in multinational military contexts must be highly flexible and adaptable in order to respond as required, for planning in such contexts is often ad hoc and situational.
- The ninth dimension is *ethics*. Ethics in a national force differs from that in a multilateral force in that the mission of a national force tends to be relatively clear and a reflection of national interest. By contrast, the mission of a multinational (e.g., peacekeeping) force may be much less clear and may involve complicated activities in distant lands, only some of which may be considered traditional military responsibilities. In peacekeeping situations, there is the additional complication of expecting military leaders and subordinates to identify with a supranational ethical standard where the operation is undertaken “on behalf of all of humanity” (Gurstein, 1999, p. 212). Thus, there is the need to develop an ethical base to leadership in such morally difficult environments as are found in many peacekeeping contexts (Gurstein, 1999). Further, as Graen and Hui (1999) argue, cultural differences complicate ethical judgments, and leaders must find ways to deal with these complexities, which is no small task.

### **3.2.5 Transformational Leadership: An Expanded Leadership Paradigm**

In a multinational military context, contingents will each possess their own histories, traditions, morals and values (Champagne, 1999). Thus, operational commanders will often be confronted with the challenge of conducting operations under a united and multinational command, influenced by political direction from multinational or multilateral organizations. The different contingents’ motivations will demand that the commander foster a strong sense of purpose and trust, along with the capacity to deal with highly complex operational situations while remaining cognizant of political and cultural aspects. Indeed, multinational leadership skills involve more than simple team building skills and adaptability. Given political constraints, and unclear civilian and political chains of command, multinational commanders must exemplify leadership characterized by a strong sense of purpose, innovative thinking, enthusiasm, individualized concerns, and satisfaction in accomplishment, while finding innovative ways to reward and manage their troops (Champagne, 1999). In other words, as Champagne (1999) argues, what is needed from a multinational commander is charismatic, inspirational, and intellectual leadership (i.e., transformational leadership), and also aspects of transactional leadership (e.g., contingent reward, management by exception). Transactional leadership occurs when a leader rewards or disciplines followers based on the adequacy of their performance of mutually agreed or leader-assigned tasks

(MacIsaac, 2000). Transformational leadership complements transactional leadership, and the full spectrum of leadership competencies is needed (Champagne, 1999). Similarly, in discussing the Full Range Leadership Model by Avolio and Bass, MacIsaac (2000) argues that transactional leadership must be expanded to meet the new challenges that result from operational deployments in the more complex and politically ambiguous, less certain, new world security environment. More specifically, in order for leaders to develop enduring trust, loyalty, and commitment from followers, leaders must pay special attention to individual followers' needs for achievement and growth, and frequently act as coach or mentor (MacIsaac, 2000) – all aspects of transformational leadership. Similarly, Shamir and Ben-Ari (2000) suggest that multinational military leadership requires several aspects of transformational leadership, such as individual consideration (sensitivity to members' needs, respecting differences, and providing opportunities for development) and intellectual stimulation (challenging others' assumptions and stereotypes, encouraging a viewing of the world from different perspectives, and fostering critical and independent thinking). Thus, to be effective in today's military environment, a commander must be willing to adopt and apply the principles of transformational leadership in addition to the more typical transactional leadership approach, and moreover, must be capable of *transitioning* from one approach to the other, depending on the circumstances (MacIsaac, 2000; see also Shamir & Ben-Ari, 2000).

Indeed, the ability to transition from one leadership style to another, depending on the cultural or situational context, will be critical to multinational leadership, as different nations within a multinational military contingent will value and respond positively to different styles of leadership. For example, as part of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies, and in addressing the question of whether transformational leadership attributes would be “universally” endorsed in a sample of 62 nations, Den Hartog et al. (1999) found that while some leadership traits (e.g., decisive, positive, just and intelligent) were seen as universally positive, and other leadership traits (e.g., ruthless and egocentric) were seen as universally negative, a number of leadership traits (e.g., sincerity, evasiveness, cunningness, sensitivity, and enthusiasm) were indicative of effective leadership in some cultures but not others. Similarly, because of the diverse values and core beliefs of different societies, concepts of leadership are culture bound; for example, authority might be based on achievement, wealth, education, charisma, or birthright, depending on the nation or culture (Lewis, 2000). In some societies, leadership is individual (or even despotic), and authority and decision-making structures are hierarchical; in other societies, leadership is collective, and authority and decision-making structures are more collaborative (Lewis, 2000). The most effective leaders, therefore, will be those who can adapt their leadership style to suit different cultural contexts (see also Lewis, 2000).

### **3.2.6 Combining Social, Emotional, and Cultural Intelligence: Transculturals**

In addition to the above requirements, Champagne (1999) argues that an operational commander in a multinational context must be able to deal with the social complexity, or the multiplicities, diversities, and intricacies that are found in social dynamics and interconnections. Leaders will need both conceptual and social competencies (i.e., “social intelligence”) in order to achieve success in high-tempo, diverse multinational operations (see also Zaccaro, 1999). According to Zaccaro (2002), social intelligence reflects an ability to successfully engage in social awareness, social acumen, response selection, and response enactment. Similarly, Zaccaro, Gilbert, Thor, and Mumford (1991) maintain that effective leaders possess social intelligence, which allows them to accurately perceive social requirements and select appropriate behavioral responses. Zaccaro (1999) argues that effective military leadership entails the utilization of various social competencies, and maintains that behavioral flexibility, conflict management, persuasion, and social reasoning skills are critical for senior military leaders. Once again, such social intelligence or cultural intelligence skills will be all the more critical and complex for multinational military leaders (see Stewart, Cremin, Mills, & Phipps, 2004). For example, such leaders will require the ability to conduct cross-cultural dialogue and adapt their communication style to the situation, to engage in active listening, and to be perceptive and sensitive to other cultures (Teo, 2005).

Similarly, other analysts have suggested that leaders require “emotional intelligence,” or the ability to perceive emotions, access and produce emotions to aid in thought processes, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and monitor emotions for the promotion of emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Recently, increased importance has been placed on the emotional intelligence of leaders due to findings suggesting that emotional intelligence can be used to facilitate transformational leadership (see Zugek & Korabik, 2004). Although the concept of emotional intelligence (and the use of emotional intelligence tests for military selection and training) has been questioned (Day, Newsome, & Catano, 2002), the ability to understand emotional knowledge will be even more challenging and important for multinational military leaders, given differences in emotional expression and communication across different cultures.

Furthermore, as the world becomes more culturally pluralistic, transculturally skilled multinational commanders will be needed, to transcend and accommodate cultural differences, and in order to integrate people of different cultural backgrounds together in a unity of purpose (Graen & Hui, 1999). Thus, the challenge of multinational military operations is to select and train “transculturals” – those individuals who transcend cultural differences and who can bring people of different cultures together (Graen & Hui, 1999). In a similar vein, other analysts, such as Gareis and vom Hagen (2005), have also suggested the importance of transcultural leadership skills. Indeed, Gareis and vom Hagen call for the transformation of military multinationality into military transnationality, which corresponds to a culture that is more than merely the sum of several national elements, and is thus *transcultural*. To the extent that multinational military leaders can achieve this cultural integration, cooperation and unit effectiveness will be enhanced. However, transcultural leaders will be required to deal not only with diversity within the multinational force, but also with diversity in the local population. As problems become more complex due to multinational, global issues, the need for cross-cultural teamwork becomes increasingly critical. Thus, a way of command that promotes such teamwork, or what Graen and Hui have referred to as “Best Leadership Practices,” is required. Similarly, Elron, Halevy, Ben-Ari, and Shamir (2003) discuss intercultural effective leadership behaviors such as:

- a) Integrating differences (e.g., bringing different cultural perspectives and preferences together, resolving differences among them, and generating integrative solutions and compromises);
- b) Bridging differences (i.e., communicating across differences, making efforts to understand them, and building shared bases and commonalities, such as a shared military professionalism, lessons learned, mission specific experiences, and supra ordinate goals); and
- c) Tolerating differences (i.e., passive actions or inactions that allow others the space to act freely according to their own cultural values, beliefs and norms; suspending quick judgment; and avoiding treading on others’ cultural “comfort zone,” such as not ridiculing others’ religious customs or practices) (see also Mannix & Neale, 2005).

Reflecting the themes discussed above, Cremin, Mills, Phipps and Stewart (2005) have also discussed the behavioral characteristics of effective multinational military leaders. These behaviors include: adopting a flexible and adaptive command and leadership style in accordance with the foreign contingents under their command; building personal and professional relationships with foreign contingents by paying them visits and, where possible, socializing with them; establishing a shared “frame of reference” for the operation; and engendering understanding and trust between the different nations by negotiating and building relationships (see also Stewart, Cremin, et al., 2004). Further, the knowledge, skills, and attributes of effective multinational commanders (Cremin et al., 2005) include leadership and coaching skills; cognizance of other nations from a variety of perspectives and how they relate to one’s own nation; empathy towards other nations; and self awareness and self control. Finally, Cremin et al. (2005) offer the following “top 10 tips for multinational commanders:”

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- 1) If you don't already have it, build your 'national knowledge' of the historical, social, political, economic makeup of other nations in your command (along with a database of multinational experience).
- 2) Be prepared to adapt your command style.
- 3) Prioritize relationship building. Mutual respect is key. The goal is to foster a communicative, collaborative, and co-operative relationship.
- 4) Understand national contingent capabilities. Do not over task contingent forces, but build the level of challenge in tasks slowly.
- 5) Don't assume your way is the only way. Different approaches may be needed.
- 6) Negotiation is commonplace; command by discussion.<sup>2</sup>
- 7) Be prepared for variations in the standard of spoken English (and be careful about the use of acronyms). Always seek closed loop communication when conveying important information.
- 8) Establish a common sense of purpose.
- 9) Where possible, establish a common operating procedure (COP) (e.g., when shared doctrine and Standard Operating Procedures or SOPs are lacking, create a unifying set of COPs/SOPs).
- 10) Promote equity of risk and reward.

### 3.2.7 Assisting Multinational Military Leaders: Liaison Officers and Liaison Teams

In past coalitions, the problem for multinational military leaders of establishing unity of effort or command has been alleviated to some degree by the use of liaison officers and teams at the operational and tactical levels (Gillespie, 2002). These groups of personnel are conversant in the national language and culture of the forces involved, can smooth out communication problems, and may enhance coordination and cooperation (Gillespie, 2002). These "directed telescopes" or teams of well trained liaison officers allow the commander to get regular feedback on the comprehension and compliance of coalition forces in theater (Davis, 2000a; Gillespie, 2002). As will be discussed later in this chapter, the concept of liaison teams was used in the Persian Gulf War, for example, when General Schwarzkopf selected a group of liaison teams that established communications between his headquarters and the major coalition partners. This team reported back to the Coalition Coordination and Communications Center, which provided information and clarified orders to coalition members (Gillespie, 2002). Similarly, the formation of "geostrategic scouts," or officers who have the requisite linguistic, cultural, historical, regional, and geopolitical knowledge, can assist coalition commanders when they move into various regions of the world (see Davis, 2000a). Through these mechanisms, unity of effort at the operational and tactical level can be achieved by confirming that the commander's intent is properly developed, communicated, and carried out.

Liaison officers can also assist with technological interoperability in multinational forces which often involves intercultural issues (Macklin, Christie, & Stewart, 2004). According to Metz (as cited in Marshall et al., 1997), asymmetries in technology among coalition partners poses the greatest threat to cohesion and effectiveness during combat operations (see also Mazakowski, Chapter 7). Thus, while force modernization has the potential to increase interoperability, it also brings new challenges that could compromise unity of effort in multinational forces. The challenge for a commander is to balance any loss of tempo by the most technologically capable elements of the force, against the inclusion of the least capable, in a way that achieves the operational aim. It is also necessary for digitally superior headquarters to provide digitized liaison teams to bring appropriate links and functionality to subordinate headquarters.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted, however, that in some cultural contexts, a more directive leadership or command approach may be more effective.



Ironically, the requirement for human liaison in the information age will be greater than ever before, especially in multinational, intercultural operations. One key element in this new security environment will be empowered, trained, and equipped liaison officers of appropriate rank that can provide the lubrication to make the system work (Potts, 2004). Thus, trained liaison teams knowledgeable in military technology and doctrine, as well as in language and culture, are important for mission success, as such teams can greatly assist with the understanding of commander intent (Bowman, 1997; see also Macklin et al., 2004; Stewart, Cremin, et al., 2004; and Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004).

Regardless of technology, there are several human interoperability issues that must be addressed in multinational military operations. The most obvious is language. English is now the dominant language in business and international popular culture. It has also emerged as the language of choice of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO's) multinational High Readiness Force Land Headquarters. This means that it will become increasingly important for native English speakers to be able to speak other languages in order to enhance cultural sensitivity, and in order to build mutual understanding and respect (Bowman, 1997; Macklin et al., 2004; Potts, 2004; Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004). Language training must therefore become an integral part of officer development (Potts, 2004). The language problem can be lessened by the early identification of the need for translator support and the use of multilingual liaison personnel (UK Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999). Further, interpreters can assist not only with translation but may also act as cultural, diplomatic, and political mediators (Bos & Soeters, 2006).

Another issue is food. Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that food will remain a key cultural interoperability issue (Potts, 2004; Bisho, 2004). Further, it is recommended that commanders strive to accommodate religious holidays, festivals, prayer calls, and other unique cultural traditions important to various contingents, depending on the circumstances (Bowman, 2004; UK Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999). In the Persian Gulf War, for instance, recognition and accommodation of Arab cultural differences were essential in gaining consensus and maintaining cohesion within the coalition. To assist with cultural and language challenges, linguists and area experts may be employed by commanders at all levels (UK Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999).

In short, the skills required for effective leadership in multinational military operations are significantly more complex than those required in national and culturally homogenous military forces, and will present unique challenges in the present global context (Gurstein, 1999).

### **3.3 CULTURAL BARRIERS TO TEAMWORK IN MULTINATIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND**

It is evident that cultural differences in language, nonverbal behavior, and body language (e.g., differences in voice inflections or facial expressions; norms regarding acceptable length of eye contact or personal distance; variations in handshakes) may all pose challenges to intercultural communication in multinational military contexts (Desimone, Werner, & Harris, 2002; Gillespie, 2002; see also Riedel, Chapter 6). In this section, however, potential *cognitive* cultural barriers to communication and teamwork in multinational military contexts will be examined, with a particular focus on implications for leadership and command (Hofstede, 1980, 1983, 1991; Klein, 2005; Klein et al., 2000).

#### **3.3.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

In multinational military operations, as in other military contexts, command and control depends on a shared understanding of the intent of the mission. Participants must be aware of the goals and expectations for collaboration. Mission success requires communication and the monitoring of ongoing operations. Military personnel need to understand the reasoning patterns, judgments, and decision making of multinational coalition members in complex environments. However, during complex, time pressured missions, such as

are typical of coalition operations, judgments must be made in the face of considerable uncertainty. Moreover, cultural differences may affect such cognitive tasks as planning, problem detection, situation awareness, uncertainty management, and decision making. If commanders assume that others interpret and react as they do, manage uncertainty as they do, and think about real and hypothetical issues as they do, then there can be problems in command and control (Klein, 2005; Klein et al., 2000). Further, command and control can be an even bigger issue in distributed situations, where face-to-face personal contact is not possible, and feedback is limited (Klein et al., 2000). Although technology can assist communication in distributed situations, technology does not always provide a suitable medium for conveying important messages involving statements of intent, such as commander's intent (Macklin et al., 2004). Further, the greater the number of nations with disparate cultures, the greater the quantity of information available and the greater the complexity of collaboration and coordination (Lichacz & Farrell, 2005).

In the 1980s, Geert Hofstede made a comprehensive attempt to capture national value and cultural differences through a cross-cultural classification scheme of work-related values in organizations (Handley & Levis, 2001). This classification scheme was based on four dimensions: *power distance*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *individualism-collectivism*, and *masculinity-femininity* (Hofstede, 1980, 1983, 1991). *Power distance* relates to the amount of respect and deference between those in superior and subordinate positions, or the extent to which the less powerful in a system accept and expect an unequal distribution of power (see also Klein et al., 2000). *Uncertainty avoidance* relates to planning, and the creation of stability, as a means for dealing with uncertainty. *Individualism-collectivism* relates to whether one's identity is defined by personal goals and achievements or by the character of the collective group to which one belongs. *Masculinity-femininity* refers to the relative emphasis on achievement versus interpersonal harmony.<sup>3</sup> Hofstede subsequently assessed these value dimensions among thousands of IBM employees in 72 national cultures and in 20 languages (Hofstede, 1991; see also Gerstner & Day, 1994; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; and Javidan & House, 2001). Although the generalizability and validity of Hofstede's cultural dimensions have been questioned (see Klein et al., 2000), his work is generally seen as a step forward in understanding and measuring differences in national culture and values (Handley & Levis, 2001). In particular, the dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance have been seen as useful conceptualizations of national cognitive differences relevant to *leadership* (Klein et al., 2000). Power distance appears to describe a leadership style, while uncertainty avoidance relates to the concept of risk assessment in leaders' decision making (Klein et al., 2000).

Since Hofstede's work was first introduced, many military researchers and analysts have incorporated his dimensions, and other related cognitive factors, into their analysis of cultural barriers to teamwork. For example, Bowman and Pierce (2003) have described four cognitive cultural barriers to teamwork that they argue influence communication, coordination, and decision making in multinational military contexts. Expanding on Hofstede's conceptualizations, these four dimensions include power distance, tolerance for uncertainty, the individualism/collectivism dichotomy, and cultural differences in reasoning. In Bowman and Pierce's terms, *power distance* describes the extent to which less powerful individuals in a system accept inequality. In low power distance relationships, working patterns are more egalitarian and team processes are more collaborative and interactive. In contrast, in high power distance teams, leaders tend to be directive, thereby constraining team creativity and collaboration. *Tolerance for uncertainty* reflects the amount of discomfort experienced by an individual or team in the presence of unknown factors. A low tolerance is marked by a search for details through rules and structure, whereas individuals or teams who act or make decisions in the face of incomplete knowledge are exhibiting a high tolerance for uncertainty. This difference can cause problems in a team, or among teams, if members or teams with high and low tolerances must work together. One member or team will start slowly, collecting as much information as possible, while the other member or team will move quickly toward an end product or

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<sup>3</sup> Since Hofstede's original work, a fifth dimension, *long-term orientation*, has been added. Long-term orientation focuses on the degree to which a culture embraces, or does not embrace, long-term values such as perseverance and thrift (see also Riedel, Chapter 6).

solution. The *individualism/collectivism dichotomy* reflects a preference for working alone or in a group. This dimension includes a preference for building relationships among team members as contrasted with a focus on individual task achievement. Individualists often view the mission as primary and relationships among team members as secondary, whereas collectivists view team relationships as critical to producing a viable team product. Finally, cultural differences in *reasoning* can also emerge in the context of multinational operations. Such differences may be related to concrete versus hypothetical thought patterns: Hypothetical thinkers are capable of envisioning several solutions to a problem, while concrete thinkers prefer to have detailed plans of action and often use previously used solutions to solve new tasks. These differences can cause problems in a team setting when a course of action is unclear or when conditions require changes to a plan. The hypothetical thinker is capable of generating several possible solutions, while a concrete thinker may view this as avoiding the problem at hand (Bowman & Pierce, 2003).

### **3.3.2 Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Leadership**

As indicated above, Hofstede's dimensions have important implications for leadership. For example, masculinity-femininity may affect whether the leader (and team members) are more focused on the task/achievement or on harmonious interpersonal relationships. Individualism-collectivism may affect whether the leader (and team members) are focused more on their own personal goals or the goals of the collective. Long-term vs. short-term orientation may affect whether the leader (and team members) are open to change or seek to uphold traditions. However, the cultural dimensions of *power distance* and *uncertainty avoidance* appear to be especially pertinent to leadership and command. Differences in power distance, for instance, are reflected in leadership style, as well as in the interpersonal power and influence between the superior and the subordinate. In cultures with low power distance, we would find more collaborative, egalitarian working patterns and team interchanges, less centralized or top down decision making, and flatter organizational structures (Handley & Levis, 2001). It is interesting to note that even among NATO nations, there are variations in power distance. For example, some studies have shown Norway and Denmark to be low on this dimension, while Turkey, France, and Belgium have been found to be high on power distance, which is associated with a more top down, hierarchical, authoritarian leadership style (Hofstede, 1980; see also Soeters, Tanercan, Varoglu, & Sigri, 2004; but cf. Elron et al., 1999). Similarly, Soeters (1997) found strong cultural differences in power distance in the military academies of 13 nations, with the UK military academy showing the highest level of power distance among all the academies studied (see also Soeters & Bos-Bakx, 2003; and Soeters & Recht, 2001).

Significantly, there are also implications of power distance for mission command, or the command doctrine underlying manoeuvre warfare. Mission command is designed to achieve unity of effort, a faster tempo, and initiative at all levels; it requires decentralization of authority and decision making (see Davis, 2000b). The emphasis is on the development of skills and the transmission of a commander's intent so that personnel at all levels can function effectively when unexpected events occur with no time for additional input from above (Handley & Levis, 2001). Comfort with this approach will vary with differences in power distance (Klein et al., 2000; UK Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999; see also Soeters et al., 2004). Specifically, cultures that are low in power distance will be comfortable with the mission command approach to command and control, whereas cultures that are high on power distance will be less comfortable with this approach (see also Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004). As Potts (2004) suggests, some nations have inscribed the concept of mission command into their military cultures, allowing subordinates considerable freedom of action and discretion to take the initiative within the commander's intent as circumstances change. Others expect to command, and be commanded, by detailed orders, with a need for frequent reporting back to superiors and further direction as circumstances change. Potts argues that nations must work towards a common understanding of mission command in order to maximize effectiveness in multinational operations, while recognizing and accommodating different approaches. Similarly, Soeters (1997) has argued that commanding officers of international military units should be aware that their leadership or management styles are not necessarily understood in the same manner by different nations, and that they should show mutual understanding and promote multinational

teamwork on an equal status basis, with shared interests and common goals for all nations involved. One way to achieve this, as mentioned previously, is for leaders to adapt their leadership styles to suit the situation and cultures of their component forces.

Differences in uncertainty avoidance, or the extent to which members of a culture experience uncertainty as stressful and the extent to which they take actions to avoid uncertainty, are also relevant to leadership, and in particular, to decision making (Hofstede, 1980, 1991). People (e.g., leaders) who are high on uncertainty avoidance experience change and ambiguity as highly stressful; thus, they may seek out rules that will provide structure and order for change, and are uncomfortable with making decisions in the face of uncertainty (Klein et al., 2000). An organization that scores high on uncertainty avoidance will have standardized and formal decision-making procedures (Handley & Levis, 2001), and a military organization that is high on uncertainty avoidance is less likely to be comfortable with mission command (Stewart, Cremin, et al., 2004). In contrast, people (leaders) who are low on uncertainty avoidance are more comfortable making decisions in the face of uncertainty (Hofstede, 1980, 1991). In organizations with low uncertainty avoidance, decision-making procedures will be less formal and plans will continually be reassessed for needed modifications (Handley & Levis, 2001). Uncertainty avoidance also influences a national group's readiness to adapt in the face of an unexpected development. High stakes, time pressured decision making is coordinated when multinational collaborators are similar on uncertainty avoidance and risk assessment. However, it is difficult for people who value spontaneity and last-minute decisions to coordinate actions with those who need firm, committed plans. When operations include people with different tolerances for uncertainty, there can be tension. A leader or decision maker with high uncertainty avoidance is likely to follow the procedure regardless of circumstances, whereas a leader or decision maker with low uncertainty avoidance may be more innovative (Handley & Levis, 2001). Among NATO nations, Portugal and Greece are rated high on uncertainty avoidance while Denmark and the United States (US) are rated as low (Hofstede, 1980). Thus, the challenge for a commander or leader is to recognize cultural differences in these areas and use them to balance perspectives rather than to create disharmony (Klein et al., 2000).<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, although analysts agree that national cultural differences in cognition may present barriers to successful coalition command and control, coordination and communication (Handley & Levis, 2001; Klein et al., 2000), these cultural differences may be overcome. Klein et al. (2000), for example, propose a *cultural lens* concept that captures cultural differences in reasoning, judgement, and authority structure (see also Klein, 2005). A cultural lens is a metaphor to allow those involved in command and control operations to see their world as if through the eyes of other participants and to understand how options are conceptualized and evaluated. According to Klein et al. (2000), the ability to *decenter* that is brought about through the cultural lens can support the anticipation of actions, facilitate accurate judgements, and lead to the effective negotiation of differences. Further, seeing the world through the cultural lens of others may increase common vision in the face of divergent views (Klein, 2005). In short, a cultural lens is a tool that a multinational leader can use to strengthen common ground and the coordination of action, and to enhance understanding in the context of multinational military operations (see also Lewis, 2000).

Before proceeding to a discussion of leadership and command structures, it may be pertinent to discuss some of the implications of network enabled operations (NEOps) or network centric warfare for the leadership of intercultural, distributed military teams.<sup>5</sup> According to the 2005 Canadian Forces (CF) keystone document on NEOps, the objectives of NEOps are to improve the planning and execution of

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<sup>4</sup> In addition, differences in activity orientation may also be associated with cultural differences in decision making or leadership style (Klein et al., 2000). "Do-ers" take a pragmatic approach to decision making and are more focused on work and achievement, while "be-ers" tend to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships (see also Klein, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> At the time of this writing, NEOps is the term used in Canada, while NCW is used in the US, where it constitutes a pillar of ongoing transformation of the military. Similarly, the UK has adopted this concept as Network-Enabled Capabilities (NEC) and NATO has begun its implementation under the name NATO Network Enabled Capabilities (NNEC). Sweden refers to it as Network Based Defence (NBD) and has made this concept the center of its future defence forces. Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Germany are other examples of nations that have adopted this concept.

operations through the use of information and communication technology linking people, processes, and ad hoc networks (Department of National Defence, 2005). Such operations are intended to allow joint, interagency, multinational and public stakeholders, as appropriate, to access information and data seamlessly, from a wide range of sources, in order to facilitate effective and timely interaction between sensors, leaders and effects. The results should be an expanded awareness and comprehension of the environment (situational awareness), improved access to timely, relevant information, improved reaction time and synchronization of activity, and improved ability to act. Further, through a clear understanding of the commander's intent and the operational picture, leaders, including those at subordinate levels, will be able and expected through NEOps to exercise increased initiative, thus enabling a greater degree of mission command to take place. Furthermore, according to the CF keystone document, NEOps will enhance the ability to work effectively with allies, coalition participants and a range of governmental and non-governmental defence and security partners to achieve a common goal, with due consideration for any legal, jurisdictional, or proprietary constraints (Department of National Defence, 2005). Thus, NEOps is expected to increase interoperability. NEOps may also be viewed as the means by which the effects desired by a commander (i.e., effects based operations) are most successfully achieved.<sup>6</sup> However, as discussed previously, not all nations are equally comfortable with the notion of mission command or the decentralized power/authority (low power distance orientation) that is permitted by NEOps, and not all nations are equally technologically equipped (or "net ready") for NEOps in the first place (see also Masakowski, Chapter 7). Further, effective NEOps require a high degree of trust between partners (e.g., in order to share information), and this will place unique demands on the skills of leaders and commanders in order to engender such trust without the benefit of direct personal contact. Indeed, NEOps will require the shaping of culture to realize greater information sharing and collaboration, higher levels of trust, and greater devolution of authority.<sup>7</sup> In short, NEOps is fundamentally a *human* endeavour, not simply a technological practice, in which intercultural factors and awareness play a critical role. It is likely that training, as well as strong leadership, will be required to build trust and confidence between nations that may have to collaborate on a distributed and temporary basis within the context of NEOps.

### **3.4 LEADERSHIP OR COMMAND STRUCTURES**

#### **3.4.1 Types of Command Structures**

It is widely accepted that the most important principle for international coalition effectiveness is a defined and viable *command and control structure* (MacIsaac, 2000). The command structure will determine who is in charge, and the command authority will determine the authority that the commander will have over the force (Lescoutre, 2003). However, the issue of command structure may be especially contentious and complicated within the context of an intercultural, multinational military operation (Bowman, 1997; Lescoutre, 2003). As Gillespie (2002) points out, the national interests of forces involved in a multinational operation may lead to potential conflicts. Alliances can deal with these issues by established command and control structures that take into account differences in national procedures (Gillespie, 2002).<sup>8</sup> These structures have personnel from each of the alliance members, who become integral to the

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<sup>6</sup> An effects based approach can be seen as an outcomes versus outputs approach to operations. Outcomes (e.g., damage to specific enemy capabilities) are distinct from outputs (e.g., sortie rates); further, outputs may not have a direct effect on the desired outcomes of the military campaign. As seen above, some analysts view NEOps as simply enablers for effects based operations.

<sup>7</sup> In order to ensure interoperability, militaries will likely have to adopt international data standards such as those developed by NATO or the Armies of the United States, Britain and Canada (ABCA). Such interoperability, however, will likely be realized most readily by nations with similar levels of technological expertise.

<sup>8</sup> It should be recognized, however, that even among NATO nations, there is a lack of universally accepted definitions of command authorities. Both officials and planners need to be aware that command authority definitions are not internationally standardized, may conflict with many similar national definitions, and are often modified for specific operations (Durell-Young, 1997). Consensus is also lacking within NATO regarding whether an allied commander can do something not explicitly proscribed under his/her command authority (Durell-Young, 1997).

command and planning process in both operational and logistical billets, and this integration, along with addressing potential problems early on, creates a sense of trust amongst the participants (Gillespie, 2002). In short-term coalition efforts, however, commanders will typically not have the same luxury, as time will be a factor, and leadership must be based on trust, persuasion, and sensitivity to national needs (Gillespie, 2002).

Whatever the command structure, multinationality poses a number of challenges, the resolution of which is critical to military effectiveness and operational success. These challenges include the formation of an effective command and control system, an intelligence system that can employ data from a number of multinational and national sources, and a logistics system that takes into account the need for national support but also multinational needs. The coalition commander must be responsible for co-ordinating all military infrastructure within the theater of operations, and the presence of civilian groups, non-governmental organizations, and private voluntary organizations will make the coordination requirements even greater (Bowman, 1997). All things considered, multinational command requires an attitude of mind that is international in perspective (UK Doctrine for Joint and Multinational Operations, 1999).

The structure of command within multinational military operations may take a number of forms. Current doctrine generally recognizes three main types of coalition command structures: *lead nation command*, *parallel command*, and *integrated command* (Durell-Young, 1997; see also Lescoutre, 2003; and Overton, 2003). As Lescoutre (2003) suggests, the commander of a multinational military force must choose a command structure that will maximize the potential to command and provide for unity of effort or purpose throughout the coalition. However, current doctrine does not offer any guidance to a force commander as to which command structure may be preferable in any given coalition situation (Lescoutre, 2003). Durell-Young (1997) has identified three characteristics that should be considered when selecting a command structure (see also Lescoutre, 2003). First, the commander must be cognizant of the political dimension that influences the coalition dynamic, and must thoroughly understand the political objectives to be achieved, in order to select the optimum command structure (Lescoutre, 2003). Second, if a coalition must intervene rapidly into a conflict, then a strong lead nation command structure is recommended (Lescoutre, 2003). This lead nation should be regionally based and maintain its existing integrated headquarters (Lescoutre, 2003). Third, if there is a vast *diversity of cultures* involved in the coalition, then a parallel command structure should be selected (Lescoutre, 2003). A strong spirit of cooperation and mutual support between the multinational commanders must accompany a parallel command structure (see Durell-Young, 1997; Lescoutre, 2003; cf. Bowman, 1997).

### **3.4.2 Command Structures in Action: Case Histories**

Lescoutre (2003) illustrates considerations for selecting a command structure in the context of four coalition operations: the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the UN International Force in East Timor (INTERFET). These examples or case histories are detailed in the paragraphs below.

#### **3.4.2.1 Lead Nation Command**

As Lescoutre (2003) explains, the lead nation command structure is present when one of the nations in a multinational coalition has the acknowledged and explicit lead role. This role normally includes the position of multinational force commander and the domination of the command and control element in the headquarters. In most cases, the lead nation has the largest force in the operation; further, all other national elements in the coalition are subordinate to the lead nation with some specific conditions over the use and control of their forces. Depending on the size and duration of the operation, the force commander will integrate, within his/her headquarters, a number of coalition member representatives based on each nation's contribution. This integration of the headquarters also provides smaller coalition members with the feeling that they are playing a role in the leadership of the mission. However, the greater the contribution that a nation makes to the coalition operation, the greater the role that a nation will have in

the decision-making process. The UN sponsored operations in Korea (in which the US took the lead) and in East Timor (in which Australia was the lead nation) are two examples of a lead nation command structure in coalition operations (Lescoutre, 2003; Wheatley & Buck, 1999). As will be seen below, even where there is a lead nation command structure, lead nations depend on the support from liaison teams or coalition operating regions in order to achieve mission success. Further, lead nations must respect the culture and traditions of subordinate nations, or problems may arise.

In the Korean War, there were significant cultural and language differences between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Eighth US Army (EUSA). Differing religious customs, the importance of “saving face,” and the limited number of translators in the Hangul language, as well as the lack of modern technical terms within this language, were difficult challenges (Wheatley & Buck, 1999). To facilitate joint operations, a liaison corps (i.e., the US Military Advisory Corp, or KMAG) was established between the EUSA and ROK units. The KMAG’s main responsibilities were to maintain a liaison between the ROK Army and the EUSA and to assist the ROK Army by providing guidance and suggestions relating to US actions and intentions. As the liaison, the KMAG Headquarters was co-located within the ROK Army Headquarters. Since the KMAG advisors were also assigned to ROK units, they were able to provide information regarding the activities and status of these units to EUSA. Despite problems within the KMAG, including not having enough advisors and equipment, the KMAG helped to overcome language and cultural differences between the coalition partners (Wheatley & Buck, 1999).

In East Timor (Operation Stabilize), in which Australia, the largest contributing nation, was the lead nation, more than 20 culturally diverse countries participated (Lescoutre, 2003). However, the cultural diversity of the coalition members did not impact negatively on the success of the mission. Lescoutre (2003) attributes this success to two main factors. First, since the Australian Defence Forces were already structured to operate in the region, most of the coalition members were regionally based. Second, the theater commander (General Peter Cosgrove) of the INTERFET made every attempt to meet the goals and concerns of the troop contributing nations (Lescoutre, 2003; see also Ballard, 2001). In fact, INTERFET built upon the strong relationships that existed among the Australian, New Zealand, UK, and American elements of the coalition. This trust made for fluid communication among the English speaking members of the coalition (Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Canada, and the US). Significantly, it was among these nations, which shared a common language and similar culture, where most of the communication occurred within the coalition (Ballard, 2001). Further, within the INTERFET staff, Thailand’s General Songkitti Jaggabatarara served as both a national command element commander and General Cosgrove’s deputy. This assignment was designed as a contribution to coalition cohesiveness, and although the complexity of both roles did not always coalesce, the effort was successful. The key issue was the method of ensuring centralized control of the entire coalition while facilitating the execution of assigned tasks by national elements using their own doctrines and procedures. General Cosgrove alleviated this problem by employing coalition operating regions (Ballard, 2001).

### **3.4.2.2 Parallel Command**

The second type of command structure is the parallel command model, in which two or more multinational headquarters exist with their respective subordinated coalition forces, but no single force commander is designated (Lescoutre, 2003). The member nations retain control of their own forces, and command responsibilities are shared (Lescoutre, 2003). The parallel multinational headquarters achieve unity of effort through the formation of a 24-hour Coalition Coordination, Communications, and Integration Center (C<sup>3</sup>IC) (Lescoutre, 2003). The functions of the center are to coordinate the various activities between the multinational headquarters; to communicate and disseminate the various orders and transmissions (including translation from one language to another); to act as the focal point for force sustainment, host nation support and movement control; and to integrate the coalition forces in terms of doctrine, training, and strategies (Lescoutre, 2003). Staff elements from each coalition member are represented in the C<sup>3</sup>IC (Lescoutre, 2003).

A recent example of parallel command structure is the coalition operation in the Persian Gulf War (Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm), in which Western coalition forces came under the control of a US force commander (General Schwarzkopf), and the Arab and Muslim coalition forces came under the control of a Saudi force commander (General Khaled Bin Sultan) (Lescoutre, 2003). In Operation Desert Storm, coalition effectiveness was an early priority and the military commanders understood that a structure had to be developed that incorporated each national contribution in a way that maximized its effectiveness and minimized its limitations (Ballard, 2001). Both force commanders recognized the diversity of the cultures involved in the coalition and judiciously selected a parallel command structure for their respective multinational operations (Lescoutre, 2003). As suggested above, the spirit of cooperation and mutual support between the two multinational headquarters was due in large part to the existence of the coordination center – the C<sup>3</sup>IC – which facilitated the combined planning process and improved the everyday integration of coalition operations (Lescoutre, 2003). Although the C<sup>3</sup>IC cell did not have command authority or a direct role in the campaign planning process, it was particularly efficient at integrating the efforts of the two major partners (or “lead nations”)<sup>9</sup> in the coalition into a unity of effort, through the assignment of missions that were consistent with political restrictions, military requirements, and force capabilities (Barabé, 1999). Without usurping the power of the two multinational headquarters, the C<sup>3</sup>IC provided the linkage that contributed to the success of the coalition, and proved critical to the success of Operation Desert Storm (Lescoutre, 2003).<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, the personal rapport, dialogue, and good working relationship between General Schwarzkopf and General Khaled Bin Sultan were all instrumental in resolving any cultural issues that surfaced during the conflict (Lescoutre, 2003). Indeed, there were vast cultural differences in the coalition as reflected in national traditions, language, religions (Islam vs. non-Islam), class (officers vs. soldiers), gender roles, discipline, cultural tolerances (e.g., between Arab and non-Arab states), the issue of “saving face,” discomfort with outsiders, and standards of living (Western vs. Middle Eastern) (Lescoutre, 2003; Wheatley & Buck, 1999). Due to his personal knowledge of Middle Eastern culture, and the input of foreign assistance officers, General Schwarzkopf understood that the coalition’s efforts against Iraq were extremely vulnerable to cultural sensitivities, and therefore he made sure to foster cross-cultural interaction throughout the campaign (Dickinson, 2004). In addition, the use of culturally aware liaison teams in the parallel headquarters also contributed to the success of the parallel command structure (Dickinson, 2004). In short, the recognition and accommodation of Arab cultural differences were essential in gaining consensus and maintaining cohesion within the coalition. Although General Khaled bin Sultan recognized that the US would make the ultimate command decisions, the parallel command structure assured Saudi Arabia the retention of its sovereignty as well as its religion, culture, and traditions, and enabled the coalition to exercise a united front (Lescoutre, 2003).

### **3.4.2.3 Integrated Command**

A third type of command structure, which is not as widely recognized in the doctrine as the other two, is the integrated coalition command structure (Lescoutre, 2003). This type of structure is present when all coalition members participate equally in the operation and are represented in the command headquarters to assist the force commander, who is usually selected amongst the contributing nations, in making decisions (Lescoutre, 2003). Good examples of such command structures can be seen in many UN sponsored

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<sup>9</sup> Some recent literature refers to the command structure in the Persian Gulf War as *combination* (lead and parallel), or *hybrid* (Lescoutre, 2003; see also Wheatley & Buck, 1999). Indeed, according to Durell-Young (1997), the three basic command structures (lead nation, parallel, integrated) need not be mutually exclusive (see also Bisho, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> A three-tier parallel command structure was adopted in the Vietnam War between the United States, South Vietnam, and South Korea. However, the absence of a coordination center between the multinational headquarters may have inhibited the coalition’s unity of effort and contributed to the defeat of the South Vietnamese government to the communist regime of North Vietnam (see Lescoutre, 2003). Further, South Vietnam was not given a significant part in the development of operational strategy or allocation of forces; nor was it fully integrated in the command structure above the tactical level (Ballard, 2001).



operations such as UNPROFOR in the former Republic of Yugoslavia and UNAMIR in Rwanda. However, Durell-Young (1997) suggests that there may be some disadvantages with this type of command structure, in the areas of level of experience, staff training, and integration. For these reasons, Durell-Young (1997) believes that an integrated command structure for high intensity operations may be inappropriate. This might partially explain some of the breakdown in the command structure that occurred during the Chapter 7 United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) (Lescoutre, 2003).

Durell-Young (1997) further argues that it would make little sense to establish universally applicable guiding principles for the selection of command structures. Rather, it may make more sense to identify the strengths and weaknesses that may arise when selecting an appropriate structure (e.g., an integrated coalition command may provide the most political advantages; a lead nation structure can respond quickly). According to Durell-Young (1997), however, the parallel command structure that was implemented in Operation Desert Storm (the US and Arab/Muslim forces each had their own separate chains of command) may have been successful in part because of the presence of a lead nation (the US). In other words, and somewhat ironically, a parallel structure without an explicit or implicit lead nation may not be able to develop and maintain an essential unity of purpose in the conduct of operations, which is so important to mission success (Durell-Young, 1997).

Similarly, in analyzing multinational command and control arrangements since World War II (including Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, operations in Somalia, Haiti, Southwest Asia, and Eastern Europe), Ballard (2001) concludes that one key to success in multinational military operations is to maintain a focus on developing operational cohesion and unity of purpose. Where a combined staff can be used, overall coalition effectiveness increases. When the differences within a coalition are dominant, some version of the parallel structure may be the most useful (see also Lescoutre, 2003; but cf. Durell-Young, 1997). Other important keys to coalition success include developing and empowering coordination cells; ensuring that national commitments match command authority and staff representation; and including joint boards, component commanders, decentralized operations, flexible boundaries for joint fires, and the synchronization of air, land, and sea (Ballard, 2001). Each of these command tools has the potential to assist in the development and effectiveness of complex, intercultural coalition operations (Ballard, 2001).

### **3.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MULTINATIONAL MILITARY LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Given the increasing frequency and complexity of multinational military operations, it is necessary to consider strategies for dealing with the cultural differences that arise in relations with multinational military forces (or other non-military organizations, such as international relief agencies and non-governmental organizations), and to identify the specific training requirements of multinational military leaders and operations (Gurstein, 1999; Winslow, Kammhuber, & Soeters, 2003). Indeed, the focus on education and training to overcome cultural differences and historical biases will pay dividends, both within the coalition and within the countries in which the coalition will conduct operations (Bowman, 1997). Below is a discussion of training strategies for developing effective multinational military leaders, followed by a discussion of general strategies for developing effective intercultural military operations and teams.

#### **3.5.1 Training and Development for Multinational Military Leaders**

As discussed earlier, it is the task of the operational commander to successfully integrate all of the diverse contingents of a multinational military force in order to ensure its overall cohesiveness and effectiveness (Plante, 1998). Potts (2004) suggests that one way of developing leaders for this task would be to establish a world class institution to develop commanders and senior staff for multinational appointments. Recognizing the complexity inherent in leading a multinational force, the US military has identified a

number of key points that the operational commander must address (Plante, 1998). The US doctrine on the subject, as articulated in FM 100-23, states that the effectiveness of multinational operations will be improved by:

- 1) *Establishing rapport and harmony among senior multinational commanders.* The keys are respect, trust, and the ability to compromise. The result will be successful teamwork and unity of effort. Similarly, Potts (2004) suggests that a common understanding of doctrine and procedures (*co-operability*) can also be developed through good working relationships within a coalition and through training.
- 2) *Respecting multinational partners and their ideas, culture, and customs.* Such respect (consideration and acceptance) shows each partner's importance to the alliance or coalition.
- 3) *Assigning missions appropriate to each multinational partner's capabilities.* Multinational partners' opinions should be sought during the planning process. National honour and prestige may significantly impact mission assignment. It must be ascertained that multinational partners have the necessary resources to accomplish their assigned missions. Cross levelling among partners may be required.
- 4) *Ensuring concerted action through liaison centers.* For example, the ability to communicate in a partner's native language is important because it enhances and facilitates liaison.
- 5) *Enabling all partners to operate together in the most effective manner and to make the most efficient and economical use of resources.* Standardization agreements are the result of rationalization, standardization, and interoperability efforts in alliances. These agreements may be appropriate for rapid adoption by coalitions.
- 6) *Ensuring all multinational members' efforts are focused on a common goal to produce unity of effort.*
- 7) *Knowing and understanding the capabilities of multinational partners as well as or better than you know the belligerent parties, from movement and manoeuvres to logistical support.*

In a similar vein, Gillespie (2002) offers suggestions to educate and prepare officers in the skills needed to deal with national and cultural frictions, and recommends tools for achieving unity of effort (and command) in modern coalition contexts (cf. Davis, 2000a). In particular, Gillespie (2002) describes the following as important elements of a coalition leader's toolbox:

- 1) *Education.* Leaders must have the knowledge of their own position in the operational level of warfare and of the conflicts that arise in building a multicultural force. Foreign language and foreign cultural training should be a priority for selected personnel. Schools like the Pearson Peacekeeping Center<sup>11</sup> should be offered as well as other international schools<sup>12</sup> and courses in order to establish a human database that can be drawn upon in the future. Generic intercultural issues in multinational military operations should be included in officer training syllabi,

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<sup>11</sup> The Pearson Peacekeeping Center, established in 1995, provides training programs to participants from different countries and also founded the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centers, which provides an informal forum for the exchange of peacekeeping information among peacekeeping nations around the world. Similarly, the Peace Support Training Center was established in 1996 to ensure that all deployed CF personnel are fully prepared for modern operations (Grant, 2003). Training conducted at the Peace Support Training Center focuses primarily on non-traditional military subjects, such as negotiation and mediation techniques and cultural awareness. The aim is to make personnel better prepared to perform their duties in the complex world of peace support operations (Grant, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> The NATO School (Oberammergau) acts as a center for training military and civilian personnel serving in the Atlantic Alliance, as well as for Partner countries. Its courses are continually revised and updated to reflect current developments in [Allied Command Europe](#) and [Allied Command Atlantic](#). Each year a wide range of courses are taught on topics such as weapons employment, nuclear, biological, and chemical defence, electronic warfare, command and control, mobilizable forces, multinational forces (including multinational crisis management), peacekeeping, environmental protection, crisis management, and basic NATO orientation. More information is available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb141302.htm>.

supplemented by nation-specific information just prior to operations or exercises (Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004). However, all personnel who are likely to be involved in multinational operations must be made aware of cultural issues that may affect interoperability. Thus, cross-cultural training and instruction should be given to all troops prior to deployment.

- 2) *Liaison Officers*. The use of officers with multicultural knowledge or experience (e.g., officers who are themselves visible or cultural minorities within their own nation), as a source of expertise in this area should be considered as there is a wealth of knowledge in them that sits largely untapped. This tool can be invaluable in overcoming perceived frictions (Gillespie, 2002).<sup>13</sup>
- 3) *Training*. Multinational training opportunities must be explored as a method of understanding potential partnership issues. There must be agreements between countries to allow selected personnel to be assigned to different armies and to understand the complexities between forces so that, when operations actually begin, there is a capability established between forces in that they have experience in working together. As Bowman (1997) argues, the more personnel available who are experienced in the cultures of various coalition partners, the smoother the coalition operations will be. Similarly, multinational planning exercises could significantly improve initial operational responses to emerging crises. Such training exercises will help to overcome the initial confusion of coalition operations and cultural problems by identifying them in a training situation before an actual crisis occurs (Bowman, 1997). Multinational immersion training, in which role-plays of operations with various nationalities are conducted, has also been recommended (see Stewart, Cremin, et al., 2004).

Similar in intent to the above recommendations, Graen and Hui (1999) have proposed a comprehensive global training model to prepare leaders for global leadership. This global training model, which may be applied to leaders of multinational military operations, involves:

- a) Transcultural skill development,
- b) Third culture making skills,
- c) Cross-cultural creative problem solving skills, and
- d) Ethical skills.

*Transculturals*, as eluded to previously, are those who grow beyond their own cultural socialization so that they can understand different cultures with minimal biases, make valid cross-cultural judgements, and develop cross-cultural partnerships (see also Elron et al., 2003). Those with *third culture skills* are those who can use cross-cultural partners to understand, reconcile, and transcend systematic cultural differences and build a third culture (such as a global or common military culture) in which both cultures can cooperate (see Elron et al., 1999). Third cultures involve the bridging and transcending of two or more cultures. In bridging cultural differences, third cultures involve ways to bring compromises between the different cultural practices. When bridging cultural differences, cross-cultural partners find ways to come up with organizational practices and management techniques and programs that are acceptable to members

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<sup>13</sup> Indeed, countries with diverse, multicultural populations can play a special role in preparing forces for multinational military operations. For example, David Last suggests that Canada, as a multicultural country through national policy, is at a comparative advantage in dealing with multinational military issues, as Canada has a pool of culture and linguistic experts from which to draw (Grant, 2003). Dickinson (2004) recommends making better use of Canadian diversity, by actively recruiting first- and second-generation Canadians (ethnic/visible minorities) into the CF; using more efficient means of tracking the linguistic abilities and the cultural background of CF personnel in order to provide support for international military operations; and increasing the emphasis on language and cultural training for personnel prior to deployments. Dickinson (2004) also discusses how first-generation Canadians have contributed to multinational military operations (e.g., as interpreters or gatherers of intelligence). Also, with two official languages, Canadian soldiers can provide a useful insight into understanding the problems associated with working with translated documents and with coalition partners operating in their second language. Dickinson (2004) adds, however, that although Canada has had some success in using culturally aware personnel to improve operational effectiveness, no policy has been adopted that would make systematic use of the multicultural nature of Canadian society.

of each culture. Those with *multinational creative problem solving skills* are those who can mediate and negotiate multinational interests in a creative problem solving context. Those with *ethical skills* are those who can understand multinational ethical conflicts and have the means to deal with them. Graen and Hui (1999) propose that training involving these four skills should continue throughout the career for both individual leaders and teams. As Bowman (1997) suggests, the education of officers and non-commissioned officers will help change perceptions and stereotypes concerning the roles and abilities of other nations, and thus will play a critical role in the leadership of change.<sup>14</sup>

### **3.5.2 Training and Development of Multinational Military Teams**

In addition to intercultural training and development for individual leaders, commanders should also develop intercultural awareness among their soldiers and officers – in effect, their teams (Winslow et al., 2003). Towards this end of sharing expertise, commanders must establish a training and development program to close any critical gaps that have been identified, and must also develop multilingual standard operating procedures, cultural awareness training, staff training at the headquarters level, and education in a basic code of ethics (Plante, 1998). The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, for example, has been developing training programs and regular pre-deployment inspections to improve the overall quality of the troops deployed. Once a commander knows the strengths and weaknesses of their troops, they are in a much better position to develop an appropriate training program (Plante, 1998). For UN peacekeepers, for instance, such training may include an understanding of the broader global political context of peacekeeping, recognition of the diversity of national interests that must be accommodated within a multilateral peacekeeping mandate, and a set of materials and standards that articulate broad ethical standards and codes of conduct (see Gurstein, 1999). Commanders must also create awareness of the *benefits* of diversity through both words and actions (Winslow et al., 2003). In the context of multinational operations, commanders should stress the joint character of the mission as the *superordinate goal* for everyone involved in order to achieve a unity of effort. Commanders should emphasize the *equal status* of all groups involved in the operation, and if necessary, boost the status of any low status groups (see also Soeters & Bos-Bakx, 2003; and Soeters & Recht, 2001). Commanders should make decisions so that members of every group can maintain their dignity without loss of face. Such principles of intergroup relations can be complemented by policies that enhance intercultural encounters, such as concrete collaboration with diverse groups and preparation before deployment, and should be integrated into the whole training period before deployment. For these tasks, commanders must carry the primary responsibility.

It is also important for commanders to introduce diversity training with some urgency and strength (Winslow et al., 2003). In many countries, participation in diversity training is voluntary; this sends the message that diversity training is relatively unimportant. Thus, according to Winslow et al. (2003), diversity training should be mandatory. If this mandatory approach elicits some resistance, then it is important for senior leadership to clarify the reasons for the diversity policy. Indeed, leadership support is extremely important for the implementation of diversity policy and is critical to the initiation of intercultural competence. Further, official statements about the importance of diversity policy must be followed through with its actual implementation (Winslow et al., 2003).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> For example, the Marshall Center has shown this to be the case for the nations of Eastern Europe. Such training could be expanded into national military schools. Something like the Marshall Center or the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, should be considered to support education and training of officers and non-commissioned officers from African nations. However, the Marshall Center is currently restricted to relatively senior personnel, and should be expanded to include more junior military personnel (Bowman, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> As a result of problems that arose with the German Armed Forces in Somalia and Cambodia due to a lack of awareness of local norms and values, the German Ministry of Defence commissioned the Institute for Psychology at the University of Regensburg to develop an intercultural curriculum to train German soldiers for international assignments (Winslow et al., 2003). Training was aimed at improving intercultural encounters with civilians of the host country, officials of the host country, and soldiers of other nations. In particular, soldiers cited the last category of encounters as especially difficult.

Elron et al. (1999) have identified a number of “integrating conditions” and “integrating mechanisms” for understanding how multinational military forces are able to establish cohesion and function effectively much of the time – without fighting each other. The integrating conditions include: a common military culture (based on the notion of a military profession, maintained through national training institutions that are open to the militaries of different nations); bureaucratic controls and structural similarity among different national forces; integrative missions (with superordinate goals or objectives such as “peace” or “international justice”); shared conditions and experiences (such as the integrating effects of uncertainty or danger and of “foreignness” or being far away from home); the temporariness of the system (e.g., multinational forces may be more tolerant or understanding of one another because they know that this is only required of them for a limited period of time); and a high level of cultural diversity (paradoxically, a very high level of cultural diversity may ease communication and coordination problems by facilitating the formation of a “hybrid” organizational culture that provides a common sense of identity for each participant).

In addition to such integrating conditions, the following integrating mechanisms may offset the potentially negative effects of cultural diversity: joint or combined operations and training (e.g., joint exercises provide a means of sharing military values and an opportunity for achieving cooperation); cross-cultural training (pre-deployment); an internal division of labour among national units in ways that minimize the need for coordination and the opportunities for friction; formal coordinating mechanisms (i.e., structures at the top of the command framework in the form of diverse headquarters representing all participating countries); information flows and the sharing of knowledge (knowledge management); and leadership and deliberate cohesion building activities (see also Stewart, Macklin, et al., 2004). As Elron et al. (1999) and others have pointed out, commanders of multinational forces must constantly engage in efforts to create distinctive identities and internal cohesion, and in short, to create a team-oriented, cooperative environment. Leaders must therefore articulate a unifying vision and institute a range of educational, cultural, and sport activities designed to introduce national cultures to each other and create a common esprit de corps.<sup>16</sup>

### **3.5.3 Training for a Multinational, Intercultural Military Context: Additional Tools and Technologies**

Besides cultural awareness and diversity training programs, analysts have also identified other strategies for dealing with intercultural issues in multinational military operations. As discussed earlier, the use of liaison officers, who are well versed in the cultures of the countries involved, offers one possible strategy (Gillespie, 2002). The US military, for instance, recognizing the importance of these types of personnel, have a system of Foreign Assistance Officers (FAO) who, based on language testing, are posted to different countries (Gillespie, 2002; see also Dickinson, 2004). After initial selection and a 2-year course, including basic language training, they live in these countries where they interact with the national military leaders and act as advisors to the host nation (Dickinson, 2004; Gillespie, 2002). A result of this program is that FAOs become totally immersed in the culture of the people, and in effect, become advisors on culture (Gillespie, 2002). They become a conduit back to the US regarding what the country expects and the potential pitfalls that may be encountered (Gillespie, 2002). FAOs are now an integral part of the US Forces and the advice given by these personnel – which constitutes, essentially, a human database on various cultures – is utilized in the planning and conduct of operations. The system is designed to produce an in-house capability that provides the US military with cultural and linguistic expertise in every region of the globe (Dickinson, 2004). Other countries, such as Canada, are also developing this capacity.

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<sup>16</sup> For example, the Australian contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers invited force members for a day of games and sport on Australia Day (the day Australia was colonized by the British), while the New Zealanders offered a Maori style feast on Waitangi Day (the day Britain signed a treaty with the Maori people). In other contexts, drinking, eating and partying are central to the creation of cooperation and affiliation, and, to the extent that these activities are institutionally supported and ensure equality among the participating groups, may contribute to the weakening of prejudice and the integration of the force (for a more detailed discussion of these and other integrative mechanisms, see Elron et al., 1999; Elron et al., 2003; and Ben-Ari & Elron, 2001).

In terms of training for successful coalitions, experience has shown that headquarters elements, whether existing multinational headquarters or a national headquarters that has been designated to assume a lead nation role in a future coalition operation, require additional preparation in order to command coalition operations. In addition to enhanced communications and augmented language capabilities, specific mission training is necessary. Much of this training can be done in advance through the use of command post and computer-assisted exercises and workshops and seminars for key personnel. Distance learning techniques may also enhance training and education of individuals and units, and training in public affairs and civil military operations can be added to this package. Once again, the main advantage of field training exercises between national forces is that cultural and historical differences between nations may decrease greatly after working together (Bowman, 1997; see also Barabé, 1999).

Klein et al. (2000) argue that understanding national differences through the use of the *cultural lens* can improve the command and control effectiveness of coalition operations (see also Klein, 2005; and Masakowski, Chapter 7). The cultural lens can allow for more effective training of military personnel entering multinational military operations, and it can inform the design of decision support systems so that they can accommodate differences in reasoning, judgement, and power structure. Although it may seem impractical to develop a cultural lens for every ethnic group in every country that exists, Klein et al. (2000) argue that it is possible to identify a small, usable set of dimensions (e.g., power distance, dialectical reasoning, counterfactual thinking, risk assessment and uncertainty management, activity orientation, and independence/dependence) that reflect the diversity of how people think, make, decisions, and assess risk. In terms of training, for example, programs developed by the North Carolina Center for World Languages and Cultures and by Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) provide US forces with information about cultures around the world. Such programs have been particularly useful for negotiators, business people, and Peace Corps volunteers involved in face-to-face interactions. Klein et al. (2000) further argue that in distributed teams, it is particularly important for team members to understand cognitive differences that may affect coordination and decision making. Training programs must prepare military personnel to understand the clusters of cultural dimensions so that they may develop common ground and thus increase the effectiveness of multinational military operations (Klein et al., 2000). Similarly, decision support systems must help distributed teams sustain common ground, through models and simulations that include national culture factors. Importantly, such capabilities would expand a commander's ability to anticipate and react to challenging situations (Klein et al.).<sup>17</sup>

In a similar vein, Bowman and Pierce (2003) suggest that an understanding of how culture affects teamwork has provided critical information for the development of training tools to help leaders and teams overcome cultural barriers. Bowman and Pierce identify two training tools that have been developed. The first is a communication skills training tool that can help individuals to develop understanding and tolerance of culturally diverse cognitive styles. The second is a web-based decision game designed to provide information and situational awareness of cultural differences in cognition. Both tools will have application before, upon arrival, and throughout the period of deployment and will be available to US and other leaders and teams, thereby creating opportunities for national and multinational team building.<sup>18</sup> With increasing emphasis being placed on interoperability of systems between coalition partners, Bowman and Pierce (2003) suggest that this project will provide a foundation for continued linkages between nations in technology and human systems.

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<sup>17</sup> The Decision Support Systems for Coalition Operations (DSSCO) project has been developing tools that US military planners can use to improve the effectiveness of multinational coalition operations involving diverse military and civilian organizations. A prototype is being developed by SPAWAR Systems Center – San Diego to support the Operations Planning Team (OPT) of the Commander in Chief, US Pacific Command (Handley & Levis, 2001; Handley, Levis, & Bares, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> Soeters et al. (2004) have argued that simply preparing for deployment beforehand is unlikely to be sufficient. It is worth considering holding a sort of “cultural debriefing” half-way through the deployment, giving cultural experts the opportunity to consider the actual experience of the reactions and behavior of the “other parties” (see also Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993). Cultural debriefings could take place regularly or on request. It might also be possible to hold these cultural debriefings jointly with colleagues of different nationalities (Soeters et al., 2004).

Finally, some further recommendations regarding language training in the context of multinational military operations should be mentioned. In addition to language training, dictionaries of common terms must be developed and distributed, including logistical and tactical terms (Marshall et al., 1997). As mentioned earlier, acronyms and abbreviations should be avoided in order to ensure a clear understanding of terms within a coalition, and operational and logistic plans and orders should be written in greater detail and clarity to avoid misunderstandings (Bowman, 1997). Once again, it is recommended that native English speakers are able to speak other languages, in order to build mutual understanding and respect (Potts, 2004; Bowman, 1997; Stewart, et al., 2004), and that they speak slowly and avoid colloquialisms (Bowman & Pierce, 2003).

In summary, as the composition of multinational military operations becomes more diverse, the need for leaders to bring groups of different cultures together to function as a unit becomes more crucial (Graen & Hui, 1999). Thorough preparation and training is vital if commanders are to be culturally aware and sensitive, patient, adaptive, and tolerant (Soeters et al., 2004). In general, all personnel who are deployed in multinational military coalitions should have thorough training in the cultural aspects of their work. Attention must be paid to the cultural characteristics of both the coalition partners and the local population. Steps taken to develop common operating procedures, to train together, and to educate future leaders will help ensure that future coalitions successfully accomplish their assigned mission (Bowman, 1997).

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

Multinational coalitions will become more prevalent in the future as nations seek alternate methods of resolving conflict (Davis, 2000a). With the increasing complexity of such coalitions, and with new partners, future coalition commanders will face a myriad of challenges, including the integration of culturally diverse groups and the establishment of an effective command and control structure (Davis, 2000a). This environment will demand a greater range of leadership skills and competencies, the ability to overcome cultural barriers to effective teamwork (such as cultural differences in power distance and decision making), and an ability to lead within various command structures. Leaders must recognize that both national interests and cultural factors will influence the setting of coalition goals and objectives, place constraints on the coalition force, and determine a nation's contribution in terms of organization, capability, and command authority (Davis, 2000a). Through the development of intercultural leadership skills, innovative command structures, and thorough coordination, liaison, and cooperation, both political interests and cultural diversity in coalition operations can be addressed, and cultural diversity in multinational military operations can be used effectively as a positive resource (Davis, 2000a).

As discussed in this chapter, the focus in multinational military operations must be toward achieving unity of purpose, as opposed to unity of doctrine or command (Davis, 2000a). To achieve unity of purpose, operational level commanders must develop mutual confidence amongst the military leadership of the coalition partners to ensure that a balance is struck between competing political and military interests and to ensure that cultural issues are addressed (Davis, 2000a). Indeed, of the intangibles of coalitions' command and control matters, mutual confidence and trust between partners may be the most important consideration. Being able to trust is essential to unity of effort, much more so in the case of nonconventional operations in which the commander must blend the skills of culturally diverse national contingents so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Barabé, 1999). More research is needed, however, to examine the issue of trust and reliability in a multicultural environment (Graen & Hui, 1999).

Doctrine publications and professional military education curricula must reflect the political and intercultural realities of coalition operations to ensure that future leaders can meet the challenges of coalition command (Davis, 2000a). This education and training must include diversity training for both leaders and teams. Although the development of multinational command structures has been aided by new doctrines and by the exchange of lessons learned in operations (e.g., see Ballard, 2001), it will remain a challenge as long as national groups do not share a common vision of the desired objectives for a given

operation, and intercultural factors are in play. International organizations such as the UN have contributed to the development of international consensus regarding objectives and vision, but more work in the education and training of multinational military leaders and teams, particularly in terms of cultural diversity, is needed. As Ballard (2001) suggests, the ground is fertile for further investigation, as multinational responses are needed to deal with an ever shrinking and increasingly interlinked world.

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## Chapter 4 – MULTINATIONAL MILITARY TEAMS

by

**A. J. van Vliet & D. van Amelsfoort**

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the literature on cultural diversity in military teams. The introductory section will examine the notion of teams, particularly in relation to culture. Within this context, there will also be a discussion of some of the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity with respect to teams. The second section briefly describes the method that was used for a review of existing literature pertaining to military teams and multinational operations. In the final section, the literature will be discussed and some conclusions and recommendations will be made.

#### 4.1.1 Teams

Before a discussion of teams and culture can begin, it may be useful to first define what is meant by the term “team.” In her review of the literature, Dyer (1984) noted that a clear definition of a team was not available. Therefore, she suggested that a team be considered as including two or more people, a common goal, specific role assignment, and interdependence (see also Salas, Bowers, & Cannon-Bowers, 1995). These elements were reiterated by other researchers during the 1980s (Modrick, 1986; Morgan, Glickman, Woodard, Blaiwes, & Salas, 1986). Orasanu and Salas (1993) expanded this early definition to include additional characteristics:

- a) Teams make decisions in the context of a larger task;
- b) Team members have specialized knowledge and skills relevant to the task and decision; and
- c) Task conditions under which teams operate often include high workload and time pressure.

In large part, the characteristics detailed by Dyer (1984) and Orasanu and Salas (1993) continue to be used today. Based on the above the following working definition of a team is proposed:

*A team consists of two or more people with a common goal, making decisions in the context of a larger task. Each member has a specific role and specialized knowledge and skills relevant to the task and decision, and team members are interdependent.*

When speaking of cultural diversity in teams, we are referring to three types of cultural diversity:

- *Cultural diversity within a team;*
- *Cultural diversity between or among teams; and*
- *Cultural diversity between a team and the social environment.*

This distinction helps identify the types of processes that are affected by cultural differences, and thus also the consequent effectiveness of the team in question. In this chapter, of particular interest is cultural diversity within multinational military teams, or between the militaries of different nations.

As mentioned before, the scope of this chapter is focused on how cultural differences or cultural factors affect team effectiveness, with specific interest in how team processes are affected by cultural factors. Because teams consist of individuals, differences at this level of analysis are of great importance, but teams also behave in an environment such as an organization (an agglomerate of other teams) and even at a more abstract level such as a nation or host of nations. Early literature on culture mainly focused on

how individuals, as representatives of certain ethnic backgrounds, can be distinguished due to their ethnic characteristics and in particular how they tend to behave or cope with certain situations from a socio-emotional or psychological perspective. The next two sections will address this point of view.

#### **4.1.2 Cultural Diversity in Teams**

Cultural diversity within teams has been associated with both advantages and disadvantages in terms of group creativity, flexibility, and problem solving ability (Day, Stinson, Cameron, & Catano, 2002). Compared to homogeneous groups, heterogeneous groups tend to make more creative and higher quality decisions (Adler, 1990; Kai, Bridgewater, & Spencer, 2001; Triandis, Kurowski, & Gelfand, 1994). Heterogeneous groups are also more likely to consider a greater number of possible solutions and to discuss the implications of alternative solutions more thoroughly than homogeneous groups (Nemeth, 1985). Groupthink, a tendency for highly cohesive groups to use ineffective decision-making processes, is also less likely in diverse groups (Janis, 1972). Initially, diverse groups may experience more communication problems, but in the long term they may outperform homogeneous groups (Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998). These improvements in creativity and problem solving have resulted in overall superior job performance for diverse groups (Wright, Ferris, Hiller & Kroll, 1995).

There are some drawbacks associated with diverse and heterogeneous groups, however. Homogeneous groups tend to be more cohesive, efficient, and productive in the short term than heterogeneous groups (McGrath, Berdhal, & Arrow, 1995) and to have fewer communication problems than heterogeneous groups (Chatman et al., 1998). Heterogeneous groups tend to be less socially integrated, have a greater potential for conflict (Berry & Kalin, 1995), and tend to experience more stress (Triandis et al., 1994) than homogeneous groups. Because diverse groups tend to be less cohesive, their members may spend more time establishing relationships than working on group tasks (Adler, 1990). Finally, heterogeneous groups tend to have higher member turnover (Chatman et al., 1998; O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989). Some of the studies that have examined the effects of group diversity on cohesiveness, communication, and performance, however, have had methodological limitations that compromised their external validity and generalizability to real workplace situations (e.g., Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993).

#### **4.1.3 Types of Multicultural and Multinational Collaborations**

While much has been written on cultural dimensions, little if any research has been completed identifying different forms of multicultural and multinational (MC/MN) collaborations. Zaccaro, Salas, and Burke (2003) have identified four types of MC/MN collaboration based on their work with American soldiers in Bosnia. These are:

*Integrated multicultural/multinational units.* Soldiers and foreign nationals operate as part of the same unit with common operational missions. Another version of such teams is a unit from one nation with some foreign liaisons. These often happen at higher rank levels.

*Partnering national units.* One nation's units serve as partners with other national units. Each unit may have the same overall mission, but different operational missions. Conversely, the units may have the same operational mission but responsibility for different sectors in the operating environment.

*Subordinated foreign national units.* Foreign units are placed under the command of another national unit and commanding officer. Zaccaro et al. (2003) note that in the American case, this is a rare occurrence.

*Embedded units.* A national unit is embedded within and is operating from a foreign culture. This type of MC/MN collaboration is noted by Zaccaro et al. (2003) as being the oldest and most familiar to American soldiers.

This raises a number of questions, such as: Does cultural diversity within or between teams affect the productivity or effectiveness of military teams in multinational operations and if so, how?

## **4.2 METHOD**

In order to better understand the impact of cultural diversity on teams within multinational operations, a review of the current literature in the area was conducted. Although relatively little research exists specifically looking at this issue, a body of literature that concerned teams and team-building which can inform an understanding of the dynamics of teams in multinational situations could be identified. For ease of analysis, this research was grouped around some broad themes such as inter-group relations, cross-cultural adaptability, and inter-group activities.

### **4.2.1 Inter-Group Relations**

A multinational team will always be faced with a number of issues that stem from inter-group relations and dynamics. For example, in a peacekeeping mission, which falls into the category of military operations other than war, the difference in cultures, languages, religions, military values and level of expertise will be accentuated (Plante, 1998).

Inter-group relations, while being influenced by the composition of the groups themselves, are subject to a number of tendencies. The most common tendencies are ethnocentrism, social isolationism, prejudices and stereotyping, and marginalization. Quite often, a given tendency will feed on another one. Thus, the ethnocentric approach of judging others from one's own perspective might very well include a number of prejudices and stereotypes (Plante, 1998). For example, Western culture has long considered itself to be far more technologically advanced than any other culture and many Westerners have developed a number of stereotypes about the "technologically challenged people of the Third World." Marginalization and ostracism (which can be considered as marginalization to the extreme) are aspects of group behavior that can simply be defined as the refusal to associate with, or the isolating or rejection of, a group. This isolation can take a number of forms from highly visible to barely noticeable actions. It can vary from subtle treatment and polite exchanges to total exclusion and outright hostility toward a particular group of individuals. Usually, it is based on the tendencies discussed above and will appear along racial, cultural or religious lines. It also can be based on expected skills, values or behavior. In most cases, there is a significant amount of ignorance implied (Plante, 1998).

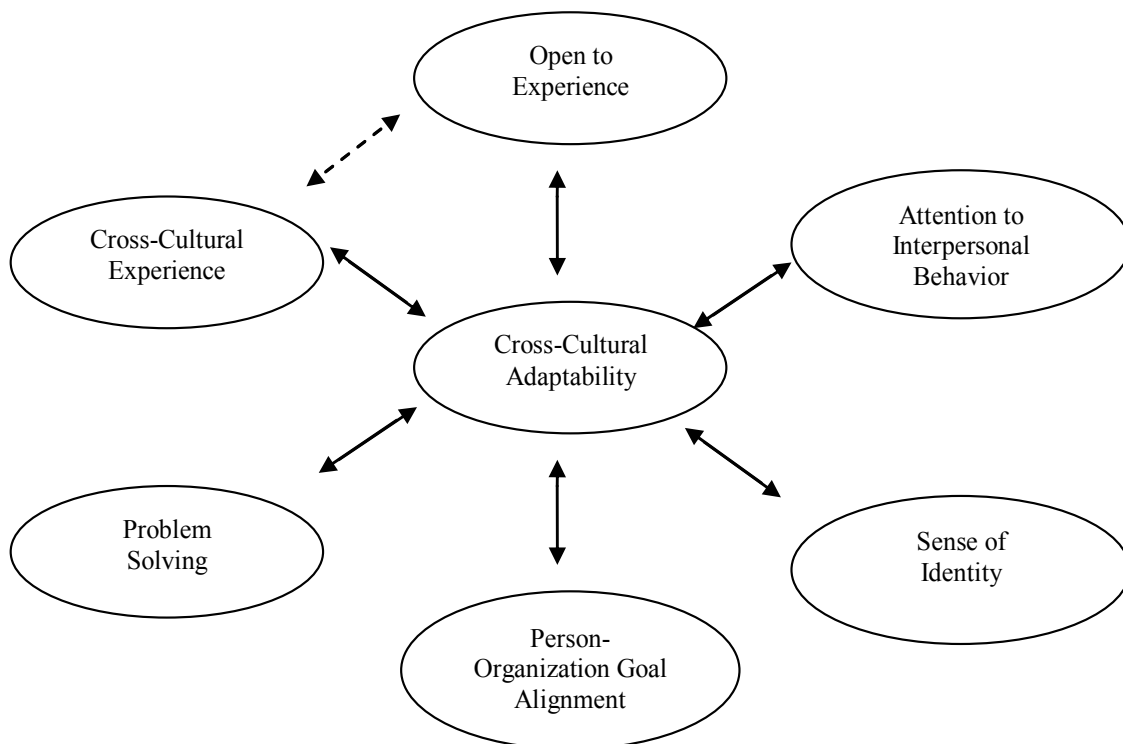
What does this mean for the collaboration of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) soldiers with, for instance, NATO and non-NATO countries? According to Canadian General Maisonneuve: "[In the Implementation Force, IFOR] problems of interoperability are lessened by the fact that most of the troops are from NATO" (1997, p. 149). However, while there appears to be a common military culture that promotes effective co-ordination among NATO countries, significant differences arise when the Canadian military, for instance, works with some non-NATO countries. The Ethics Survey conducted with Canadian Forces members revealed that cultural tensions are prevalent in multinational deployments. As mentioned by McKee (Chapter 2), these tensions included differences between Canadian and some other United Nations (UN) forces on substantive ethical issues, such as participating in the black market. Other problems arose from different value systems among the contingents (Winslow, 1999).

In the last 5 years, the UN has made substantial efforts to improve the effectiveness of its peacekeeping operations. However, the intensive effort to persuade developing countries to contribute troops has created a number of challenges at the operational level. These problems affect the cohesion and loyalty of a group, which are considered important components of combat effectiveness. Loyalty is encouraged at all levels, as military values and structures grant primacy to collective goals (Winslow, 1998). This is reminiscent of Toennies' (1963) notion of *Gemeinschaft*, which refers to a social state in which belonging is pervasive and where primary group relations predominate: Individuals exhibit strong allegiance to their group and the group exerts social control over the individual member. In the military, group allegiance is seen to be essential to combat effectiveness. Strong affective ties bind soldiers into a fighting unit in which they are willing to sacrifice their lives for each other. Military culture emphasizes "belonging" while training

rewards group performance. Exaggerated loyalty to the primary group, however, can lead members to work at counter purposes to the overall goals of a mission. Thus, assembling and leading a multinational force remains a complex and challenging task for any commander (see Febraro, Chapter 3). In order to succeed, the operational commanders must optimize the forces assigned and create a truly integrated team. This will likely involve the task of training and development. Commanders must keep in mind, however, that success might rest with the weakest contingent; thus, they can ill afford to leave out or to marginalize any contingent within a multinational force.

**4.2.2 Cross-Cultural Adaptability**

One way to help ensure inclusion of all contingents is to build cross-cultural openness and adaptability. Drawing on a study of Australian Defence Force peacekeepers that highlighted the importance of cross-cultural issues in peace operations, Schmidtchen (1997a) developed an instrument, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Scale (CCAS). The CCAS quantifies individual cross-cultural adaptability and is based on the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Model depicted in Figure 4.1 (Schmidtchen, 1997b).



**Figure 4.1: Peace Operations Cross-Cultural Adaptability Model.**

The CCAS is composed of 53 items that measure the following six domains of cross-cultural adaptability:

*Openness to Experience.* Peacekeepers must be open to new ideas because they are continually presented with a range of different cultures. These cultures may be organizational (e.g., UN and other non-governmental organizations), military (e.g., peacekeepers from other nations or other services), or ethnically based. The maintenance of consent, a fundamental principle of peace operations, is supported by the peacekeepers’ ability to recognize, adapt to, and integrate ideas and ways of doing things that are different from their own.

*Attention to Interpersonal Relations.* People who are successful in cross-cultural environments are skilled in their ability to recognize and attend to interpersonal relations. They are attentive to verbal



and nonverbal communication cues and the context in which they occur; they are also sensitive to the impact of their behavior on those with whom they interact, and can accurately communicate their intentions in a sensitive and meaningful way.

*Sense of Identity.* When entering cross-cultural situations, an individual's beliefs and values may be fundamentally challenged. In a peace operation where exposure to the culture is intense, emotional, but inherently short-term, it is important that service personnel have a high degree of self-awareness and maintain a strong sense of self-identity.

*Person-Organization Goal Alignment.* Peace operations present service personnel with a range of new roles that stem from the strategic role of the organization in which they serve. In the context of peace operations, the UN is a third-party mediator and monitor. This role must be reflected at every level of the force and in the actions of the individual. Consequently, it is important that the peacekeeper's values and beliefs be consonant with those of the organization.

*Problem Solving.* Peace operations and cross-cultural environments consistently present service personnel with novel problems in a novel context. In these situations, the individual has limited ability to generalize from previous training and experience. In such a socially ambiguous environment, the ability to identify problems, produce novel solutions, and learn from experience is fundamental to successful performance.

*Cross-Cultural Experience.* Previous experience in, or exposure to, cross-cultural conditions or a propensity to participate in these types of conditions can provide the individual with skills, abilities and attitudes that can be successfully transferred to the peace operations environment.

The purpose of Vanderpool's (2002) study was to confirm the accuracy and appropriateness of the six factors and their constituent items originally identified by Schmidtchen. The CCAS was administered to 751 members of the Canadian Forces and 563 members of the Australian Defence Force. The results suggest that a five-factor structure would be more appropriate for the CCAS. These factors are interpersonal relations/sense of identity, openness to experience, organizational goals, problem solving, and cross-cultural experience. However, further research is required to verify the factors identified and to determine the predictive validity of the CCAS.

## **4.3 INTER-GROUP ACTIVITIES**

### **4.3.1 Inter-Group Planning**

Effective coalition operations begin with thorough planning that includes all participating organizations in clearly defined, appropriate roles. Two key factors that influence the success of inter-group planning for coalition operations are described below.

*Inclusion planning.* This factor is the degree to which all participating coalition organizations are included in planning prior to deployment. It can range from being fully inclusive of all organizations to being fully exclusive, where each organization develops its own plans independently. When implemented well, inclusion planning creates a positive first step in relationship building between coalition partners and facilitates the exchange of valuable information throughout the operation.

*Common and consistent goal.* This factor is the degree to which all participating coalition organizations agree on a common objective and strategy (role compatibility) prior to deployment. It can range from being fully agreed upon by all organizations to being conflicted, where each organization pursues objectives independently. The development of a common and consistent goal fosters relationship building between coalition partners and facilitates the exchange of information throughout the operation.

Inter-group planning builds a foundation of trust for a coalition operation. It must be acknowledged that cultural differences between groups can add to the challenges of inter-group planning – these differences may mean that planning is carried out differently by the groups involved (e.g., different levels of personnel involved, different planning procedures). However, inclusion planning can facilitate the formation of a common and consistent goal even between groups with dissimilar purposes and perspectives, if the planning process focuses on the big picture and on the population needing assistance. In turn, inter-group bias and perceptions of “us” versus “them” are lessened, and unity of purpose is strengthened. Participants contribute to the plan of operations, lessening the chances for misattribution of intent and the development of feelings of inequity. Early inter-group planning paves the way for later inter-group coordination.

### **4.3.2 Inter-Group Coordination**

After the initial planning has been completed, co-ordination must occur throughout all phases of an operation in order for it to succeed. Inter-group coordination (along with communication) helps to ensure positive relations and efficiency. There are two key factors that influence the success of inter-group coordination for coalition operations:

*Service-Oriented Military.* This factor relates to the existence of behaviors that reflect mission appropriate service to the affected population and to participating organizations. These behaviors can range from a full customer service orientation where the military seeks to understand how to serve and behaves accordingly to a take-charge mentality where there is no customer focus. A service orientation is particularly important in operations other than war that require a high degree of customer focus, such as relationship building, diplomacy, negotiation, understanding, and problem solving. When implemented well, a service orientation facilitates teamwork, high morale, trust, and good will among contingents.

*Task Reciprocity.* This factor refers to the existence of a reciprocal helping relationship among groups such that “you help me do what I need to do for the good of the mission, I help you do what you need to do for the good of the mission.” This reciprocity is based on the viewpoint that all mission participants have valuable roles to fulfil, and mutual helping is the only way for all participants to succeed. Social identity of groups is maintained, but the groups are perceived to be of fairly equal status. Seiple (1996) refers to this mindset as “altruistic self interest,” that is, the cornerstone of interaction between, for instance, the military and non-government organizations (NGOs). When implemented well, task reciprocity contributes toward solid working relationships and leads to high cooperation among organizations and high mission commitment.

Effective inter-group coordination results when roles are clearly defined. Groups with differences in the amount of specialists or generalists on staff may find that task-role linkages need to be explicitly defined for coordination efforts to proceed smoothly. Personnel that provide liaison to the other groups are essential for on-going coordination. In addition, problems due to misattribution of intent are reduced when supportive relationships are established. Effective intergroup coordination also increases the efficiency of resource usage, thereby reducing conflicts due to resource scarcity.

### **4.3.3 Inter-Group Communication**

A comprehensive, mutually agreed-upon plan forms the foundation of an effective coalition operation. Inter-group communication is the means by which organizations share information on the development and execution of plans. Two key factors influence the success of inter-group communication for coalition operations:

*Inter-organizational communication.* This factor is the degree of information sharing between leaders belonging to different groups (e.g., participating militaries, the UN, NGOs). It can range from being inclusive so that all organizations share and minimize gaps, to exclusive where participating

organizations do not share any information. When implemented well, inter-organizational communication creates ease and speed in accomplishing difficult tasks, improves planning, and reduces major mistakes.

*Information transfer.* This factor is the degree of information flow from group leaders to those performing task assignments in the field. It can range from being fully transferred so that all field personnel are informed of plans, to minimally transferred where, due to technological difficulties or lack of a system, field personnel are not informed. When implemented well, information transfer enhances unity of effort by facilitating efficient task execution.

Effectively functioning inter-group communications are key to coalition operations (see also Riedel, Chapter 6). Aside from the obvious issue of the technology used by the different groups, a protocol for communications is important for defining how communications occur (see Masakowski, Chapter 7). Again, cultural differences may play a part. Differences in hierarchy and the absence or presence of gatekeepers set limits on who communicates with whom. Further, it is hypothesized that these differences are associated with protocols for one-way (usually top down) or two-way communication. Differences in these areas may be overcome by creating communications protocols specifically designed for and bounded by the needs of the specific operation. Without effective communications, personnel may be performing needless tasks or may be put into harm's way. The likelihood of misattributions, inter-group bias, and conflict over resources is increased in the absence of effective inter-group communication.

#### **4.3.4 Inter-Group Training**

Inter-group training is an essential pre-mission/between mission method for assuring positive relations, knowledge, and teamwork (see also Febbraro, Chapter 3). It prepares groups to be at their best when working with each other under the stress of disaster, war, or other unusual circumstances in which coalitions often function. Two key factors influence the success of inter-group training for coalition operations:

*Cultural awareness.* This factor refers to behavior by military personnel that takes into account the values of the host nation and participating organizations. When implemented well, this factor promotes positive goodwill, publicity, and enhanced ability for effective operations. The consequences of poor cultural awareness can be serious, such as alienation of the host populace and the creation of threatening conditions for military personnel.

*Combined rehearsal.* This factor refers to specific combined training or simulation exercises prior to or during a mission that allows all organizations an opportunity to start building unity of effort. When implemented well, combined rehearsal facilitates unity of effort, and reduces inefficiency and mistrust.

Inter-group training is the ultimate facilitator of success. There is no substitute for experience in how to plan together, share resources, or establish effective communications. However, as noted above, resistance to shared training has been encountered. Issues such as military security and control of exercises as well as NGOs' desire to maintain neutrality must be considered. As these diverse groups increasingly find themselves as partners in real operations, creative solutions are being developed. For example, the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance in Hawaii has expedited combined exercises and exchanges between the military and NGO communities.

### **4.4 BARRIERS TO TEAMWORK**

As discussed throughout this report, four cultural factors have emerged as barriers to the teamwork process (Bowman & Pierce, 2003; Klein, Pongonis, & Klein, 2000). The first, *power distance*, describes the extent to which less powerful individuals in a system accept inequality. In low power distance

relationships, working patterns are more egalitarian and team processes more collaborative and interactive. Alternately, in high power distance teams, leaders tend to be directive, thereby constraining team creativity and collaboration. An example of how power distance imbalances act as a barrier to teamwork will clarify this problem. If team members are high on the power distance dimension, then they will be less likely to ask for clarification of a task requirement, possibly leading to incorrect or partial completion of the job.

The second cultural factor, *tolerance for uncertainty*, reflects the amount of discomfort experienced by an individual in the presence of unknown factors. A low tolerance is marked by a search for details through rules and structure, whereas individuals or teams who act in the face of incomplete knowledge (who make decisions while moving) are exhibiting a high tolerance for uncertainty. This difference can cause problems in a team if members with high and low tolerances must work together. One will start slowly, collecting as much data as possible, while the other will move quickly toward an end product.

The *individualism-collectivism* dichotomy is the third dimension, which reflects a preference for working alone or in a group. This dimension includes a preference for building relationships among team members as contrasted with a focus on individual task achievement. Individualists often view the mission as primary and relationships among team members as secondary; collectivists view team relationships as critical to producing a viable team product.

Finally, cultural differences emerged in the *cognitive process of reasoning*. For instance, variance was identified in concrete versus hypothetical thought patterns. Hypothetical thinkers are capable of envisioning several solutions to a problem, while concrete thinkers prefer to have detailed plans of action and frequently use previously employed solutions to solve new tasks. These differences cause problems in a team setting when a course of action is unclear or when conditions require changes to a plan. The hypothetical thinker is capable of generating several possible solutions, which may be viewed by a concrete thinker as avoiding the problem at hand. Similarly, variances in dialectical reasoning have also been found. Consistent with the Greek and Roman tradition of logical discussion, dialectical reasoning selects the best course by debating alternatives. Discussion is viewed as helping to sharpen distinctions and highlight strengths and weaknesses of each view and maximize the quality of solutions. However, not all cultures agree on the value of such dialectical reasoning.

In addition to the four dimensions discussed above, *activity orientation* is another dimension on which cultures vary: Activity orientation refers to the way a culture's members think about life, work, and relationships (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). Two basic activity orientations include the "doing" and the "being" orientations. National groups characterized by "doing" view work- and achievement-related activities as the desirable focus of their activity. Groups characterized by "being," on the other hand, view relationships and enjoyment of life as the desirable focus of activity.

In short, if multinational military operations are to work effectively, it is vital that there is an understanding of the complexities presented by national cultural differences (Klein et al., 2000). The challenges posed by national cultural differences are compounded by the distributed decision-making that characterizes many multinational military operations.

Sutton and Pierce (2003) proposed that situation assessment, coordination, roles and responsibilities, and support behavior are four fundamental aspects of team performance that are consistent across teams, multinational or not. Conceptualizing teamwork in these terms emphasizes cognitive functions that manifest in measurable behaviors (for a detailed review, see McGlynn, Sutton, Sprague, Demski, & Pierce, 1999). Behaviors associated with team functions are, for example, information exchange regarding team tasks, goals, and mission (situation assessment); response sequencing, time, and position coordination of responses (coordination); load balancing, matching member resources to task requirements (assigning roles and responsibilities); and general activity monitoring, including adjustments of team and

member activities in response to errors and omissions (support behavior) (Fleishman & Zaccaro, 1992). Individuals can have significantly different culturally based cognitive biases that influence their behavior.

In concert with the cognitive biases of others, these behaviors will either enhance or damage team performance. Leaders and team members who recognize such biases and understand the implication of culture’s impact on situation assessment, coordination, assigning of roles and responsibilities, and support behavior are better prepared to adapt, as needed, to ensure mission success. It may be proposed that the relationship between culturally based cognitive dimensions (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, activity orientation, and thinking orientation) and team performance functions (situation assessment, coordination, assigning of roles and responsibilities, and support behavior) can be behaviorally defined. Once defined, a framework for understanding cultural diversity in cognition and teamwork will provide insight into culturally based cognitive biases on teams that will further enhance an understanding of the relationship between cognitive behaviors and adaptive performance. This knowledge should lead to improved adaptive team performance in joint, interoperable, multinational operations.

The goal of the work of Bowman (2002) was to develop and validate a model representing the relationship between cultural dimensions and team performance functions. Data collection occurred over a period of 12 months wherein four trips were made to the Stabilization Force headquarters in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

**Table 4.1: Framework for Understanding Cultural Diversity in Cognition and Teamwork**

Framework for Understanding Cultural Diversity in Cognition and Teamwork					
National Cultural Dimension	Team Performance Functions				
	Range	Situation Assessment	Coordination	Assigning Roles & Responsibilities	Support Behavior
Power Distance	High	Vertical	Centralized	Rank	Leader
	Low	Horizontal	Decentralized	Expertise	Team
Uncertainty Avoidance	High need for Certainty	Detailed Info	Well defined	Highly Specialized	Formal
	Low need for Certainty	General Info	Ad hoc	Multi-functional	Informal
Activity Orientation	Independent	Direct Comms	Doing	Skills & Abilities	Task
	Interdependent	Indirect Comms	Being	Connections	Relationship

Collaboration on multinational teams, whether to combat terrorism or keep the peace, places a premium on cultural competence and adaptable teamwork. As the definition of what constitutes adaptable behavior on multinational military teams becomes clearer, a look at the value of understanding the effect of culture on teamwork becomes necessary. As has been seen, many barriers to adaptability are directly attributable to cultural cognitive diversity. Following are just a few examples noted by Bowman (2002).

*Power Distance*

- If team members are high in power distance, then they may not share information that could alter a decision, believing that it is the leader’s responsibility to make decisions.
- If a leader is high in power distance, then team members may not be used to exploit their best skills, possibly resulting in miscommunication, lack of coordination, and loss in shared situational awareness.

### *Uncertainty Avoidance*

- If team members have a high need for certainty, then they may ask for so much guidance and information that they no longer provide unique contributions to the task.
- If a leader has a high need for certainty, then the task may become so detailed and structured that it obviates any creative action on the part of the team members, thereby defeating the purpose of team action. The corollary to this condition is that:
  - If the leader has too low a need for certainty, then they may not cover sufficient details in an operation and not provide team members with enough information for them to do their jobs.

### *Activity Orientation*

- If team members have an independent rather than an interdependent orientation, then they may be moving from task to task without developing a team culture or team situational awareness.
- If a leader is independent rather than interdependent oriented, then they may disregard some team members' contributions if they do not obviously contribute to the task at hand. Information and opportunities for shared situational awareness may be lost.

### *Thinking Orientation*

- If leaders and team members are too hypothetical in their thinking, then it may be difficult to reach closure on an issue as members continue to generate hypotheses.
- If leaders and team members are concrete thinkers, then they may miss information that may be relevant to a task but outside the mainstream.

The central purpose of Bowman's (2002) program of research was to facilitate adaptable teamwork, specifically on multinational military teams, through the development of objective force leader and soldier learning opportunities. Bowman proposed to expand understanding of the relationship between cultural, social cognitions, and team performance functions through theoretical and practical research in collaboration with members of the multinational team commanding forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other multinational venues. Selection of representative dimensions of cultural variability may be revised to include one of the most researched in relation to cognitive processes, the individualism-collectivism dimension. Using the framework as a basis, it was Bowman's aim to develop products to increase cultural awareness and multinational team adaptability. Bowman proposed to include evaluation of performance measures that predict adaptable team performance and the development of a Likert-type scale to measure the degree to which team members' cognitions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and activity orientation can affect team situational awareness, coordination, assigning of roles and responsibilities, and support behavior.

One of the main distinguishing features of current deployments is the fact that units are very often formed by several military contingents, differing in size and composition and coming from different nations. This requires, among many other things, a high level of interculturalism within units, since it can be assumed that different cultures are linked to different nations, and that diverse military cultures are involved, even though a certain universal military culture could be assumed to exist. But diversity means also different rules and organizational features for the various national contingents, and different equipment and resources, not to mention different languages. Since cooperation is required such diversity has to be managed successfully for the sake of the mission itself.

Indeed, as earlier mentioned, there are stressors and difficulties that arise from diversity within multinational forces. In such a context a sort of "culture shock" can be expected. Difficulties arise from relations with other units' members of different nationality and language that can then affect performance.

They can also give rise to feelings of relative deprivation, defined as a sharp perception of unfair differences in such things as wages and equipment among contingents (see McKee, Chapter 2). On the other hand there is interesting evidence that, though it is limited in scope and details, is enough to invalidate the most pessimistic hypotheses on the incidence of problems posed by intercultural relations and the deficiencies in professional education and training that might cause them. Indeed, the simple findings expounded below point unmistakably to fewer difficulties than could reasonably be expected.

A study by Boene (2002) found that only 38% of the total officer sample reported difficulties and problems in interpersonal relations with colleagues from other national contingents, and of those, less than 3% reported that these difficulties were frequent (the remaining 35% saw these difficulties as intermittent). When difficulties are considered, lower ranked officers mentioned “problematic cross-national relations” less often (less than 30%) than did senior officers (between 40% and 55%), and the same was true for younger officers (i.e., 25 – 35 years old). With respect to the source of problematic intercultural relations, these were registered as indicated in Table 4.2 below. As can be seen, the main difficulties arose from general cultural diversity (language, culture) and from diversity in military culture (divided loyalties, mission interpretation, professional preparation, ethical codes of conduct). The fact that such difficulties are less frequent than might be expected does not mean that they are not relevant for unit performance, however.

**Table 4.2: Source of Intercultural Problematic Relations (adapted from Boene, 2002, p. 93)**

<b>Source of difficulty</b>	<b>%</b>
Language	46,1
Divided Loyalties (NATO, UN, Country...)	32,6
Cultural differences	31,2
Mission diverging interpretations	31,2
Interoperability problems	28,4
Professional preparation	28,4
Different ethical codes	24,8
Communication	22
Rivalries	17
RoE	16,3
Other	4,2

*Note:* Percentages exceed 100 because more than one item could be chosen by respondents.

#### **4.4.1 Diversity Among the Multinational Forces Deployed**

On the basis of earlier research, van Amelsfoort and van Vliet (2004) developed a framework in which team functioning is influenced by three sorts of factors: situational, personal, and team. The focus of this research is on cultural differences within the team and between the team and the host nation. The model suggests that cultural diversity within a team can be considered a resource if teams are exposed to a highly (culturally) diverse environment. This resource would enhance observation, appraisal of situations and coping with ambiguous situations. A questionnaire has been developed and administered based on this model; however results and analysis are still pending publication.

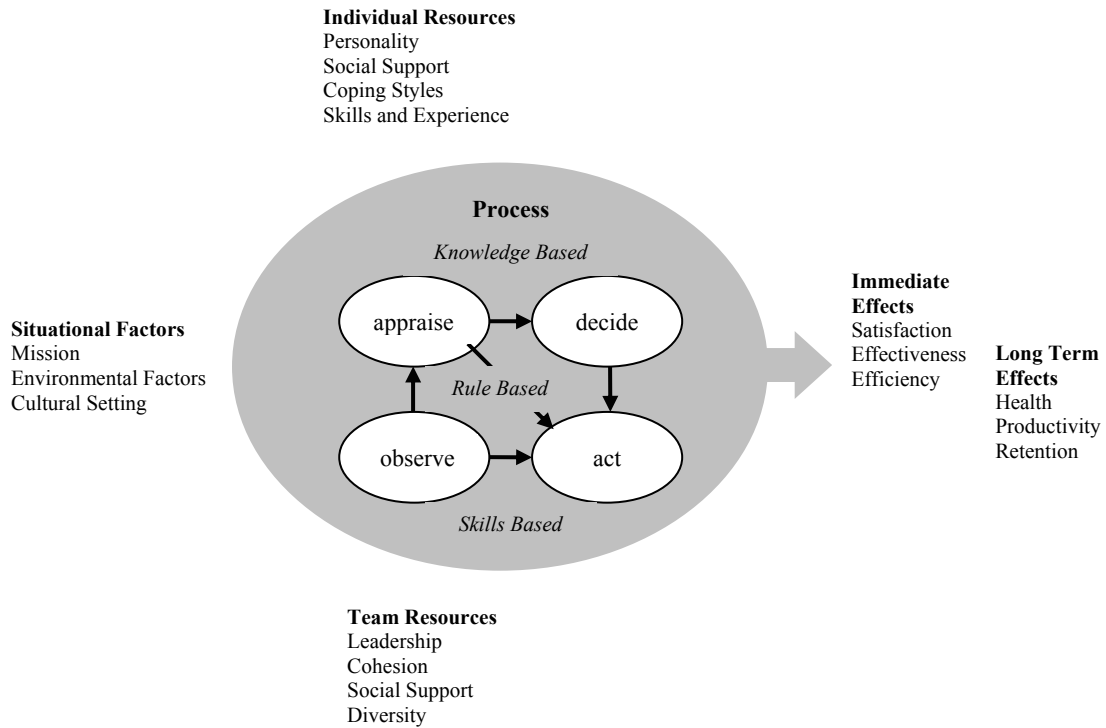


Figure 4.2: Framework for Team Functioning (van Amelsfoort & van Vliet, 2004).

Fidock (2002) developed a framework within which current and future model development can be assessed in terms of representing organizational behavior. Organizational behavior can be conceptualized in terms of six key attributes with associated variables. The six attributes are technology, structure, culture, processes, people, and resources (see Figure 4.3).

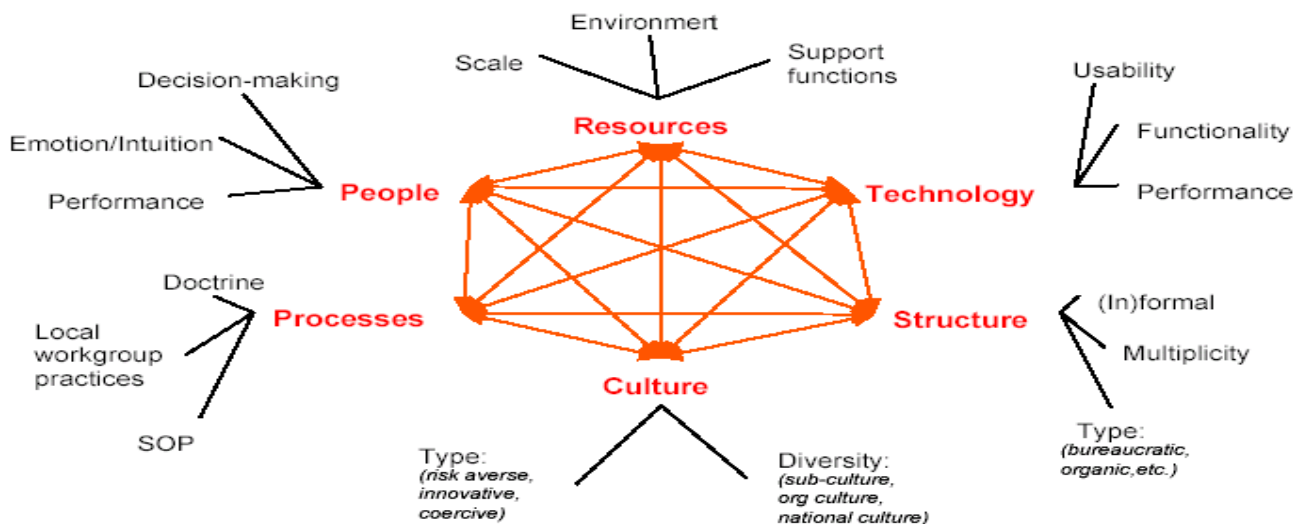


Figure 4.3: Framework for Organizational Behavior (Fidock, 2002).



## 4.5 CONCLUSION

The foregoing literature review suggests consensus on a number of points. When groups possessing diverse cultural and organizational backgrounds must work together, differences among them can become major impediments to mission success. Gaining an awareness of these differences is a necessary first step in developing strategies to overcome these differences and forge effective working alliances. In nearly every coalition operation, personnel from diverse groups are expected to interact effectively in order to achieve mission objectives. The organizations involved, such as the host government, the military, and NGOs, frequently struggle in this effort. Knowledge of inter-group variations in core cultural values and their related behavioral consequences can help to promote positive inter-group relations. Implementation of planning, coordination, communication, and training processes that are designed to meet the needs of diverse groups is required to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of coalition operations.

Although theoretical and empirical studies on this subject exist outside the military context (see, e.g., Hofstede 1980, 1991), the subject is almost non-existent within military boundaries. The military organization has such specific characteristics that the theories based on civil organizations do not necessarily generalize to this type of organization. On the other hand the generic dimensions originally identified by Hofstede on which cultures may differ seem to be supported within a military context. Different authors may reformulate these dimensions somewhat or add a dimension due to their specific interest, but in general the five-dimension approach seems to be rich enough to allow for the different cultural distinctions, but parsimonious enough to remain generic.

On the whole, much work remains to be done. There is a need for access to empirical studies that test theories and models in this area in order to develop a knowledge base for informing policy relating to multinational military teams.

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## Chapter 5 – CULTURAL PREDISPOSITIONS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL ASPECTS

by

**Oliver Dzvonic**

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the cultural predispositions involved in culturally diverse multinational military operations. The core of cultural predispositions is composed of explicit and tacit assumptions and understandings, as well as other cognitive processes, including ways of thinking commonly held by a group of people, or a particular configuration of assumptions and understandings that is distinctive to a group. These assumptions and understandings serve as guides to acceptable and unacceptable perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. They are learned and passed on to new members of the group through psychosocial processes and interactions.

Cultural differences present barriers to successful coalition command and control. This challenge is compounded by the distributed decision making that characterizes many operations. If nations are to work effectively in multinational operations, then the complexities presented by differences in national cultural predispositions must be understood. These differences are reflected at the individual and psychosocial level of analysis in terms of differences in “personality, cognitions, attitudes and values, power distance, dialectical reasoning, counterfactual thinking, risk assessment and uncertainty management, activity orientation, trust, and ethics” (Sachman, 1997, p. 25).

Before looking specifically at cultural predispositions and psychosocial aspects of multinational military operations, it would be informative to take a look at the general literature on the relationship between culture and personality. Reviewed in the following section of this chapter are some of the key research studies conducted in this area at the theoretical and empirical level. This review will then provide the basis for a discussion of the implications of this literature on multinational military operations.

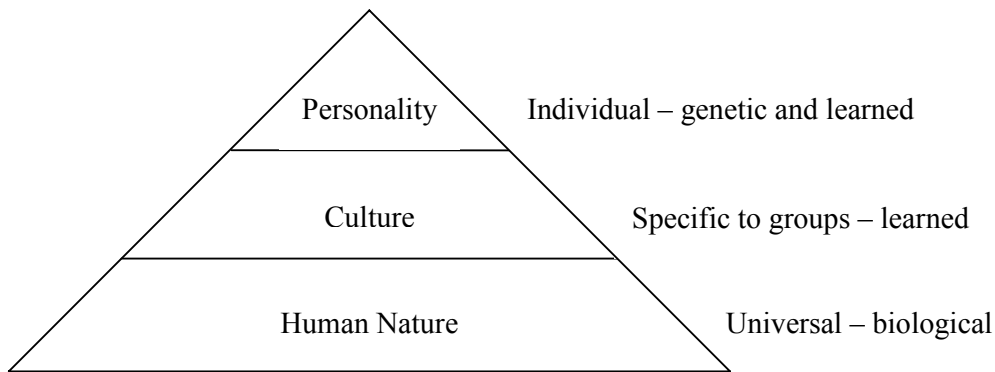
### 5.2 CULTURE, PERSONALITY AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES

#### 5.2.1 Hofstede’s Definition of Culture

Geert Hofstede defined culture as the “collective programming of the mind” (Hofstede, 1980, p.16). This collective programming lies between the universal nature of each person and an individual’s unique personality. Hofstede states that the mind has three elements that make up the human mental program:

- 1) *Biological*: All humans have a universal reaction to biological stimuli, such as fatigue and hunger.
- 2) *Personality*: Personality is that which makes each human an individual. Although cultural socialization will teach individuals that certain modes of behavior are or are not generally acceptable, individual responses will vary. In any given instance, it is not possible to judge precisely how an individual from another culture will react to a set of circumstances. Individual experiences are unique and learned reactions and therefore differ across a spectrum of responses.
- 3) *Culture*: Cultures are not universally applicable. So, for example, eye contact is not a universal sign of respect. Most Anglo-Saxon children in the United Kingdom are taught to look their parents in the eye when they are being chastised and as a sign of respect. In many parts of Africa it is considered extremely rude to look someone in the eye and in the same circumstances children will be encouraged to cast their eyes to the ground as a sign of respect.

Elements of biology (human nature), personality and culture combine to provide the mental programming that defines each person. There is disagreement about whether the boundaries among the three elements are as distinct as shown in Figure 5.1. However, Hofstede’s (1980) theory provides an analytical conceptualization upon which to base an understanding of the cultural values that are examined in this study.



**Figure 5.1: Three Levels of Mental Programming (adapted from Hofstede, 1980).**

**5.2.2 Cross-Cultural Studies on Personality Traits**

Probably the first empirical attempt to determine dimensions of culture at the societal level was made by psychologist Raymond Cattell who applied the factor-analytical approach he had used in the development of individual personality tests to data about various countries (see Cattell, Graham, & Woliver, 1979). Cattell analyzed more than 48 country-level variables for over 40 countries; his variables were a set of geographical and demographic data. Cattell looked for dimensions among nations of what he labelled “syntality,” a concept parallel, in nations, to the “personality” of individuals. The only obvious underlying influence found was economic development. Others continued Cattell’s approach, but the only common factors that were found were level of economic development, country size, and political allegiance to one of the two power blocs at the time (i.e., the United States and the Soviet Union).

Other taxonomies of national cultures from a psychological perspective were described by Georgas and Berry (1995). A breakthrough in the study of national cultures was Richard Lynn’s (1971) book, *Personality and National Character*. This book reported the results of a factor-analytic study of national medical and related indicators. These included the frequency of chronic psychosis, average caloric intake, suicide rates, and cigarette consumption in 18 developed countries, and identified a dimension of “anxiety.” Lynn and Hampson (1975) extended this to two dimensions: “neuroticism” and “extraversion.” Lynn (1981) then added “psychoticism.” These three dimensions corresponded to items from the personality trait dimensions in Eysenck’s (1978) system. Mean national scores on personality scales measuring these three dimensions for 37 countries were published by Lynn and Martin (1995). Earlier, Lynn (1991) had focused on a new potential dimension: “competitiveness.”

The term personality has been used in many ways, but most personality psychologists claim to be concerned about the whole individual and those features of psychology unique to that person. Psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the unconscious determination of behavior and the origins of personality in early experience, was the dominant school in personality psychology in the first half of the 20th century. It had a tremendous influence on personality and culture studies and was itself influenced by them (e.g., Erikson, 1950). In the second half of the 20th century, however, critiques of psychoanalysis (Eysenck, 1952) and the projective techniques used to assess its personality constructs (Lilienfeld, Wood, & Garb, 2000) have dramatically reduced its influence, particularly in North America.

The crucial event in the revival of trait psychology was the emergence of the five-factor model of personality (Digman, 1990). Although there are thousands of trait-descriptive adjectives in English (e.g., nervous, enthusiastic, original, appreciative, and controlled), it was obvious that there were far fewer major groups of traits, or factors. Competing systems argued for 3, 10, or 16 main factors, but the work of Tupes and Christal (1992), replicated by other researchers (Goldberg, 1981), supported the superiority of five main factors. The same factors were consistently found in adults and adolescents, men and women, and self-reports and observer ratings. Although many instruments have now been developed to measure the five-factor model, the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992) is the most widely used and researched. The factors have been given somewhat different names and interpretations by different investigators. In the NEO-PI-R, they are called neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness to experience (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C). Six specific traits, or facets, define each factor. For example, conscientiousness is represented by subscales measuring competence, order, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation.

In a study by Hofstede, Bond, and Luk (1993), similar descriptions by individuals of the culture of their organizations reflected very similar personality factors. Hofstede et al. (1993) correlated the five personality factors with at least one dimension of culture, and all four culture dimensions were related to at least one personality factor. As detailed in Chapter 1 of this report, these dimensions included power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, and individualism-collectivism. However, the fifth Hofstede dimension, long-term orientation, was omitted from this analysis. First, long-term orientation scores were available for only 24 of the 33 countries (Hofstede, 2001). Second, among these 24 countries, long-term orientation was strongly correlated with individualism. Long-term orientation's only correlation with personality was with extraversion, but the correlation between extraversion and individualism was stronger. Long-term orientation, therefore, added nothing unique to the analysis. The correlations between the four cultural dimensions and the five personality factors revealed a distinct pattern of associations between two sets of data of entirely different origins. On the one hand were country-level scores on five personality factors collected from very diverse samples, each answering in their local language, and mostly collected in the 1990s. On the other hand were country scores on four culture dimensions, mostly based on survey responses by employees of local subsidiaries of the IBM Corporation, most of whom responded in their local language, and which were collected around 1970. The use of local languages in both sources could lead to the inference that the correlations were due to language effects, but the IBM data were also replicated in international populations in which everyone answered in English, and the culture patterns were found to cross language families (Hofstede, 2001, pp. 49, 62-65). The correlations between the two sets of data (on the five personality factors and the four cultural dimensions) demonstrate that national levels of personality factor scores are not random but correspond to established and reasonably stable differences in national value systems, held to be expressions of national cultures. This means that self-report measurements of the five personality factors, besides reflecting individual differences in personality, contain a collective component common to respondents from the same country.

From the NEO-PI-R factor scores, neuroticism showed the closest relationship with the culture dimensions (55% of variance in country levels explained); neuroticism scores were higher in uncertainty avoiding, masculine cultures. The relationship of neuroticism score levels with uncertainty avoidance explained 31% of the variance. One of the earliest validations of the uncertainty avoidance dimension was a 0.73 Spearman rank correlation ( $p < .001$ ) with the neuroticism factor identified by Lynn and Hampson (1975) in medical and related statistics for 18 countries (Hofstede, 1980, pp. 168-170). Hofstede (2001, pp. 155-157) reviewed a number of other studies linking stronger uncertainty avoidance to stress, anxiety, and the expression of emotions. For example, across 25 countries, uncertainty avoidance rank-correlated 0.44 ( $p < .05$ ) with national means for the neuroticism scale of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Lynn & Martin, 1995). Using data from the International Survey on Emotion Antecedents and Reactions (Scherer & Wallbott, 1994), significant correlations were found across 14 countries between uncertainty avoidance and the self-reported expression of anger by men and of guilt by women and by men.

The expression of emotions, related to national personality or other predispositions, may have important implications for multinational military cooperation and relationships.

### 5.2.3 Hofstede's Interpretation: Culture's Consequences for Traits

As mentioned earlier, the correlations between the two sets of data (cultural factors and personality factors) demonstrated that national levels of personality factor scores correspond to established, stable differences in national value systems and national cultures. They also demonstrated that self-report measures of the five personality factors contain a collective component common to respondents from the same country. This common component can be explained by one or more of the following three causes:

- 1) Between national populations, the distribution of genetically determined personality factors differs systematically.
- 2) Children growing up in a country acquire or learn common personality characteristics in the process of their development.
- 3) National cultures affect the way in which people respond to a personality test. Respondents will measure themselves against a social norm: they will compare themselves to others around them. In addition, respondents will describe themselves as they would like to be seen: answers will contain a component of social desirability. Further, how others are perceived and what is socially desirable differ between cultures (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).

### 5.2.4 McCrae's Interpretation: Personality's Consequences for Value Systems

A radically different interpretation of the associations between cultural and personality factors is suggested by the five-factor theory of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1996, 1999). In that theory, personality traits are construed as basic tendencies that are rooted in biology and interact with external influences, including culture, in shaping the skills, habits, tastes, and values—the characteristic adaptations—of the individual. It is not unusual for personality theories to recognize the contribution of biological influences in shaping traits; often the word temperament is used to describe this part of personality (see Figure 5.2). Five-factor theory is unique in asserting that traits have *only* biological bases. Accordingly, cultures shape the expression of traits, but not their levels (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).



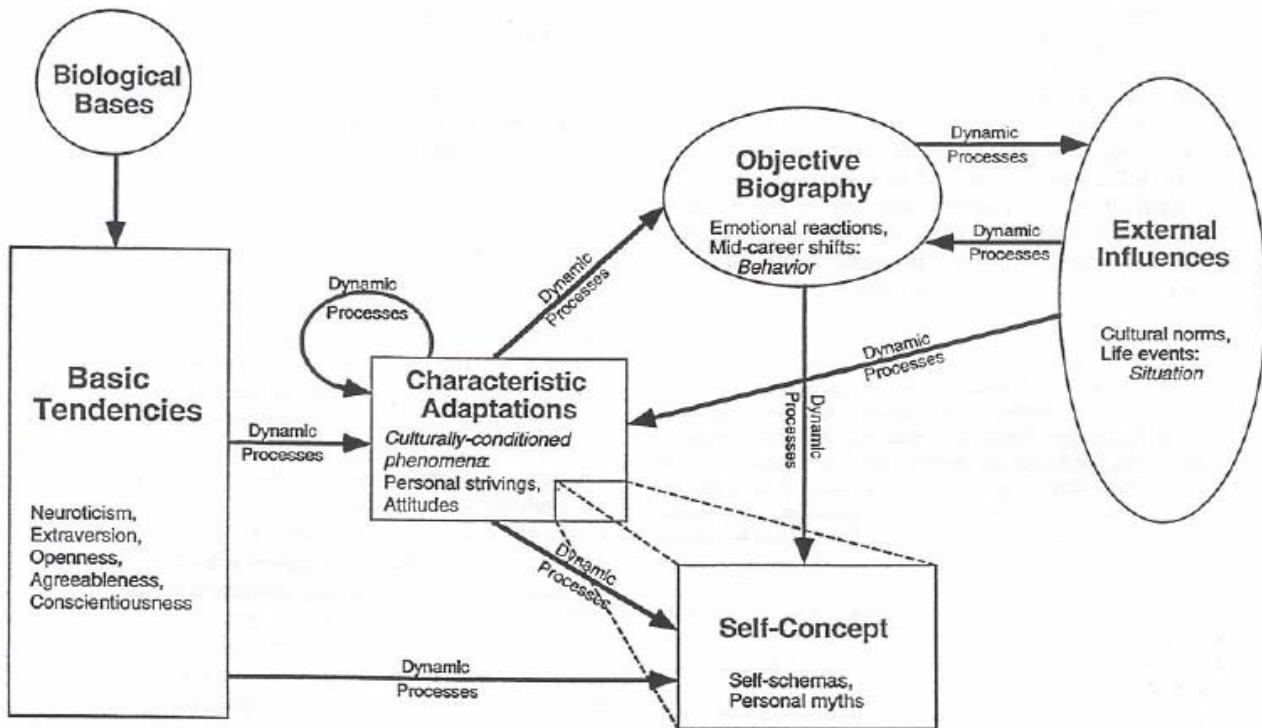


Figure 5.2: A Representation of the Personality System, with Categories of Variables, Specific Examples, and Arrows Indicating Causal Pathways (adapted from McCrae & Costa, 1999).

### 5.2.5 Cross-Cultural Personality Predispositions

Another study on cross-cultural personality predispositions, which was carried out by Dzvonik, Retzlaff, and Popa (2004), used the Armstrong Laboratory Aviation Personality Survey (ALAPS) as a method of comparison between American, Romanian and Slovak aviators.

As shown in Table 5.1, significant differences were found in the following ALAPS scales:

*Confidence:* The Slovak and Romanian respondents were similar but in this scale scored significantly higher than the American sample. This may be due to the varying socio-economic status of the aviator group in each society.

*Socialness:* The Slovak and Romanian respondents tended to be more outgoing and were friendlier than the American respondents. This could be due to culturally specific patterns and preferences pertaining to collectivism-individualism (e.g., found in Western European vs. Central, Eastern or Southern European countries).

*Aggressiveness:* The Slovak and American respondents expressed similar tendencies on this scale. Compared to the Slovak and American respondents, the Romanian sample showed a higher level of aggressiveness.

*Orderliness:* All samples (Slovak, American and Romanian) expressed a high sense of orderliness. This may be due to the nature of the aviator profession, where being methodical and disciplined is an essential component of a safe work environment.

*Negativity:* Most similar in this scale were the American and Slovak respondents. A greater tendency to be negative was expressed by the Romanian respondents. If this finding is not the result of a cultural mentality then it could also be caused by job and/or life satisfaction.

*Affective Lability, Anxiety, Depression and Alcohol Abuse:* As clinical (psychopathology) scales, these should be and were low in general. Similar results were found in the Slovak and American samples, except in regard to attitudes to alcohol consumption. Romanian and Slovak respondents seemed to have a more positive attitude to and tolerance of alcohol consumption, possibly related to culture. Higher anxiety and depression scores among the Romanians surveyed may be related to social transformation, social-economic situations and work satisfaction.

*Dogmatism:* The scores in all samples were generally low. The Slovak and Romanian participants were the most similar and showed a higher dogmatism score than the American sample. This may be due to cultural patterns of “power distance” in terms of organizational culture.

*Deference:* This score tended to show low values and all samples were quite similar, but the Romanian respondents seemed to be more deferential than the Slovak and American samples. This finding could be affected by culturally determined factors.

*Team-Oriented:* The highest score in this scale was achieved by the Romanian sample, followed by the Slovak sample. American respondents showed a significantly lower team orientation. It is presumed that this finding is due to the culturally conditioned individualism-collectivism factor impact. Romanian and Slovak respondents tended to be more collectivistic than the American respondents, as an individualistic orientation is culturally more typical of the United States (US).

*Organization:* The Slovak and Romanian samples tended to be highly systematic and organized, while the American respondents scored significantly lower on this factor.

*Impulsiveness:* The level of impulsiveness was low in all samples. A higher score was recorded by the Romanian sample than by the American sample. The lowest impulsiveness score was for the Slovak sample. Impulsiveness is related to age and could also be culturally conditioned.

*Risk Taking:* The highest risk-taking behavioral tendency was shown by the American sample and the lowest by the Slovak sample. Regarding these differences, the Slovak subjects seem to be more “conservative” in terms of risk-taking than the American and Romanian subjects.

**Table 5.1: ANOVA-Paired Comparison of Cross-Cultural Personality Predispositions in US, Romanian and Slovak Aviators (Dzvonik et al., 2004)**

ALAPS Scale	Cross-Cultural Result
Confidence	SL=RO>US
Socialness	RO>SL>US
Aggressiveness	RO>SL=US
Orderliness	SL=RO>US
Negativity	RO>SL=US
Affective Lability	RO>SL=US
Anxiety	RO>SL=US
Depression	RO>SL=US
Alcohol Abuse	SL=RO>US
Dogmatism	SL=RO>US
Deference	RO=US=SL but RO>SL
Team Oriented	RO>SL>US
Organization	RO>SL>US
Impulsiveness	RO=US>SL
Risk Taking	US=RO=SL but US>SL

*Note.* SL = Slovak. RO = Romanian. US = American (United States).

As can be seen in Table 5.1, the Slovak participants seemed to be most similar to their American counterparts on the following scales: aggressiveness, negativity, affective lability, anxiety and depression. The Slovak and Romanian participants were approximately similar on these scales: confidence, orderliness, alcohol abuse and dogmatism. The Romanian and American respondents were similar on the scale of impulsiveness. Cross-congruence was found between the Slovak, Romanian and American sample on these scales: deference and risk taking. These findings should be seen as the result of a comparison of personality in different cultures using one method and as only relevant to aviation personnel. Therefore, it would be incorrect to make wider generalizations. It is not possible to know how these participants would accept each other in real work and life situations. In fact, an acceptance of differences by individuals or groups is dependent on experience, prejudice and subjective level of tolerance, in general, and also on tolerance for intercultural differences in particular (see Febbraro, Chapter 3).

### **5.2.6 The Interaction of Personality Traits with Culture: Consequences for Multinational Operations**

Personality may interact with the process of cultural adaptation and acculturation. Ward and Chang (1997) addressed the issue of cultural fit and sojourner adjustment, and found that sojourners whose personality profiles resembled that of the host culture aggregate had lower levels of depression (although this effect was not replicated in a second study; Ward, Leong, & Low, 2004). Similar analyses might, of course, be done for native members of the culture. Berry and Sam (1997) identified four strategies of psychological acculturation: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Characteristics of both individual immigrants and the host culture might affect the strategy chosen. Immigrants who are highly open to experience are likely to seek integration, because they can appreciate the values and

perspectives of both the original and the acquired culture. But if the nation that they find themselves in is high in uncertainty avoidance, where deviations from the prescribed norm are perceived as threatening, then they may be forced to assimilate or face marginalization. In such ways are human lives shaped by the interaction of culture and personality (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).

### **5.2.7 Activity Orientation**

Activity orientation refers to the way in which a culture's members think about life, work, and relationships (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). Two basic activity orientations include the "doing" and the "being" orientations. National groups characterized by the doing orientation view work and achievement-related activities as the desirable focus of their activity. Groups characterized by the being orientation, on the other hand, view relationships and enjoyment of life as the desirable focus of activity. Do-ers are most concerned with accomplishing a task in the most practical and efficient manner, whereas be-ers are most concerned with accomplishing a task in a manner that is enjoyable and that benefits the interpersonal dynamics of the situation.

These differences in activity orientation generate obstacles to the effectiveness of decision making and planning. Do-ers opt for a pragmatic approach to decision making, with little concern for the relational aspects of a situation. The decision making of be-ers, on the other hand, tends to be tied to relationships and based on emotion. Pragmatics may be sacrificed for positive interpersonal outcomes. Differences in activity orientation are also likely to affect the critical problem identification and situational assessment aspects of multinational operations. National groups that focus on work and goal achievement are likely to identify different problems and to assess situations quite differently from those that focus primarily on relationships.

### **5.2.8 Dialectical Reasoning**

In complex missions marked by unexpected challenges, commanders will be faced with tough choices. In famine relief, for example, a commander might have to decide between using resources to provide massive infusions of food and water, or to use those resources to attack the cause of the famine by rebuilding an infrastructure (roads, bridges, wells) destroyed in a civil war. According to the Greek and Roman tradition of logical discussion, the best course is selected by debating alternatives. Discussion helps to sharpen distinctions between and highlight strengths and weaknesses of each possible action, maximizing the quality of solutions. This "dialectical reasoning," is not, however, the universal mode of thinking.

Dialectical reasoning research has found national differences in reasoning about contradiction (Peng & Nisbett, 1999). Some non-Western groups deal with seeming contradictions by seeking compromise, retaining elements of both perspectives. Rather than sharpen distinctions, the goal is to blur them. These groups may view polarizing discussions as divisive and unpleasant. They may not contribute to discussions because criticism of one's perspective may be perceived as criticism of the person or as a personal attack. Some non-Westerners may also see such discussions as closing out the option of learning from a broad range of positions. Why choose between short-term and long-term goals? In the example above, why not focus on helping the distant villages, airlifting relief to remote stations, and rebuilding infrastructure? The regional authorities can collaborate by building roads to these distribution centers, doing the bulk of the work and preparing to take over the burden of development. Allies who seem slow and indecisive may frustrate Western-style thinkers. In contrast, some find the rush to judgment of Westerners to be impulsive, inconsiderate, and intimidating.

### **5.2.9 Hypothetical vs. Concrete Thinking**

An initial phase of an operation has ended and it is time to re-examine the course of action. All participants are committed to improving subsequent action but here the similarity ends. Some cultures

are comfortable thinking about hypothetical scenarios, and others are baffled by it. Some participants are comfortable exploring not only what happened but also an array of “what if’s.” “What if the air strip had been closed by a flood?” “What if the neighboring border had not been sealed but had allowed hostile forces to enter?” They want to project the consequences of non-occurrence and even unlikely events. This process of counterfactual thinking (a form of hypothetical thinking) considers the implications of hypothetical occurrences. Counterfactual thinking uses mental representations of alternatives to past or future events (Tetlock, 1998). Lessons-learned exercises use counterfactual thinking to identify ways in which future performance might be enhanced by changing communication processes, modes of activity, and so on (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Cultures differ in the extent to which reasoning and notions of causality are separated from context and are abstract, hypothesis-driven, or are contextually grounded in personal experience (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Context-bound thinkers improve planning by remaining within the realm of context-grounded, personal experience. They believe that improvement comes from a careful review of past events as they occurred rather than an attempt to imagine what they may see as unlikely scenarios. These two reasoning styles are often not obvious, even in face-to-face discourse. They are even more difficult to detect in a virtual organization with distributed operations and functions. National differences in counterfactual thinking present barriers to coalition re-planning when partners use experience differently and lack a common mechanism for improvement. Those engaging in counterfactual reasoning may interpret resistance as lack of intellectual curiosity, or even lack of intelligence. Those who rely on context-bound reasoning may see the counterfactual exercise as a waste of time, showing off to no purpose, or the immature speculations of inexperienced people.

## **5.3 TRUST AND ETHICS**

### **5.3.1 Trust**

Trust is a social expectation. It involves our perception of the integrity, justice, caring, and competence of someone or something that is verified by experience with that person or thing. Trust is a condition of the situation as much as it is of human relationships. The organizational situation also encourages or discourages trust. The expectations and assumptions that members hold about how much risk they can (or should) accept in working with others in situations where knowledge is not present also shapes relationships. Others are trusted when they, or the environment, lead us to believe that what they say they will do, will eventually come to pass. We can define trust, then, as confidence in the authenticity of the words or actions of a person, or similar qualities or attributes about an organizational symbol or ritual. Defined this way, trust becomes a central element in culture formation and leadership. To trust another person or thing means that we have confidence that the person or thing will prove to be trustworthy and that what we see or hope for, in or about that person or thing, is the truth about them. Trust is a hope in reality, based on the characteristics and behavior of a person and the situational context. Thus, trust is a logical, thoughtful hope or expectation (Fairholm, 1994).

In many ways, trust is a socio-cognitive process. Trust theorists argue that the process of developing trust involves the creation of expectations and beliefs about others. More specifically, trust is seen as developing as we become increasingly able to predict the actions of others. These expectations derive from our experiences and interactions with others. Such interactions provide information and knowledge about what a person is likely to do in specific situations, and this information becomes increasingly elaborated into views of what people are likely to do on a consistent basis (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985).

### **5.3.2 The Antecedents of Trust**

*Interdependence* is a necessary antecedent to trust. Interdependence is necessary when the interests of one party in a relationship cannot be realized without the other. Without being connected with another person,

and without having one's outcomes in some way dependent on another person, there is no need to trust (Lewis & Weingert, 1985).

*Risk* is a critical antecedent to trust. Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998) define risk as the perceived probability of loss, as interpreted by a decision maker. Risk is seen as a critical antecedent to trust because in trusting another person, positive outcomes are not assured. The reason to trust, however, is that choosing to incur the risk may yield positive outcomes.

*Uncertainty* is seen as occurring because the motives, goals, and future actions of others are usually not fully known. Lewis and Weingert (1985), for example, argue that uncertainty is an important precursor to trust because if one were omniscient, actions could be undertaken with complete certainty, leaving no need, or even possibility, for trust to develop. Uncertainty is a critical antecedent to trust.

*Vulnerability* is also seen as a critical antecedent to trust. As Luhmann (1988) argues, a fundamental condition of trust is that it must be possible for the partner to abuse the trust. Unless one is vulnerable to potentially negative outcomes, there is little reason to take the risk of trusting another person.

Institutions provide one dimension through which trust is defined (Paparone, 2002). The institutional dimension of trust includes the habitual rules, structures, and reputation-building aspects that establish conditions for trust within an institution. Trust relationships within and among institutions depend on leadership and management, professionalism, organizational design, technology, and time. Each one of these is discussed below.

*Leadership and management* play a key role in initiating or setting conditions for institutional trust. Setting conditions for trust include building competence (the extent to which members see the institution as effective), openness (seeing others as approachable and honest), concern (a climate of sincerity and caring), reliability (behavioral consistency and congruence), and identification (perception of fairness in how the paradox of individual interests versus group interests are managed).

*Professionalism*, another key ingredient to building trust in institutions, normally implies a shared ethos and is a function of expertise or specialized knowledge and skill, responsibility, performance in a social context, and esprit de corps, which derives from a sense of unity and from consciousness of being set apart from others. Professionals would rather change an untrustworthy organization or even exit it than participate in it. In that regard, professionals are the theoretical antithesis of bureaucrats, who are characterized by loyalty and blind obedience, regardless of the professional climate or culture of trust. Professionally based trust, then, is the essence of social capital – the accumulated collective trust of the institution gained through engagement and reciprocity.

*Organizational design*. A third ingredient in building trust in institutions concerns organizational design. Organizational designs are diverse and can include an owner-managed clan, an entrepreneurial adhocracy, a divisionalized hierarchy (typical of US Army organizations), cross-functional or matrixed teams, or a postmodern network. Often, formal controls or constraints are used to build trust in owner-managed or divisionalized bureaucracies. These formal mechanisms are often counterproductive and inefficient, however.

Organizational design refers not only to an organization's internal design but also to its external design, or how it fits with and builds trust with other agencies or organizations. Organizations sometimes combine to form networks, such as strategically allied organizations. These networks often use legalistic measures such as formal contracts to build trust, but these, too, are usually inadequate. Trust becomes the only way to conduct affairs effectively. In these more loosely coupled designs the most important antecedents for trust are top leader involvement, harmony or equality among partners, and security by reducing uncertainty. Trust in the postmodern network organization is the conceptual converse of formal rules and becomes the effective way to conduct affairs.

*Technology* is a fourth part of the institutional dimension of trust. Technology becomes a substitute for trust. Technical control obviates the need for the more uncertain trust. For example, an organization might introduce robotics, automation, or rule-based technology to monitor production quality. Such technology takes quality control from people and gives it to machines. Technology becomes the arbiter of quality. At the end of the day, however, humans will still regulate the machines and technical processes to some degree; hence, trust will continue to be an important component of the institution.

*Time.* The last ingredient in forming trust relationships in institutions is time, specifically, the amount of time available to form trust relationships. The robustness of the initial formation of trust depends on the predisposition of the trustee or trustor. This predisposition rests on factors such as a trusting stance (the personal belief that things will turn out satisfactorily regardless of others' trustworthiness), faith in humanity (the personal belief that strangers are trustworthy in ambiguous and novel situations), categorization (how parties stereotype or perceive in-group and out-group identity), structural assurance (how the situation is bounded by legal safeguards, institutional rules, and regulations), and situational normalcy (how familiar parties are in a given context).

During a crisis, there is little time to form trust relationships. Crises often demand the establishment of swift trust relationships among individuals, teams, agencies, organizations, or institutions that are strangers to one another (Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1999). For example, when ad hoc state and local disaster-relief activities are organized, responders must often work together for the first time. Swift trust is built on a number of variables, including reputation, conversation, health, safety, investments, hierarchical position, perceptions of adaptability, cognitive illusion of mastery, presumption of trustworthiness, prospect of future interaction, and role clarity. Time, as a dimension of trust, increases in importance as vulnerability increases. Professional institutions use slow activity periods to develop methods to increase the chances of forming swift initial trust relationships when a crisis hits.

### **5.3.3 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness simply means being worthy of trust. There are no easy paths for leaders or managers to be worthy of trust. Some observers are rather prescriptive and argue that trustworthiness should be built through:

- 1) Living by genuinely shared values and operating principles.
- 2) Sharing a common vision or view of the world.
- 3) Enhancing familiarity across groups.
- 4) Encouraging experience with risk-taking and experimentation.
- 5) Making signs of trust and collaboration visible.

While there is much to commend in the list above, some items might not translate easily into action. Nevertheless, trustworthiness has three subsets: building trust, sustaining trust, and rebuilding trust. Furthermore, trust building seems to rest on three foundational cornerstones: ethics, culture, and organization development.

### **5.3.4 Effects of Trust on Military Operations**

Cox (1996) argues that trust played a critical role in the high performance and achievement of the most highly decorated combat unit in US history. The 442<sup>nd</sup> regiment was composed mostly of Japanese-American soldiers who fought during World War II. Despite facing obstacles both on the battlefield and at home due to prejudice against Japanese people, the White leaders of this regiment were able to create a command climate that promoted cohesion, morale and trust. Cox argues that this climate was due in no

small part to the fact that the 442<sup>nd</sup> soldiers believed that their leaders would do what was right for them and for the mission. Trust, in combination with morale and cohesion, is argued to have played an important role in combat success.

### 5.3.5 Ethics

Ethics and individual trustworthiness may be somewhat parallel concepts. In the academic community, social scientists build constructs to discuss and test ethics and individual trustworthiness separately. These constructs usually describe what unethical behavior is, establish norms to restrict such behavior, and then articulate formal ethical standards or policies into some form of code. The ethical component seeks at each level of analysis to answer questions like “what *should* officers and soldiers do?” and “what kind of leaders *should* the armed forces have?” The answers to these questions establish norms of individual and collective behavior, what courses of action, and what outcomes the officer is obligated to seek; in sum, they constitute a professional military ethic. The term *ethic* can refer to the body of moral principles or values governing a particular culture or group. Just as with the military-technical component, this ethical component can be analyzed from the perspectives of society, the military institution, or the individual soldier.

The relationship between military culture and ethos is complex and as yet unresolved. But differences between the ethos of militaries can be explained by a number of factors. First of all, national cultures exert a strong influence on any military force. Next the relationship between the military force and the society that supports it determines many facets of military culture. As indicated earlier, large differences, based on fundamentally different interpretations of the proper role of the military in society, exist between many Eastern and Western military cultures. Even among democracies, such as Israel and Canada, different civil-military relationships have produced vastly different military forces. Furthermore, as Soeters and Recht (2001) have demonstrated, there are measurable differences between Western military forces based on the tension between the vocational and the occupational approach to military service which has been influenced by differing national cultures (see Browne, Chapter 8). These differences in military culture have yet to be investigated in depth, but theories that purport to explain differences among international and/or multicultural organizations may prove useful to guide future research (English, 2001).

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The understanding of how cultural predispositions affect personality and teamwork provides critical information for the development of selection and training tools to help leaders and teams overcome cultural barriers. In accordance with Klein, Pongonis and Klein (2000) the dimensions of personality, values and attitudes, cognition (e.g., power distance, counterfactual thinking, dialectical reasoning, uncertainty avoidance, activity orientation) and trust have each been linked to the task demands faced during multinational operations. These differences influence situational awareness, planning, judgment, and decision making. They are vital for the successful accomplishment of complex missions. They vary among national groups. If national military units assume that their coalition partners are the same as they are, then they will make serious errors. Differences on each dimension can reduce situational awareness, interfere with coordination, and detract from effectiveness. Individuals can have significantly different culturally based personality and cognitive biases that influence their behavior. In concert with the personality and cognitive biases of others, these behaviors will either enhance or undermine team performance. Leaders and team members who recognize these biases and understand the implication of culture’s impact on situation assessment, coordination, assigning of roles and responsibilities, and support behavior are better prepared to adapt as needed, to ensure mission success.



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## **Chapter 6 – COMMUNICATION**

by

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### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Military forces are increasingly being required to operate in multinational environments. This may be in multinational teams, such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) teams, where soldiers from different nations work together for common goals, or in non-traditional missions such as peacekeeping and disaster relief, where soldiers work closely with local populations.

In these situations, people from different cultures are put into close contact. Such relationships can be problematic when the potential for miscommunication is considered. Having been socialized in different cultures, participants in multinational teams bring to interactions diverse ways of communicating and understanding communication. Different cultures have different values, communication styles, norms, and behaviors, all of which can lead to problems in communication.

Communication is critical in any team setting but particularly within multinational military teams. The research on multinational teams (MNTs) indicates that communication is one of the most pressing difficulties affecting team efficiency and effectiveness. A study by Riedel and Karrasch (2002) found that soldiers in multinational collaborative teams in a NATO operation rated communication as the number one challenge to teamwork in their teams.

Some argue that culturally diverse groups present more opportunities for problems than culturally homogeneous groups, including lower levels of trust (Adler, 1997; Triandis, 2000) and miscommunications (Li, 1999). Overall, while cultural diversity has the potential to produce better performance (Nemeth, 1986), it also increases the complexity of interactions and potential communication problems. However, since the use of multinational teams and group interactions is increasing and likely to continue to be the mode of operation in the future, it is important to understand how and why miscommunications arise and ways that they can be avoided.

This chapter focuses on communication in groups engaged in multinational military operations. One important subset of these groups is the multinational team. A team can be defined as “a set of two or more people who interact, interdependently and adaptively toward a common and valued goal or mission, who have been assigned specific roles or functions to perform, and who have a limited life span of membership” (Salas, Dickinson, Converse, & Tannenbaum, 1992, p. 4). This definition emphasizes that the team members are interdependent and that they are working toward a common goal. This means that communication and coordination to keep teams on track is very important. Communication is at the heart of what teams do. If communication breaks down, then team functioning is weakened. It is important then, for teams in multinational military operations that have the potential for communication problems, to be alert to and deal with those communication problems.

This chapter will discuss how cultural differences affect communication in multinational military operations; describe different cultural dimensions and how differences along these dimensions can affect communication in multinational military operations; and discuss the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that facilitate intercultural communication in those environments. While there is not a great deal of research specific to multinational military operations, academic research is clearly relevant and the focus in the paper will be on the academic literature. This chapter will not deal with technology and communication (see Masakowski, Chapter 7), but with the impact of culture on communication.

## 6.2 COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE GROUPS

Potentially, cultural diversity in multinational groups can be a strength. Research suggests that multinational teams can have big advantages over more homogeneous teams. Team diversity can improve creativity and decision making by bringing together different perspectives, world views, and experiences. Culturally diverse teams can be more innovative because multiple points of view can be brought to a problem. A diverse group is thus more likely to come up with different solutions to a problem (Nemeth, 1986). In addition, cognitive complexity is associated with second-language acquisition and may improve problem-solving abilities of group members who speak more than one language (Earley & Gibson, 2002).

However, Miller, Fields, Kumar, and Ortiz (2000) maintain that while teams made up of members from different cultures can be significantly superior to homogeneous teams, they can also experience more difficulties if the cultural differences are ignored. Indeed, communication problems due to cultural factors can be a major barrier to group performance and effectiveness. This section discusses communication problems in culturally diverse groups and the operational difficulties that these communication problems can produce.

### 6.2.1 Lack of Language Fluency

One might argue that miscommunications in multinational settings arise because of lack of fluency in the language that is being used. While researchers agree that fluency in the language does not ensure accuracy in intercultural communication (Gass & Varonis, 1991; Hammerly, 1991; Scollon & Scollon, 1995), part of the problem of communication is simply a lack of knowledge of the language and common idioms of the language used by the group.

Riedel and Karrasch (2002), studying communication in the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR), found that even speech mechanics can make communication difficult for non-native speakers (i.e., speakers with English, the specified NATO language, as their second language). Speaking too fast or too softly, and using acronyms, slang, dialects, and even humor can make the communication even harder for non-native speakers to understand. Some SFOR native speakers (i.e., those with English as their first language) said that they had difficulty understanding other native speakers. Speaking in an English or American regional accent can make communication difficult. For instance, some soldiers from the United States (US) said that they could not understand soldiers from the United Kingdom (UK) and would go to the Canadians for a translation. One SFOR non-native speaker said that even at his Newcomers' Orientation, the presenter had an American southern accent and he was able to understand only half of what she was saying, even though he was fluent in English.

Li (1999) found that speakers in intercultural situations communicated significantly less information than speakers in intracultural situations, even when language ability was controlled. Listeners in intercultural groups could retrieve only 50% of the information that was sent versus 75% in intracultural situations. This means that language ability alone does not ensure intercultural communication. This finding has implications for intercultural communication training: language training per se is not enough. Participants in intercultural groups need to be aware that even if they are fluent in the language being spoken, miscommunications are highly likely. To communicate successfully, one needs to understand not only the language but cultural differences in communication.

### 6.2.2 Information Sharing

Cherrie (1997), looking at multinational military operations during a mine strike recovery, concluded that multinational operations take more time. Information exchange in culturally heterogeneous teams is slower due to language barriers and the effort that it takes for the calibration of meaning. Differences in language, tactics, techniques, and procedures and doctrine cause the pace to be much slower than usual.

Because multinational commanders must issue orders in a tactful and diplomatic manner, the orders process in multinational operations often is more collegial and less structured than, for example, the more direct US process.

A problem that plagues MNTs is the inability or unwillingness of team members to share mission-related information with team members of other cultures. If information does not get shared, the quality of team mental models degrades and performance suffers. Jackson, May, and Whitney (1995) found that cultural heterogeneity lowers information exchange among coworkers. Because team communication is likely to be limited to topics commonly known to team members as opposed to important information held by only one team member (Strasser & Titus, 1985), cultural heterogeneity effects become important in information sharing. MNTs will talk less frequently and when they do talk it is likely to be about a topic with which other team members are familiar.

### **6.2.3 Stress and Increased Cognitive Effort**

Having to communicate in another language creates problems at a very elementary level. For example, members of a NATO coalition force reported that having to speak and think in another language for long periods of time is a source of cumulative stress (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002). One non-native speaker reported that when he is thinking, listening, and speaking in a second language, it takes a tremendous amount of focus and concentration, and that he tires faster because of it. Another said that understanding the language uses 50% of his thinking capacity, leaving only half of his brainpower left to do his tasks. This means that it takes more cognitive effort to do the same task using another language than one's own language. If this is a long-term assignment with the requirement to continually work and think in a second language, stress builds up. Not understanding or being able to speak English fluently requires exhaustive cognitive effort on the part of non-native speakers, and much patience and a willingness to understand and be understood is required on the part of native speakers.

### **6.2.4 Perception of Ability**

Riedel and Karrasch (2002) report that the non-native speakers who participated in the study often felt that they were being unfairly judged about their abilities based on their language fluency. That is, because they may not understand a conversation immediately, they felt that native speakers would judge them as not knowledgeable or intelligent. Because they did not want to be judged incompetent, non-native speakers sometimes hesitated to ask questions or to say that they did not understand.

### **6.2.5 Being By-Passed for Assignments**

Non-native speakers of a language may initially misunderstand directions and perform a task incorrectly or not in accordance with the intent of the assignment (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002). Their superiors, rather than taking the time to re-explain the directions, may give the task to someone else or just do it themselves. Similarly, when time is short, superiors may give the task to native speakers rather than risk a misunderstanding. Some thought that the practice of giving tasks to native speakers (i.e., speakers whose first language is English), simply because it was easier, hurt the team spirit of MNTs. If non-native speakers did not understand the first time, often the task was just given to a native speaker, who could understand.

### **6.2.6 Adjustment Time**

NATO SFOR multinational team members felt that SFOR teams need time before they can start to process the language and customs quickly and efficiently (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002). For instance, colloquialisms, the use of humor in meetings, the norms for morning greetings (salute, shake hands every morning, or nod your head on the way to your office), addressing of rank, and some body language differs across cultures

and requires adjustment. Other examples of customs that required adaptation included whether to bring coffee for yourself to a meeting or to take a coffee break with others after the meeting, hour-long coffee breaks in the morning and afternoon, a slower pace of work, dinner at 8pm, and the approach to alcohol consumption.

These differences can set a tone for teamwork and distract team members from the work at hand. However, members of the SFOR indicated that once you learn about these cultural differences they do not present a problem. However, the amount of time spent in the SFOR assignment varied with NATO nations, with some officers spending as little as 3 months at SFOR. They would barely adjust to the cultural differences before they would have to leave. This suggests that deliberate up-front training on cultural differences could make the adjustment faster. However, as more and more soldiers gain experience in multinational teams, this problem may become less important.

This section gave selected examples of the problems that are created by communication difficulties in multinational groups. The next section will discuss further how cultural diversity can cause communication problems.

## **6.3 HOW CULTURAL DIVERSITY CAN CAUSE MISCOMMUNICATION**

### **6.3.1 The Cultural Lens Model**

There is little empirical research investigating factors that contribute to communication in multicultural teams. However, understanding the differences in world views between cultures is essential to good communication. Klein and Steele-Johnson (2002) have proposed a cultural lens model which can be used as a way of conceptualizing communication problems in terms of how the communication is framed. The cultural lens model offers a theoretical explanation for why cultural differences could create communication problems, besides the obvious reason of not understanding the language. In general, our experiences in our families and our environment shape how we see the world. According to the cultural lens model, these experiences provide a perspective or cultural lens through which we see others. This lens shapes how people think, the beliefs and values that they hold, and the way that they see themselves and their relation to others with whom they interact. The cultural lens shapes a person's emotional reactions, ideas of how the world works and should work, and relationships with other people. People from the same national culture tend to see the world in similar ways. They share a cultural lens shaped by common experiences. People from similar cultures see the world in similar ways, and thus interpret events and make decisions similarly. They share a "lens" for making sense out of the world. This lens contains the common values, beliefs, and reasoning styles of their culture. The idea of a cultural lens is important because it provides a perspective by which we understand other people's words, gestures, intentions, and in general what we think they are communicating.

According to Klein and Steele-Johnson (2002), the cultural lens can be thought of as consisting of a number of cultural dimensions through which our experiences are filtered and interpreted. If we could adopt the cultural lens of the other person, that is, see his or her words, actions, and context through the cultural lens of his or her culture, then we would have a better chance of understanding what it is he or she is communicating. The next section discusses cultural dimensions and how they affect communication.

## **6.4 CULTURAL DIMENSIONS AND HOW THEY AFFECT COMMUNICATION**

There are a number of major cultural dimensions that can be used to explain differences in communication across cultures. Differences in these cultural dimensions can make cross-cultural communication difficult and challenging for teams operating in a culturally heterogeneous environment. The dimensions exist at



both the cultural level and the individual level. For example, one’s culture could be characterized as emphasizing one’s responsibility to society, but individual people in that society could have an orientation that emphasizes their responsibility to themselves. However, people within a culture tend to adopt the attitudes, customs, and beliefs characteristic of their culture.

Salas, Burke, Wilson-Donnelly, and Fowlkes (2004) identified 45 cultural dimensions that have appeared in the literature. The most widely accepted of these dimensions were proposed by Hofstede (1980, 2001), based on data from 100,000 mostly male employees of IBM. Table 6.1 presents five of the Hofstede dimensions and selected others identified by Salas et al. (2004). A large study by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004) identified similar dimensions.

**Table 6.1: Cultural Dimensions (abstracted from Salas et al., 2004)**

Cultural Dimension	Definition
Individualism-Collectivism (Hofstede, 1980)	Individualism is “A loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and of their immediate families only” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45). It is the pursuit of self-interests as opposed to group interest. The dimension is similar to Triandis’s (1989, 2000) instrumental-expressive dimension, which describes whether getting the job done (instrumental) or relationships (expressive) are considered more important in the culture. Collectivist cultures have a tight social framework “in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups. They expect their in-group to look out after them, and in exchange they feel they owe absolute loyalty to the in-group” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45).
Power Distance (Hofstede, 1980)	“The extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45). High power distance cultures accept this and social exchanges are based on this fact. Low power distance cultures do not see a strict hierarchy among social exchanges.
Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede, 1980)	“Extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid these situations by providing greater career stability, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviors, and believing in absolute truths and the attainment of expertise” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45).
Masculinity-Femininity (Achievement-Relationship) (Hofstede, 1980)	“The extent to which the dominant values of society are ‘masculine’ – that is, assertiveness, the acquisition of money and things versus caring for others, the quality of life, or people” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45).
Long-Short Term Orientation (Hofstede, 2001)	Long-term orientation refers to a culture with future-orientated values, especially perseverance and thrift, while short-term orientation refers to cultures that are driven by past and present-orientated values (e.g., respect for tradition), preservation of face and fulfilling social obligations (Hofstede, 2001, p. 359).
Past-Future Orientation (Hall & Hall, 1990)	Similar to long-short term orientation. Refers to the time frame that is emphasized.

Cultural Dimension	Definition
Monochronic-Polychronic (Hall & Hall, 1990)	In monochronic cultures, time is experienced and used in a linear way, segmented and compartmentalized. In polychronic cultures, time has an unlimited continuity; it unravels. People attend to many things happening at the same time. The focus is on the group, stretching forward and back.
High-Low Context (Hall & Hall, 1990)	In communication in high-context cultures, much of the information is implicitly implied and exact meaning is determined by context. Within low-context cultures communication is very direct and explicit.
Analytic/Holistic Reasoning (Choi & Nisbett, 2000)	The extent to which individuals reason holistically versus using rules, formal logic, and categories to understand behavior.

The identified cultural dimensions tend to cluster together, that is, they are not orthogonal. Certain positions on the dimensions tend to cluster together (Triandis, 2000). Triandis calls this “clustering cultural syndromes,” that is, a shared pattern of beliefs, attitudes, and norms organized around a theme. For example, the individualism-collectivism dimension overlaps with the achievement-relationship dimension in that collectivists tend to be relationship-oriented while individualists tend to be achievement or task-oriented (Levine & Norenzayan, 1999).

Triandis (2000) argues that these dimensions are important in communication because a culture’s position on the dimensions influences cues in the communication interaction to which the person pays attention. Members of different cultures pay more attention to different kinds of information when communicating. For example, a person from a high-context culture would pay more attention to body language and to the context of a message than a person from a low-context culture, who would focus on the explicit content of the message. Western cultures tend to pay more attention to the content of communications while Eastern collectivist cultures attend primarily to the context of communications (Triandis, 2000). The dimensions are presented in Table 6.1, together with how they influence communication.

**6.4.1 How Does the Power Distance Orientation Affect Communication?**

High power distance people tend to use formal, hierarchical communication. That is, they go through channels with suggestions and problems. Rank affects to whom they talk. Information may not be offered except in formal settings. Some high power distance people may be reluctant to go to the commander for additional guidance. Subordinates may fail to provide critical information to leaders, believing it is the leader’s responsibility to make decisions (Helmreich, 2000). Or they may fail to challenge a commander’s decision, even if it could result in catastrophic consequences. They prefer more traditional approaches to dealing with obstacles. Riedel and Karrasch (2002) report that one cause of communication problems cited by multinational team members was the reluctance to ask questions when they did not understand, because in their culture, it is rude to ask questions or because one simply does not question one’s supervisor.

Low power distance people tend to use informal, rather than formal, communication channels. They tend to be less traditional and seek more innovative answers to problems. They have a greater need for technology and independent thinking. They have different value orientations about the appropriateness or importance of status differences and social hierarchies than high power distance cultures. They are less traditional and more open to innovative answers to problems. They feel more comfortable challenging the decisions of the power holders. Low power distance cultures defend and assert their personal rights more than members of high power distance cultures.

Power distance influences who group members are most likely to talk with and question, and with whom they are most likely to make eye contact. Conyne, Wilson, Tang, and Shi (1999) found that Chinese group members (a high power distance culture) spoke directly to the group leader twice as frequently as to other members. They also found that group members from the US, a low power distance culture, spoke directly to the leader one third as frequently as they did other group members.

#### **6.4.2 How Does the Individualism-Collectivism Orientation Affect Communication?**

Gudykunst and Mody (2002) believe that individualism-collectivism is the most important dimension of cultural variability used to explain differences and similarities in communication across cultures. In individualistic cultures, individual goals take precedence over group goals; in collectivistic cultures, group goals take precedence over individual goals. Salas et al. (2004) report that individualists are more likely to give more weight to dispositional cues while collectivists are more likely to pay attention to situation and context cues in inferring why something happened. Individualistic cultures emphasize person-based information to interpret others' communications. Individualists tend to use low-context messages, which are direct, precise, and clear. Individualist countries include Canada, Australia, England, France, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, and the US, among others.

On the other hand, in collectivist cultures, group goals take precedence over individual goals, tending to be concerned with avoiding hurt feelings and not imposing on others. They emphasize harmony and cooperation within the in-group and will try to save face for the group and in-group members. They see direct requests as the least effective way to accomplish goals. Collectivist cultures tend to be group-oriented. They make a clear distinction between in- and out-groups. In multinational teams or groups, members who are judged as being very dissimilar may be judged as being in the out-group. This may result in less interaction and communication with the out-group members, less information sharing, less value placed on their contributions, and fewer assignments given to those perceived as out-group members (Salas et al., 2004). Collectivists focus on the goals of the group and the "we" identity is emphasized. They have few in-groups, value tradition and conformity, and have an interdependent identity. They tend to use high-context messages, which are indirect, ambiguous, implicit, and dependent on the context. Cultures high in collectivism include African, Arab, Asian, Latin, and Southern European cultures.

Collectivists tend to impose a large psychological distance between in-group and out-group members, and in-group members are expected to have unquestioning loyalty to their group. In conflict situations, members of collectivistic cultures are likely to use avoidance, intermediaries, or face-saving techniques. Leaders of collectivist cultures never reprimand a person in front of other group members. They are aware of the importance of the group and the importance of saving face. Collectivists prefer an indirect or implicit communication style (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Implicit language carefully imbues messages within a more positive tone to decrease the chances of unpleasant encounters, direct confrontations, and disagreements. Collectivists are not likely to ask questions. They follow the saying, "the nail that sticks up gets pounded."

Conyne et al. (1999) found that collectivist team members were less likely to have direct communications with the leader than with other team members, while the opposite was found for individualistic team members. They also found that collectivist team members were more hesitant to provide information, possibly due to a culture-related hesitancy to speak. When they did speak, it was for longer time periods than in the case of individualist team members, possibly to save face when a risk was taken to speak. That is, by speaking longer they were able to better justify their speaking out. For example, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Indonesians make frequent use of ambiguous words such as maybe, perhaps, and somewhat to avoid confrontation. Members of these cultures tend to avoid negative responses while communicating with their team in order to preserve the sense of harmony within the group. In collectivist cultures it is vital that one establishes a cordial interpersonal relationship and maintain it over time. For example, in African, Middle Eastern, Chinese, and Japanese cultures, sociability is extended to

business hours, schedules are looser, and the first encounter is slated for getting acquainted (Conyne et al., 1999).

People in individualistic cultures do not perceive a large psychological distance between in-group and out-group members. They value self-expression, see speaking out as a means of resolving problems, and are likely to use confrontational strategies when dealing with interpersonal problems. For example, North Americans and Germans prefer directness while Japanese prefer indirectness. Individualistic cultures are concerned with clarity in conversation and use direct requests as the best way to accomplish goals. They focus the communication on the task rather than on maintaining relationships. Individualists prefer a direct or explicit communication style, where language communicates exactly what is meant in a direct manner, even if the message is negative or somewhat harsh. Individualistic group members may inadvertently offend other members because they did not take time to learn about cultural differences or because they were so focused on their tasks that they neglected social amenities.

Collectivists are more attuned to social relationships in communication than on the task, and individualists may feel that collectivists spend too much time on relationship building and not enough on the task. The individualist is more likely to give more weight to dispositional cues, while collectivists are more likely to pay attention to situation and context cues in inferring causality.

In teams, a natural and profitable strategy is to monitor each other's performance and offer feedback if needed. However, members of collectivist cultures may have a difficult time offering feedback, and even help, to fellow team members. Collectivists may feel that those they critique will lose face and thus hesitate to offer feedback, or they may hesitate to give feedback because of the conflict that the feedback may create. Collectivists also tend to be more favorable in their evaluations of their in-group members (Gomez, Kirkman, & Shapiro, 2000).

One communication dynamic related to the individualism-collectivism dimension is face saving. Novinger says that saving face is "the value or standing a person has in the eyes of others... It relates to pride or self respect" (2001, p. 81). Face includes status, power, courtesy, insider and outsider relations, and respect. In many cultures, maintaining face is of great importance. Collectivist cultures use more other-oriented face saving strategies and other-oriented face approval enhancement strategies than individualistic cultures, which use more self-oriented face saving strategies. In Asian cultures, preservation of the self and the reputation of the family are important (Leong, Wagner, & Kim, 1995). This leads to avoidance of interpersonal risk and avoidance of direct types of communications, such as challenges, confrontations, interruptions, and direct questions. In the US, people are less concerned with saving face and more apt to challenge the speaker. In individualism, saving face has to do with preserving one's own image with others. For collectivists, considerations about face are with respect to one's own group rather than one's self. Direct confrontation with others may reflect poorly on one's own group or disturb the overall community harmony; thus one may prefer to avoid criticism of others. Emphasizing self-face leads to using dominating/competing conflict styles and substantive conflict resolution modes. Emphasizing other-face leads to using avoiding/obligating conflict styles. When there is conflict, a third party who intervenes between the people involved in the conflict preserves face since no direct confrontation takes place and the relationship is maintained. Thus, collectivists use relational process-oriented conflict strategies more than individualists.

### **6.4.3 How Does the Uncertainty Avoidance Orientation Affect Communication?**

Uncertainty avoidance represents the extent to which "a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid these situations by providing greater career stability, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviors, and believing in absolute truths and the attainment of expertise" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45). Low uncertainty avoidance cultures can accept dissent and conflict and see these as natural and useful. Norms and rules are not as clear cut and rigid as in high

uncertainty cultures. Low uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to be able to adapt to change and cope with uncertainty. They are willing to change and take risks. Conflict and dissent are seen as natural and beneficial. Low uncertainty avoidance cultures are characterized by low stress, acceptance of dissent, high level of risk-taking, and few rituals. Cultures high on uncertainty avoidance include Japan, Mexico, Greece, Chile, Belgium, Argentina, and Egypt. Cultures low on uncertainty avoidance include Canada, the UK, Denmark, India, France, Hong Kong, Sweden, and the US.

In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, situations that deviate from the plan may be unnoticed or not communicated because these events are threatening to individuals who have high uncertainty avoidance (Ilgen, LePine, & Hollenbeck, 1997). Uncertainty avoidance may have the effect of limiting the recognition of cues that may call for the team to adapt.

If leaders are too high on uncertainty avoidance, task procedures may become so detailed and structured that team members' ability to think creatively about a task is stifled. These leaders may excessively control a situation, limiting dialogue and the development of a shared situational awareness. If team members are high on uncertainty avoidance, they may ask for so much guidance and information that they no longer provide unique contributions to the task. In other words, the leader might as well have done it him or herself. If leaders are low on uncertainty avoidance, they may appear to be "shooting from the hip" or may not cover sufficient details in an operation. They may not give the team members enough information for them to do their jobs.

Rifkind and Harper (1993) found that in high uncertainty avoidance cultures, clear instruction, specialized careers, and cooperation among employees tended to be preferred. One would expect that cultures with high uncertainty avoidance would tend to ignore information that did not conform to what they already believed.

#### **6.4.4 How Does Achievement-Relationship Affect Communication?**

This dimension refers to the extent to which cultures prefer achievement and assertiveness as opposed to nurturance and social support. Japan, Italy, Mexico, the UK, Germany, and the US tend to believe in achievement as a basis of performance, whereas Sweden and Portugal tend to be relationship countries.

If leaders or team members are high on achievement and low on relationship, then they will miss the richness of information sharing provided by the diverse team, because they will tend to encourage people to focus on the task at hand, rather than take time to think of different ways of solving the problem. Members may tend to work in their national chain or with selected team members who can accomplish the tasks, thus missing the richness of the diverse team setting and resulting in streamlined, but content-poor information.

If team members are high on relationship, then they may spend too much time off-task and either not produce a product on time or produce a product that is incomplete. If a leader is high on relationship, he or she will likely have a high level of interaction with team members, which will positively influence team members' confidence, efficacy, and performance. With regard to communication, the team members high on relationship may interact more with other members, generating more information and better coordination.

If leaders are high on achievement and low on relationship, then they may disregard some team members' contributions if they do not obviously contribute to the task at hand, ignoring that their contributions may indirectly contribute to the task or may be relevant to team functions in general. Information and opportunities for shared situational awareness are lost. If leaders or team members are high on achievement but low on relationship, then they may be moving from task to task, without developing a team culture or team situational awareness.

If leaders or team members are low on relationship, then they may inadvertently offend another team member because they did not take the time to learn cultural nuances important to that person. This will inhibit information sharing and coordination.

#### **6.4.5 How Does the High-Low Context Orientation Affect Communication?**

Hall and Hall (1990) described the cultural dimension of high-low context. In high-context cultures, speakers tend to use a more indirect communication style, while in low-context cultures, speakers tend to use a more direct communication style. This dimension overlaps with individualism-collectivism, with high-context and low-context communication styles being the predominant forms of communication in individualistic and collectivistic cultures, respectively (Gudykunst & Ting-Tooney, 1988). US, German, Swedish, European American, and UK are low-context cultures. Buddhist, Hindu, Japanese, African-American, Mexican, and Latino are high-context cultures.

In low-context cultures reactions are frequently very explicit and readily observable. In high-context cultures, information about procedures is more likely to be communicated through non-verbal cues, and with less reliance on explicit verbal communication (Rifkind & Harper, 1993; Triandis, 2000). In low-context cultures, communication is more explicitly verbal and direct – the non-verbal context of the message has less value. This dimension speaks directly to the communication style norms across cultures and represents a particular challenge for multicultural environments. More is taken for granted and assumed to be shared in high-context cultures. Messages do not need to be explicitly and verbally transmitted. Reactions are likely to be reserved, as unconstrained reactions could threaten face or social esteem.

High-context cultures rely heavily on a non-verbal code system. People from low-context cultures would tend to seek information that emphasized personal or individual aspects rather than social or group aspects. In low-context cultures, messages are explicit and dependent on verbal codes (Ting-Tooney, 1988).

#### **6.4.6 How Does the Masculine–Feminine Orientation Affect Communication?**

In masculine cultures there are differentiated gender roles, and power, assertiveness, and performance are valued. Masculine-oriented countries include Arab cultures, Austria, Germany, Italy Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Venezuela. In feminine cultures, there are overlapping gender roles, and quality of life, service, and nurturance are valued. Countries with a feminine orientation include Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden.

This dimension has major implications for military multinational teams because of the different roles of women in cultures differing on this dimension. For example, one female Major from a feminine culture reported that in her multinational team, her authority was repeatedly challenged by subordinates from masculine cultures. If she issued an order, team members looked to her male peer for confirmation. If she gave information, it was ignored until a male peer repeated it. In general, she felt powerless and unable to communicate effectively in the team even though she had a relatively high rank and experienced acceptance of her authority in her own country's military community (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002).

#### **6.4.7 How Does the Polychronic vs. Monochronic Orientation Affect Communication?**

The monochronic or Western concept of time sees time as a straight line. An individualist way of life fits easily into the monochronic culture. Time is logical, sequential, and present- and future- focused. Efficiency is important. Time is money. In contrast, Eastern cultures tend to be polychronic. Here time unravels and the universe is continuous. People may attend to many things at once. There is a certain timeless quality to time; it is too vast for the human mind to comprehend. Eastern countries tend to be polychronic. Time is alive with fate and destiny. Time is a circle, an unravelling ball of thread, a spiral.

Members of American culture, for example, tend to regard time as a valuable, tangible commodity that is to be consumed to a greater or lesser degree. Americans tend to be very time-driven. A polychronic time system means that several things are being done at the same time. For Spanish and many South American cultures, relationships are more important than schedules. Deadlines are unmet when friends or family require attention. They often schedule multiple appointments at the same time. Whether they are members of polychronic or monochronic cultures, people tend to see their own time system as superior.

Monochronic cultures tend to organize their thoughts and communications linearly, that is: fact, fact, generalization, conclusion. In polychronic cultures, the line of thought is associative, going around and around the point so that the listener understands the point almost intuitively, finally zeroing in on the conclusion. Group members from a monochronic culture may find the circular and intuitive way of reasoning and communicating of polychronic group members difficult to understand and work within.

#### **6.4.8 How Does the Past-Future Time Orientation Affect Communication?**

This dimension overlaps somewhat with the monochronic-polychronic dimension. Monochronic cultures tend to be present- and future-oriented and short-term focused. Polychronic cultures are past- and long-term oriented. Past-oriented cultures regard past experiences as most important. The emphasis here is on tradition and wisdom passed down. These cultures show deference and respect for elders who represent links to the past. British, Chinese, and native American cultures show past orientation. Tradition is very important.

Present-oriented cultures regard current experiences as the most important. They emphasize spontaneity and experiencing each moment as fully as possible. They participate in events because of the immediate pleasure of the activity and believe in unseen and unknown outside forces like fate or luck. They might be seen by past- and future-oriented cultures as self-centered, hedonistic, and inefficient.

Future-oriented cultures believe that the future is the most important. Current activities are appreciated for their future benefits. Planning ahead and having a schedule to know what they will be doing in the future is important. Other cultures find this future orientation and the need to schedule and plan ahead very unreasonable and hard to deal with. Members of Northern European and American cultures are future-oriented, believing that their fate is in their own hands, and that they can control the consequences of their actions. Past- and present-oriented cultures see future-oriented cultures as slaves to efficiency. These orientations can cause miscommunication because future-oriented cultures see schedules as firm and important.

If a future-oriented team member says that a task is scheduled to be completed by 5 pm, this member's assumption is that everyone understands that the task must be completed by 5 pm. Present-oriented members, however, may understand this to mean that the task is to be completed by 5 pm if it gets done.

#### **6.4.9 How Does the Analytic vs. Holistic Reasoning Orientation Affect Communication?**

The last dimension to be discussed here concerns cultural differences in holistic versus analytical reasoning (Ji, Penge, & Nisbett, 2000). Holistic reasoning represents the tendency to perceive ideas and objects as part of a larger context, whereas analytical reasoning focuses on specific objects and minimizes the larger context. These different perspectives lead to differences in how the causes of actions and events are attributed. Holistic reasoning may lead to more external or situational attributions, while analytical reasoning may produce more attributions to the person or actor of an event. These culturally based reasoning differences influence how events in the larger environment tend to be attributed to either situational (external) causes or to personal (internal) causes. Individuals in a multicultural group may make different interpretations of the same event, depending on their cultural orientation (Choi & Nisbett, 2000; Ji et al., 2000). People from holistic cultures may attribute the same behavior to different causes and give different meanings to the same behavior, complicating their communications.

#### **6.4.10 Other Dynamics in Multicultural Miscommunications: False Consensus**

A psychological phenomenon that contributes to miscommunication is the “false consensus” effect (Mullen et al., 1985). This phenomenon holds that if we agree with a particular position, then we believe that most other people also agree with it. If we disagree with a position, then we believe that most people also disagree with it. That is, we believe that people are more or less like ourselves. This means that when we come into contact with other cultures, we are often unaware of miscommunications because we think that others are more or less like we are and think the way we do (Triandis, 2000). This is supported by the findings of Riedel and Karrasch (2002). In focus groups with multinational MNTs, focus groups with only US soldiers did not see communication as a problem, while groups consisting of speakers with English as their second language (i.e., non-native speakers) saw communication as a major problem. Because US officers did not have problems communicating in MNTs, they tended to think that the non-native speaking team members also had little trouble communicating.

### **6.5 NON-VERBAL INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

A topic that cuts across the above cultural dimensions is the use of non-verbal communication. Studies on the facial expression of emotion have demonstrated that facial expressions of basic emotions, such as anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise, can be accurately recognized across cultural groups. This suggests that emotion is a universal language (Ekman, 1972, 1982; Ekman, Soresen, & Friesen, 1969; Izard, 1971). Despite this universal expression of emotion, a study by Halberstadt (1985) found that specific appearances of facial expression may differ among cultures. A study by Marsh, Elfenbein, and Ambady (2003) also found evidence for subtle differences in the facial expression of emotions between cultures, such that the facial expressions in people of one’s own culture tend to be easier to read.

However, many other forms of non-verbal communication can be interpreted only within the framework of the culture in which they occur. That is, cultures vary in specific repertoires of behaviors. Use of movement, body positions, postures, vocal intonations, gestures, touch, time, and spatial requirements all vary across cultures. These will be discussed next.

Cultures vary a great deal in non-verbal communications and there is a great deal of room for error in these interpretations. The importance of non-verbal communication in the interpretation of messages also varies with culture. Low-context cultures like the US tend to assign less importance to non-verbal communication than to the literal meaning of the words. In high-context cultures like Japan, understanding of the non-verbal communications is more important to understanding the meaning of the communication than it is in Western cultures.

People from collectivist cultures tend to pay more attention to the context of communications than people from individualist cultures do, paying more attention to gestures, eye contact, level of voice, touching, distance between the bodies, and so on. Further complicating the situation, non-verbal communication also varies by gender and social status within a culture (Tannen, 1994).

All cultures have display rules that govern when and under what conditions various non-verbal expressions are required, preferred, permitted, or prohibited, such as how far apart to stand while talking, who to touch and where, speed and timing of movements and gestures, when to look directly at others in a conversation, when to look away, whether loud talking and expansive gestures or quietness and controlled movements should be used, when to smile and when to frown, and overall pacing of communication. Display rules vary greatly across cultures. Approachability (smiling, laughing, appropriate conversational distance) is important for Latinos when working with other Latinos and socializing with people from other cultures. European Americans tend to display these behaviors only when socializing with other European Americans. When showing grief, Southern Mediterranean countries tend to exaggerate their displays. In European American cultures, people try to remain calm. British cultures may understate their displays. Japanese may hide their sorrow or cover it with smiling.



Non-verbal communication is also important in regulating the flow of conversations. Non-verbal behaviors that help to synchronize the back and forth nature of conversations are called regulators. They are culture-specific and include behaviors such as eye contact, posture, movement, and vocalizations.

As discussed above, the expression of many emotions are constant across cultures. However, cultural differences may occur with regard to which emotion it is acceptable to display. For example, in the US it may be more socially acceptable for a woman to express fear but not anger, but it is just the opposite for a man. In Japan it is unacceptable to show anger or sadness (Novinger, 2001) and those emotions may be masked by an expression of happiness. Thus, when talking about the death of a relative, a Japanese smile may seem inappropriate to a Westerner.

### **6.5.1 Eye Contact and Duration of Verbalizations**

High-context cultures are concerned with meanings conveyed by the eyes. Asians consider extended eye contact rude and prefer brief eye contact. Anglo-Americans, on the other hand, admire a steady gaze and consider it important to maintain eye contact. For them, if someone will not make eye contact, it is a clue that something is wrong. European Americans look into the eyes of the other people when they are the listeners, but US Blacks look away, which European Americans could regard as a sign of indifference. This looking into the eyes by the European Americans could be regarded as invasive or confrontational by US Blacks.

Conyne, Wilson, Tang, and Shi (1999) found that US group members tend to look at fellow group members as they speak. Head nods and eye gaze indicate involvement with the task and eye gaze is associated with dominance. For Asian groups, on the other hand, the speaker tends to look at the leader or his or her notes, but rarely looks at other group members.

Conyne et al. (1999) found that in Asian groups, interactions involved fewer speech occurrences but longer duration of verbalizations than in US groups. They explained this finding by proposing that a cultural hesitancy to speak may yield fewer inputs, but when the risk is taken, the speaker may talk longer to protect against any loss of face. In the US, high verbal participation in groups is associated with dominance and high status. In comparison, Asian group members are relatively quieter. The Asian culture also emphasizes verbal non-assertiveness, reluctance of emotional expression, and avoidance of self-disclosure, all of which may be misinterpreted as lower status of or non-involvement by high-context group members.

### **6.5.2 Personal Space**

The amount of personal space that a person feels comfortable with when conversing varies depending on the culture. Members of Hispanic, Latin American, and Italian cultures tend to stand close to others while talking, while Anglo-Americans might feel that their personal space has been violated by someone standing that close. In general, people from cold climates use large physical distances when they communicate whereas those from warm climates prefer close distances.

Different cultures have different ideas about the appropriate amount of space between conversationalists. Americans and Canadians prefer large amounts of space. Europeans tend to stand more closely to one another when talking. North Americans may see the European desire for such nearness as pushy, while the Europeans may see the North American preference for more physical distance as cold.

### **6.5.3 Touch**

Meanings of touch include affect, playfulness, control, ritual purposes, and task-related purposes. Members of Middle Eastern, Latin American, and Southern European cultures touch more than others. This may be regarded as aggressive, overly familiar, or pushy by Northern Europeans. The latter tend not

to touch others and may be perceived as cold or aloof by members of Southern European cultures. Cultures also differ in where people can be touched. In Japan there are deeply held feelings against the touch of a stranger. For Muslims, one cannot touch a person of the opposite sex. But it is acceptable for men to hold hands. However, for Europeans and Americans, it is acceptable to touch the opposite sex, but not acceptable for men to touch each other.

#### **6.5.4 Other Non-Verbal Communication Cues**

Voice includes pitch, tone, and loudness. Latinos speak more loudly and more frequently than Americans. A Saudi Arabian's sentences may be perceived as showing apathy or lack of interest. Americans' voices may be interpreted by Saudis' as calm and pleasant. A firm statement by an American may seem doubtful to a Saudi Arabian. Other non-verbal codes include dress, body ornaments, and the need for privacy. The latter is expressed by closed doors in the US and sound-proof doors in Germany, while Japan has paper thin walls.

Rules that govern most non-verbal communication are both culture-specific and outside of conscious awareness. People use these non-verbal behaviors to make judgments of people's feelings and attractiveness. For example, Americans highly value positive non-verbal displays and regard someone who smiles as more intelligent than someone who does not, while Japanese do not equate expressiveness with intelligence.

In general, non-verbal communication becomes more important in cross-cultural communication than in homogeneous communication. In the former there is a greater chance of the verbal message being misunderstood or unclear. When this happens, people look to non-verbal clues for clarification.

### **6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATION IN MULTINATIONAL GROUPS**

Communication competence in multinational settings involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures. These can be influenced by training, education, experience, and guided practice (Wiseman, 2001). In addition, many communication difficulties in multinational settings can be eased by building up and using social capital (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002).

#### **6.6.1 Knowledge**

Included here is the knowledge necessary to interact appropriately and effectively, and the attitudes and abilities to facilitate the acquisition of this knowledge. What is needed is knowledge of other cultures, the host language, communication rules, and rules for specific contexts. Without knowledge, people will make misattributions, choose incorrect communication strategies, violate rules of etiquette, and cause loss of trust. Without knowledge they may not be able to correctly determine the reasons for the communication errors that they make. They also need feedback from others, and flexibility to learn from the feedback and change their behavior. Acquiring this knowledge involves attitudes and abilities such as open-mindedness, non-judgmentalness, and problem-solving ability.

#### **6.6.2 Motivation**

Communication competence involves the motivation to understand and be understood. Factors such as anxiety can influence the decision to communicate with someone. If multinational team members feel that they will not be understood, then this can influence whether they will even try to communicate. Or, if the effort to communicate outweighs the potential benefits, then team members may just give up the effort. With the motivation to communicate, team members will also be more open to feedback about whether

they are understanding and being understood. Motivation can create positive attitudes toward other cultures, empathy, and social relaxation, all of which will aid communication.

### **6.6.3 Skills and Attitudes**

These include being mindful of what you are doing and saying as well as your effect on others, appropriate self-disclosure, being flexible in your behavior, being able to manage the social interaction, maintaining your own cultural identity, the appropriate display of respect, finding ways to reduce uncertainty about others' communications, the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, expressing yourself clearly, and being able to "save face" for the other person.

Communicating across cultures involves a certain cognitive flexibility that enables the person to see the situation and communication that he or she is transmitting and receiving from different cultural perspectives. It involves paying attention to how others are perceiving you and then making adjustments to make the communication successful. This involves knowledge, that is, understanding cultural differences. If one is going to take another's cultural perspective then one must know what that perspective is.

Communicating across cultures also involves a behavioral flexibility to construct a message in the other person's frame of reference or to react within the cultural framework of the other person. It also involves meta-cognitive skills in the ability to see one's own behavior and communications in terms of the other's culture (i.e., the ability to observe one's own words and behavior from the viewpoint of another culture).

A key element in improving communication in multinational military teams is the team leader. Riedel and Karrasch (2002) report that multinational NATO team members participating in focus groups felt that the team leader has the critical role in managing the communication problem because the leader models how miscommunications should be identified and handled, and how feedback is given when miscommunications occur. The leader sets the tone of patience and respect for non-native speakers. The focus group participants agreed that patience and tolerance are the keys to any communication problem in multinational teams.

### **6.6.4 Social Capital**

Putnam (2000, p. 19) defines social capital as "connections among individuals – social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them." Communication interactions among members of intercultural groups can be eased with the use of social capital, where social capital is the good will that has been built up between the group members. If multinational group members expect that the other group members will behave with respect and consideration toward them, then they will be inclined to interpret a cultural faux pas as unintended and the result of not knowing cultural differences in acceptable behavior. For example, a Canadian lecturer at an SFOR training session (Riedel & Karrasch, 2002) reported that he inadvertently used gestures that were offensive to his Saudi Arabian training audience. However, instead of being offended, the Saudi audience laughed and pointed out his mistake. Believing that he would not deliberately offend them, the Saudi audience assumed that his offensive gestures were unintended. In the end, use of social capital may be one of the most effective means of creating the motivation to communicate with group members of other cultures and easing communication difficulties.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION**

Communication is at the heart of multinational operations, yet soldiers from different countries may bring diverse styles of communication and understanding communications to their interactions, which can lead to problems in multinational military operations. In addition to misunderstandings, other communication problems can include an inability or unwillingness to share information, the stress and increased cognitive

effort of communicating in a second language, degraded perception of one's ability based on language fluency, and being overlooked for assignments due to lack of language fluency.

Cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede, 2001) can provide a useful framework for identifying, understanding, and dealing with cultural differences in communication. Other chapters in this report (e.g., Chapter 4) discussed how differences on cultural dimensions impact teamwork and performance. All of the dimensions also have implications for how people communicate and understand communications. For example, a soldier high on the cultural dimension of context would tend to use an indirect style of communication with much of his communication coming from the context and common assumptions. Another soldier low on the context dimension, and tending to use direct, explicit communications, may miss much of the contextual information because she is not looking for it. Knowing that the first soldier comes from a high-context culture would tell the second soldier to look for contextual information. Training on these cultural dimensions would give soldiers a framework for better understanding themselves, their multinational partners, and for avoiding and dealing with miscommunications.

Because the multinational component of military operations is only likely to increase, training in multicultural communication should be part of standard military training programs. Communication competence in multinational settings involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively with members of other cultures. These can be developed using a wide variety of techniques, including training, education, experience, and role models. Possible training approaches include pre-deployment training and resources available during deployment for specific information. Joint or multinational training would help develop skills in working with those of other cultures. But specific courses in multicultural awareness are not enough. Cultural issues should be integrated into all military training courses starting at the most basic levels. Consideration of cultural differences needs to be a part of how all military personnel think and operate.

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## Chapter 7 – TECHNOLOGY

by

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### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the impact of technology on multinational military operations, and the ways in which technology has helped to shape military missions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It will also discuss how culture influences the use and effectiveness of technology in multinational operations. The issues addressed in this chapter are complex and related to topics in all of the other chapters in this report. Many of these issues have been discussed earlier; thus, this chapter will highlight technology issues related to multinational military operations rather than discuss them in detail.

The role of multinational military missions has changed over time within the context of globalization. Traditionally, military teams were called upon to provide support against threats to their nation's borders. Today, the military role has expanded to include global missions such as peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, and disaster relief. These operational changes have resulted in changes in each nation's strategic plans and have expanded military requirements to meet the demands of this wide range of missions, each of which incorporates technology to support its military objectives (Britt & Adler, 2003).

In recent years, there has been a shift in the international security environment as a result of terrorist acts, warfare, and natural disasters. These have necessitated technologies to support the detection, prediction, and prevention of crises and humanitarian aid efforts. Through the rapid evolution of digital technologies has emerged a critical capability to shape the ways in which nations can work together to address both natural crises and potential threats.

As military operational requirements evolve, technology continues to spiral to new levels that present both opportunities and challenges to conducting military operations within the global security environment. Since the end of the Cold War, attention has turned toward developing information management technologies that will enable the rapid transfer of information within a secure environment. This capability to rapidly transfer information is essential for ensuring effective international collaboration and cooperation in military operations. As a result, there is an ever-increasing demand for information and tools that will accelerate the distribution of information. Thus, in order to be effective in the future security environment, we must leverage technological advances in computing power to address requirements for rapid and secure transfer of information.

Historically, there are many examples that illustrate the ways in which technology has transformed warfare. Inventions and innovations such as radar, airplanes, aircraft carriers, and tanks have given tactical advantages to nations and have helped to shape history. Similarly, advances in computing power have given rise to the 21<sup>st</sup> century cyber warfare. Collaborative technologies have become increasingly important throughout the last decade with nations becoming increasingly dependent upon the capacities of the internet and networks (Alberts, 2002; Alberts & Hayes, 2005). Such networks have come to be known collectively as "cyberspace" and serve as enablers for network-centric warfare (NCW) or Network Enabled Operations (NEOps). Communication technologies play a pivotal role in multinational operations as nations seek to achieve situational awareness on a global scale (Endsley, 1995).

Network-centric warfare mandates the need to develop tools that will lead to global situation awareness, accelerate the decision cycle, and permit the synchronization of multinational forces (Alberts, Garstka, & Stein, 2000). The range of issues related to cyber security impacts all levels of military life and

operations. For the military, cyberspace affords the opportunity to distribute information and develop a common operational picture. However, cyberspace also presents opportunities for potential adversaries who seek to exploit flawed networks.

Cyber technologies have brought dramatic challenges in the way that each country's military will operate in the future. Issues related to information sharing within the command and control (C2) domain have been highlighted as critical to the success of military operations among joint forces and multinational operations (Christman & Postal, 2005). Effective C2 of multinational land force operations requires fully interoperable tools to support the exchange of information among nations.

Network-centric warfare is enabled by 21<sup>st</sup> century technology advances and will continue to permeate all domains, cultures and individuals on a global scale. Further, culture affects how, why, and when technology is used; conversely technology also has the power to transform culture. Modern cultures are filled with examples of the impact of the internet and the ways in which it influences our cultural concepts. Instant messaging and the internet have afforded soldiers the ability to transmit their observations around the world. The impact of these perspectives from the battlefield helps shape our understanding of the cultural consequences of warfare. News media from around the globe also report their unique views of the battlespace, thereby contributing to the shaping of each nation's perspective of world events as they unfold. Cyberspace serves in this way as a medium and tool for communicating information that can be used strategically and tactically to impact geopolitical events and shape cultures themselves.

As technology helps to forge cultural experiences, access to technologies, or the lack thereof (e.g., limited or restricted access to the internet), has its own unique set of consequences with regard to the development of a nation's perspective on global events. This means that we need to understand the ways in which technology transforms both cultural exchange and military collaboration.

Cyberspace represents an unconstrained domain of networks that will influence and shape warfare on land, in sea, in air, and in space. Technologies such as the internet, mobile telephones, and Blackberries may be used in an unofficial or official manner to communicate on a world-wide scale. The speed of information warfare requires, from both a defensive and offensive perspective, tools, such as multiple levels of intelligent agents, to manage the plethora of incoming information. In addition, there is a need to understand the impact of this type of unconstrained information sharing across and among cultures. As noted by Friedman (2006), the world is becoming "flatter" and the role of cyberspace will exert a profound influence and impact on all multinational missions (see also Barnett, 2004). Nations must explore the broader dimensions of working in a coalition environment, with partners such as the United Nations (UN), Partnerships for Peace (PfP) nations, allies, and non-government organizations, using cyber technologies in order to understand the demands of full spectrum multinational operations.

If the performance advantages provided by cyberspace and network-based operations are to be exploited, then, it will be necessary to achieve a level of trust among multinational colleagues in order to sustain effective operations. Information management tools within the cyberspace environment extend the ability of an individual or nation to achieve shared situational awareness (Endsley, 1995), generate increased combat power, empower decision makers, and achieve a greater degree of synchronicity in combat and non-combat operations. However, it will be important to remain mindful of the need to facilitate effective collaboration and avoid information overload by providing commanders and staff with accurate knowledge, in a timely manner, and by developing and maintaining trust between multinational partners.

This chapter will focus on the role of cultural influences on technology exchange and use, challenges in the new strategic landscape, and technological factors impacting global collaboration. It will be shown that nations must remain vigilant with regard to the impact of these factors as they will influence the ways in which nations will be able to work together.

## 7.2 THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN MULTINATIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS

Collaborative military teams are often united by mission and divided by their culture, military practices, and organizational structures. Thus, the multinational team must understand the cultural differences that may be at play in order to operate effectively. Cultural influences play a critical role within a range of operational contexts and impact on the ways in which technologies can be employed during multinational operations. While it is difficult to generalize about any group or population, multinational teams brought together to work in a coalition environment are often challenged by their diverse organizational structures, practices, and rules of engagement (see McKee, Chapter 2). For the military, a lack of cultural awareness and understanding may have negative consequences and potentially jeopardize military operations. Cultural barriers can disrupt communications, C2, and decision making (Klein, 2007). One potential consequence of these differences is that a technology from one nation may be incompatible with the technological or cultural practices of another nation (Klein, 2007). Therefore, it is essential that each nation's military organization address differences in cultural beliefs and practices as a means of providing insights into how multinational collaborative and coalition teams can effectively work together.

Lack of cultural awareness has been a major contributing factor in multinational security and military failures (McFate, 2005). Recently, the United States (US) Department of Defense attempted to address this lack of cultural awareness by embedding anthropologists within military units to inform and guide these units on cultural practices, organization, and social rules of engagement, as a means of supporting mission objectives. However, it remains to be demonstrated whether embedding civilian social scientists within military units is effective in achieving these aims (Shweder, 2007).

It cannot be assumed that technology will provide all of the answers to military challenges. Rather, an understanding of the culturally complex operational environment and its unique requirements is needed as the number of multinational missions continues to increase. For instance, cultural differences may impose constraints on multinational teams and often serve as impediments to the ways in which an individual soldier can participate, make decisions, act independently, and have access to information. Further, as coalition forces move into environments which are more culturally diverse, it is critical to achieve cultural awareness with regard to differences in perspectives, practices (e.g., gestures, behaviors) and the social rules of engagement within the local population. Cultural differences also reflect cognitive processes which capture unique perspectives and serve as a filter for interpreting interactions from outside the culture (Klein, 2007). There are unique heuristics which are culturally derived and serve to shape an individual's perspective and approach to problem solving (Klein, 2004; Masakowski & Hardinge, 1999; Peng & Nisbett, 1999).

As mentioned throughout this report, one of the principal research programs that has focused on the impact of differences in national values and cultures was first conducted by Hofstede (1980, 1983, 1984). One of the key constructs in this body of work is the discussion of four cognitive dimensions used to describe and classify national cultures. Hofstede identified individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity-femininity as cognitive dimensions that shape mental models, values, and culture and determine an individual's perspectives and behavior. Power distance refers to the extent to which members of a group expect and accept the uneven distribution of power (Hofstede, 1980). The importance of power distance can be seen in an analysis of multicultural work environments (Helmreich & Merritt, 1998). Multinational teams and operations may be negatively impacted by differences in power distance. Those with low power distance expect that their ideas will be evaluated based on merit, whereas those with high power distance maintain their leadership role and make decisions (Dorfman & Howell, 1988). The concept of power distance has implications for technology and multinational operations such that low power distance countries would tend to share their technology and expect that others would do the same. High power distance countries, on the other hand, would see sharing of technology as based on power, including national status, economic advantage, and military authority.

Multinational coalition forces which include high power distance countries do not often share technology or information equally.

Individualism versus collectivism is a cultural dimension related to whether the rights of the individual or the rights of the group take precedence (Hofstede, 1983). Coalition force members from countries high on individualism may exert an independent perspective on a coalition team which may function, instead, from a collective perspective. This potential clash of cultural identity may well impede their ability to work together, and, like power distance, may determine whether technology is shared in a collective mode or technology is used as a basis for competition.

There are also cultural differences with regard to the cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance. Individuals from nations high on uncertainty avoidance may often reduce stress by adhering to rules and structure and tend to resist change that can generate uncertainty (Lane & DiStefano, 1992). However, the distributed operational environment is a complex and uncertain one, and coalition teams with nation members high on uncertainty avoidance may find such an operational environment particularly threatening. Once again, such teams may be reluctant to share information or technology, due to concerns about security risks.

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) study, a major study that focused on understanding cultures and leadership around the world, provides evidence of the impact of cross-cultural issues that can help researchers to focus on the intersection between technology and culture. The GLOBE research program was established to focus on culture and leadership in 61 nations (House & Hanges, 2004; House et al., 1999). This study explored the interrelationship between cultural values and organizational leadership. The results have implications that extend to the multinational military setting, its organizational practices and leadership.

The GLOBE study attempted to answer questions regarding leaders' behaviors, attributes and organizational practices in the context of varying cultures and organizations. Cultural context provides a key for unlocking a culture's shared motives, values, identities, and interpretations of significant events. GLOBE researchers applied Hofstede's theory and examined societal-cultural values in terms of a leader's attributes; they determined that leaders who were consistent with the culture that they were operating in were successful in working with the team and its organization. This means, for example, that if the leadership style and way of perceiving the world of a coalition leader is not congruent with those of his or her team, then conflicts will arise (see Febbraro, Chapter 3). These will extend to how technology is used within the group.

Contemporary news headlines provide a glimpse of the impact of cultural biases and perspectives on multinational collaboration. Recently, there has been a great deal of dispute over the possibility of establishing a missile defence system in the Czech Republic (BBC, 2008). Russia has challenged the motivation surrounding this defence strategy and perceives it as a threat to its security and stability. Russians are experiencing a level of uncertainty with regard to the change in their strategic environment. Similarly, some citizens of the Czech Republic have objected to this strategic plan. The debate between these nations serves as an example of the importance of understanding culture in that both nations have their own views of events based on their threshold for uncertainty, the impact of power distance, and their respective cultural perspectives, as these events impact each nation's security strategy. Each culture interprets world events, especially those within their geographic boundaries, within the context of their cultural history. Whether threats are real or perceived, nations form their security strategies within the context of their respective nation's history and culture. What this means is that nations must understand the sociocultural environment in which technologies will be employed, as culture affects how, when, and where technology will be employed successfully in multinational operations.

As mentioned earlier, team members are increasingly being challenged by complex environments, which may include the incorporation of advanced technologies. It would therefore be helpful to identify

cultural differences in cognition and other potential cultural barriers in order to deal with the differences effectively and forge a more efficient team. As will be discussed, the use of advanced technologies may be one way of dealing with that complex environment.

### **7.3 COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

Communication technologies can contribute significantly to the success of multinational missions. It is, therefore, critical to select technologies that will facilitate communication and collaboration among nations.

Tools that would enhance communication and cooperation among teams would be of value in ensuring effective operations. Technologies have been developed to assist in the development of language skills, such as the US Army's Phraselator. The phrase-based translation concept was originally developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Linguistic capabilities were highlighted by the military during Operation Enduring Freedom and have given rise to new developments in the language translation capabilities required for diverse cultural missions. The US Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program similarly highlights the need to achieve language skills as well as regional expertise.

However, there is a critical need for tools for those commanders who must function within the shared C2 environment. For example, the Coalition Chat Line (CCL) was developed to provide a C2 capability to support coalition forces during operations such as Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The CCL works on a laptop computer and translates text to text, thus providing a capability that allows coalition partners to communicate in a chat environment in real time (Campbell & Hillenbrand, 2005). Today, this technology continues to support multinational missions and to enable commanders to communicate with each other in real time and in their native language. As such, it contributes to the successful collaboration of leaders and teams in the context of multinational operations, as well as the achievement of situational awareness and a common understanding of the operational environment.

### **7.4 TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MULTINATIONAL MILITARY OPERATIONS**

One of the most significant challenges of multinational military operations is training. Yet, training is vital to the success of multinational operations. Unfortunately there is not always an opportunity for forces from differing nations to train together; therefore, there is a need for training tools that will facilitate and enable multinational teams to work effectively in culturally disparate environments. Technologies such as virtual environments, gaming, and simulated training systems provide a unique opportunity for multinational teams to learn to cooperate and collaborate.

To address this training challenge, the US Army has developed a virtual training system to prepare officers to interact with diverse cultures and communicate effectively within such an operational environment. Virtual reality training technologies afford individuals an opportunity to learn and to rehearse scenarios prior to deployment. This training provides cultural experience based on virtual interactions with the population, which, in turn, facilitates effective decision making and leadership. Such exercises prior to deployment are critical for preparing teams to work together in a multinational operation.

Training with other nations affords military personnel the opportunity to communicate their ideas and learn from each other how to forge a cohesive multinational force team. Initiatives such as the US Joint National Training Capability and the US Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM, 2007) provide opportunities for developing capabilities in support of multinational missions. It is essential for military personnel to be trained to be culturally aware and sensitive to the ways in which they and their communications are perceived by other cultures (Garfield, 2006). The US Joint National Training Capability provides a means

to train joint forces using a live, virtual, and constructive training environment. This program spearheads the transformation in joint training by providing realistic combat training and performance feedback that supports joint and multinational operations. Participants can gain global net-centric warfare experience and enhance their performance capabilities within the simulated environment (USJFCOM, 2007).

Technologies enable live and virtual test environments and mission rehearsal by linking training, C2, and simulation centers around the globe. This capability affords partners an opportunity to participate in the training exercises necessary for deploying with coalition partners and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members in multinational exercises and humanitarian and peacekeeping missions. The goal is to have the capability to train any audience by linking C2, training facilities, ranges, and simulation centers throughout the world (USJFCOM, 2007).

Multinational military teams need to identify cultural characteristics that affect team building and team performance. On this basis they may be able to develop innovative, flexible, and responsive plans and actions to dynamically:

- a) Assess current and potential roles that others play in interactions;
- b) Establish beneficial roles in these interactions; and
- c) Develop an effective strategy in critical decision making that will ensure mission success.

Further, tools and technologies for cultural training will facilitate enhanced situational awareness and effective decision making among individuals operating within distributed teams. Training and education tools must be developed to address operational requirements of the multinational mission team, within which trust and security is often divided along cultural lines.

Training in cultural awareness and an understanding of cultural differences in language, communication style, and general cultural norms is important to the development of a cohesive multinational force (see Riedel, Chapter 6). Military personnel working within multicultural teams attempt to solve many complex problems with limited time and under severe resource constraints. In general, the diverse cultural environment of each mission requires that tools that will support the flow of information to all partners operating within the distributed environment are provided. To effectively address these challenges, decision makers require training and tools for achieving a cultural understanding and for developing strategies for decision making in culturally disparate operational environments.

Multinational military forces, whose membership shifts from mission to mission, are challenged by their cultural differences as they attempt to develop a cohesive team. Each military person approaches the situation from his or her unique cultural perspective, experience, and set of beliefs (Lindgren & Smith, 2006). Different languages, practices, and rules of engagement further impact the ability of the multinational team to form an identity as one team. While the level of cultural training has increased significantly since the Gulf and Iraq Wars, there continue to be important challenges as the long-term consequences of culturally contingent interactions, communication and behavior are often underestimated.

Indeed, in general terms, national groups differ in their thinking and perceptions. People approach problems, develop strategies, and communicate their ideas within the context of their respective cultural experiences and identities (Klein, 2005). These differences have implications for technology transfer, multinational collaboration, and military operations. Barriers to cooperation and trust emerge in multinational operations where teams are divided by their national cultures, hierarchies, and practices. Therefore, it is critical to provide training for the individuals who will participate in multinational operations so that they might acquire an understanding of these differences and gain insights that will serve to support their performance within a culturally diverse environment. It is important to facilitate the ability of the national components of a multinational team to work together effectively to achieve a shared understanding of problems and solutions so that they may move forward in a self-synchronizing manner.

## 7.5 DECISION MAKING AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Lindgren and Smith (2006) describe the impact of culture on C2 decision making in a multinational team that was organized by the UN. The On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC) was created by the UN to provide a system for coordinating and directing the activities of an international relief effort. It provided a framework for humanitarian team workers to coordinate their activities. Representatives from culturally diverse backgrounds were brought together to coordinate humanitarian relief efforts and were challenged by the differences among team members from culturally disparate backgrounds.

Research has shown how cultural background influences and shapes the way that people think, act, and relate (Masakowski & Hardinge, 1999). Cultural heritage, education, and experience also serve as the framework for identifying problems and solutions (i.e., sensemaking) that serves as the foundation for future interactions and cooperative endeavors (Klein, 2000). Most of our decisions are based on our sensemaking. Sensemaking refers to the process by which individuals attempt to understand what is happening in a given situation (Klein, 2007). People want to understand their environment and the relationships among individuals, events, and actions. Once people have made sense of events they usually know how they want to act or react – they can make a decision by recognizing the option they want to pursue. When we cannot make sense of a situation, we risk having to select among options that may not be successful as we are often relying on others to inform our decision making.

Multinational team members who differ in their cognition and perception of events, that is, their sensemaking, face significant cultural challenges. These differences have implications for technology transfer, multinational commerce, and military cooperation (Klein, 2005). For example, issues of trust often emerge as a result of differences in military cultures, hierarchies, and practices. Developing a common operational picture is not easily achieved among team members who differ in their sensemaking framework and do not have a shared understanding of their environment. As discussed earlier, technology can provide support across and among team members in the decision-making processes.

## 7.6 CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

One of the key challenges that all nations face in the strategic landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is global security. Nations must develop policies that enable them to reach across the globe and work collaboratively if they are to obtain global security. Advances in technology may well afford an increase in information; however, the issue of uncertainty will continue to impact operational success. Specifically, technologies such as sensors, satellites, systems, autonomous unmanned vehicles, and intelligent agent networks will continue to contribute toward the development of an operational picture. The success of the multinational mission can only be realized by a team's ability to respond accurately and effectively. Issues related to information overload serve as a fog in the battlespace and prevent decision makers from functioning effectively. Technology can and should provide a means of verification and validation in the operational environment where teams are distributed and multicultural.

Trust is another significant challenge in the net-centric environment in which team members are not only distributed but in which they also can participate anonymously. Teamwork is only achieved when members trust each other and establish a relationship as they work together (Salas, Sims, & Burke, 2005). Distributed collaboration among multinational teams can be a challenge in developing trusting relationships and working together to achieve a common understanding of the environment.

Constraints imposed by technologies or lack thereof must also be considered. Nations that lack access to technologies and that are required to support collaborative planning will fail to achieve full collaborative partnership. Nations require tools and technologies that address security and trust issues related to sharing information within the operational environment. It is important to implement technologies that can provide

measures to evaluate the information and support trust among collaborators, as well as tools to facilitate information sharing in a distributed environment.

Today's operational environment challenges traditional approaches and mandates a nation's need to sustain access to information that will facilitate rapid response to potential threats in an asymmetric warfare environment as well as during humanitarian crises. Catastrophic events, whether these are natural disasters, or nuclear, economic or ecological warfare, may negatively impact global security and stability for generations. The ability to respond quickly and to adapt to any situation is critical to a mission's success, regardless of whether it is military or humanitarian.

However, the intent to share is sometimes out of step with a nation's ability to share information given issues related to formatting and legacy systems, which raise interoperability issues. Interoperability plays a fundamental role in the exchange of information in joint and coalition operations. Technological interoperability has often been the focus of research, workshops, and military operations as this topic presents numerous challenges in the field (Masakowski, Hess, & White, 2001). However, while there has been a great deal of focus on this topic, other aspects of interoperability need to be examined, including culture, organizational structure, procedures and training, which similarly exert significant influence on interactions between and among military forces (Clark & Moon, 2001). As they attempt to work together using technology, coalition forces often face cultural, organizational, and interoperability issues that often present barriers to successful operations. In order to address these issues, models such as the Levels of Information Systems Interoperability (LISI) model and the Organizational Interoperability Maturity (OIM) model have been developed to provide a framework for evaluating both the technological and organizational issues related to coalition and joint operations (Clark & Moon, 2001).

In coalition operations, effective communications and sharing of information serve as the framework for C2. Recently, the Multilateral Interoperability Program (MIP) has been cited by the US Institute for Defense and Government Advancement (IDGA) as an outstanding coalition partner in the advancement of network-centric warfare (2007). Specifically, this program instantiates a multinational C2 system for coalition partnerships and supports a shared understanding of exchanged digital C2 information. The MIP program is comprised of member nations that have acceded to the requirements of the baseline data model and information exchange mechanisms developed by working groups and agreed upon by participating nations (Christman & Postal, 2005). The MIP program highlights the benefits of developing tools for distributing information to support a shared understanding of a situation, and illustrates the need to develop tools that will support the multinational operational environment. Although the MIP has made significant strides in setting standards for the development of technologies to support the sharing of information among coalition nations, this program does not resolve all of the communication challenges but serves as a critical first step that will facilitate communication and the distribution of information among NATO nations. It lays the foundation for interoperability and future technologies that will enable collaboration in support of multinational missions.

Another issue that must be mentioned pertains to national differences in policies regarding the ability to share information within the context of national sovereignty rights and security strategies, as nations work toward a common goal. Achieving a common operational picture is often hindered by each nation's rules of engagement, sovereignty rights, and rules for the distribution of information.

The paradox of this objective, however, is that as each nation places its information in the environment to foster collaboration and cooperation, that information provides an opportunity for exploitation by potential adversaries. Each nation must then address its unique security requirements as it engages in the global environment to ensure its security strategies and objectives. However, as mentioned, nations must still develop policies that enable them to reach across the globe and work collaboratively, if they are to achieve global security.



## 7.7 CHALLENGES FOR TECHNOLOGY

Global connectivity enables people to form partnerships and strengthen alliances by sharing technologies and information that will offer support during times of crises and war and help to preserve the peace. The challenge for all nations will continue, however, as they strive to sustain security within their borders and also contribute to global security. Technology will continue to play a critical role in global maritime, land, and air security, national security, and multinational operations in the future. As situations and crises emerge, visualization tools will play a pivotal role in a nation's ability to respond collaboratively. Technologies must be designed to assist decision makers to focus on critical information required to conduct operations.

In the future, networks of nodes and intelligent agents will be linked to support the decision maker in complex situations. Systems with flexible architecture will enable high level collaboration and augmented decision making for large-scale complex operations. Technology will provide situational cueing and the correlation of diverse data streams into a comprehensible, multimodal "big picture" that will empower the decision maker. Thus, the ability to respond to operational demands will depend in large part on the development of technologies that will enable multinational co-operation. However, that technology by itself is not the solution. Rather technology should be used to support the human decision maker in the conduct of effective multinational missions. Attention thus should be focused on the intersection between technology and culture as they contribute to successful multinational military operations.

## 7.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the critical issues related to technology and its role in shaping multinational military operations. Technology has advanced to support distributed, collaborative, and networked systems. However, it is worth repeating that technology by itself is not the solution. Rather, we must also address the role of the human and cultural differences in the implementation of these technologies. The material presented in this report discusses the costs and benefits of technology and some of the ways in which the intersection of culture and technology in the 21st century may be addressed.

The effectiveness of multinational military missions will be forged by each nation's commitment toward developing the doctrine and policies necessary to support information management and network capabilities. Advances in technology will continue to support multinational operations by facilitating information sharing, situational awareness, and distributed C2. However, national doctrine, policies, and strategies must be generated to guide the ways in which nations may share technologies and information, and determine a path for collaboration and cooperation. Nations must further assess trade-offs between their nation's security policies and the level of information sharing that will be allowed as they evaluate the benefit of investing in technologies to support their participation in multinational missions.

The breadth and extent of this new global environment presents challenges for multinational missions at the operational and tactical level. The ability to achieve connectivity and interoperability is the underpinning of each nation's challenge to achieve and sustain global situational awareness. Global connectivity enables the strengthening of alliances by sharing information that enables nations to work cooperatively and act in a coordinated manner. Multinational teams must achieve a coordinated response to the challenges that will be presented by natural disasters and by threats to global security.

Policies, doctrine and technology must be developed in synchrony in this demanding information environment. National strategies are necessary to support information sharing required to meet the demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century multinational missions. There is a need to transform capabilities and address the requirements for operating in a global, netted operational environment.

Technology provides a means for sharing information and achieving a common understanding among decision makers from all cultures. Network-centric warfare may be enabled by technological advances but the human element remains a critical component of any distributed C2 environment. Sensitivity to cultural differences must be a prerequisite toward understanding the ways in which technology can be used in multinational military operations.

National and international policies must be developed to establish trust and build relationships to support information sharing within the distributed collaborative environment. Trust is an essential component of the distributed collaborative operational environment. It is only through an understanding of the impact of cultural differences that progress can be made towards achieving a secure environment for sharing information.

Lastly, this discussion is only a first step toward identifying gaps in international policies for sharing information. It presents an opportunity for the reader to draw inferences regarding the implications of using technology within culturally disparate settings and offers challenges that merit further investigation.

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## **Chapter 8 – SOCIETAL FACTORS**

by

**Phyllis Browne**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

This report has looked at important cultural dimensions of a wide range of factors that impact multinational military operations. A number of issues, however, do not fall neatly within the parameters of the other chapters. This chapter will examine some of these topics under the general heading of “societal factors.” In particular, this chapter will explore the extent to which societal factors, which are shaped by culture, may influence a national population’s perceptions of military actions, which in turn may impact the participation and nature of involvement of some contingents in multinational military operations. Specifically, the chapter will address the following issues:

- a) The impact of conscripted as opposed to professional militaries within multinational, intercultural operations;
- b) Cross-national differences in casualty tolerance; and
- c) Differing public opinions across nations about military operations in general.

It will be argued that any or all of these societal-cultural factors may pose a particular threat to multinational military operations in a multicultural context. It is asserted that due to the ideological shift of warfare since the end of the Cold War and the increasing multinational nature of the response, intercultural factors will play a significant role in operational effectiveness and mission success or failure.

In a multinational military operation the societal factor of ideology is perhaps the lever that will drive the cohesiveness and sense of purpose among contingents. Ideology has been defined as a system of ideas or way of thinking relating to politics, society or to the conduct of a class or group (Barber, 2004). Ideology, often implicit, is used to justify actions, and tends to be maintained regardless of the course of events. To a large extent, nations that share the same ideology are able to function together, particularly in a multinational military context, and perhaps more so when they are driven by the same purpose. However, some areas of ideology may vary between nations and can become problematic in multinational military operations.

When individual national militaries converge under the banner of a multinational military force, whether it is under North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or the United Nations (UN), they assume additional authority and responsibility in their efforts to achieve operational effectiveness with the aggregate efforts of a variety of individuated units. Due to the level of diversity among these national contingents, effective leadership becomes critical, and leaders and commanders need to build teams that are effective (see Febraro, Chapter 3). Trust becomes of utmost importance for the leader and the multinational team. As mentioned by Dzvonik (Chapter 5), a challenge is to be able to build trust across contingents and maintain that trust. Building and maintaining trust, particularly in a multinational force, is a fundamental cornerstone of multinational cooperation and teamwork (see also van Vliet & van Amelsfoort, Chapter 4). It has become increasingly common for military training and preparation to have a cross-cultural and multinational component that will take into consideration the “norms, customs and traditions of these other nations and peoples and understand that each has something valuable to offer” (Department of National Defence, 2007, p. 88). Doll and Metz (1993) assert that cooperation – between military services, between military and non-military agencies, between government and nongovernment organizations, and among nations – may not guarantee success in an operation, but its absence nearly always assures failure.

This chapter will focus on conscripted versus professional militaries, casualty tolerance, and public opinion as key areas in which cross-national or cross-cultural differences may emerge in a multinational military operation. The chapter will also focus on the ways in which these key areas may affect military operations within a multinational context and the potential impact of each of these key factors on operations. This will be presented primarily from Canadian and American research perspectives but where possible, will incorporate information regarding other countries for comparative purposes. This will be followed by a concluding discussion.

## **8.2 CONSCRIPTED VERSUS PROFESSIONAL MILITARIES**

The debate over conscription and voluntary military service seems to hinge on the overarching concept of values. A nation's policy regarding military service will be dictated or influenced by its political and economic systems, which in turn will reflect, to a large degree, the value system of that nation. For example, the debate in the United States (US) has swung to both extremes of the pendulum: military service as dictated by the government (through conscription), and military service as decided upon by the individual (in an all-volunteer force context). Regardless of the perspective that predominates, or whether there is a compromise between the two, the ultimate goal is to generate the nation's military human resources capability to protect its national interests. Kestnbaum (2000) contends that this interrelationship between citizen and state characterizes the concept of citizen service, the origins of which are linked to World Wars I and II and the onset of the all-volunteer force (in the US) in 1973. The duty to serve is perceived by some young military personnel in the US and Canada, and indeed elsewhere, as a civic duty and a demonstration of patriotism, which, one may contend, are both value-driven. It was widely reported in the American media after 9/11, for instance, that young men and women in the US were signing up for the military as the "right thing to do" to protect their country from terrorist attacks. In other words, they were volunteering to serve.

In terms of conscription, there seems to be conflict between principles and values in determining whether the state has the right to order its citizens to perform military service during wartime or in response to crisis (through conscription), or whether individuals have the right to decide whether or not they want to volunteer for military service, as is currently the case in Canada and the US. As a third option, some nations (e.g., Israel), impose obligatory service for all citizens when they attain the age of 18 years of age, and more typically in other countries, for males within a certain age range (e.g., in Austria, between the ages of 18 and 35), as a matter of national policy during peacetime. There are a number of issues associated with each approach to military service. In the first instance, if the state can order or conscript its citizens into military service, then the question arises as to the impact of conscription on commitment, loyalty, teamwork, cohesion, and ultimately, effectiveness within a national military. Furthermore, such issues may become even more complex and may have even greater repercussions within the context of a multinational force. For example, if some nations within a multinational force adopt conscription, while others do not, this could lead to a decline in unit cohesion (Winslow, 1999; see also McKee, Chapter 2). Loyalty, integrity, and commitment are factors of military socialization that can negatively impact a unit if there is a significant discrepancy among individual national contingents' evaluations of their involvement and their purpose.

Furthermore, the differences within a multinational force can be compounded by differences within national contingents, as in the case of Germany, in which conscription is practiced for males and volunteerism is practiced for females. Italy practiced conscription for males until the end of 2004 and since then, it has relied on professional volunteer troops comprising both males and females to make up its military force. The extent to which culture-based problems could penetrate a multinational force based solely on the practices of conscripted versus volunteer (or professional) military service is heightened by the fact that numerous countries that participate in multinational forces have adopted each approach.

As mentioned, the option of an all-volunteer force, like conscription, raises the issue of satisfying the human resources requirements for an effective military. Further, when individuals volunteer for military service, it is generally expected of them that there will be a commitment, a sense of loyalty, camaraderie, a willingness to be part of the team, and ultimately a desire to contribute to the effectiveness of the military operation. However, once again, the question arises as to what impact there may be within a multinational force if some of the contingent nations have an all-volunteer force, while others have conscription, or some form of obligatory military service. For example, Denmark requires a minimum service of 4 months and a maximum of 1 year and is among 26 nations with a maximum of 1 year or less. Some nations require service for longer than 18 months (e.g., North Korea, Iran, and Egypt), and others have a limited service of 18 months (e.g., Ukraine and Columbia). Others practise selective conscription (e.g., China, Indonesia and Mexico) and still other nations practise a combination of compulsory and voluntary service (e.g., Singapore, South Korea, Bermuda, and Kuwait). The US (e.g., during the Korean and Vietnam Wars) and Canada (during the Second World War) have also engaged in a combination of both types of service. The diversity in economic and social conditions of individual national contingents, whether conscripted or from all-volunteer forces, may be problematic for the commander and for mission success, which has been acknowledged among military contingents internationally. In outlining lessons learned from Somalia operations with multinational contingents under the aegis of the UN, for instance, Allard (1995) suggests that because multinational forces are ad hoc coalitions of the willing, planners must recognize the reduced tempo with which a coalition force conducts peace operations. Allard further cautioned that different national capabilities and international differences (e.g., related to conscripted vs. professional militaries) may also affect both the planning and the reality of peace operations.

Segal and Tiggie (1996) identified five social trends in American society that, in the mid-20th century, reached a turning point and challenged the relationship between the individual and the state, as well as the nature of the American military organization, with implications for compulsory versus voluntary military service. He identified these trends systematically as:

- a) A movement away from the “large force-in-being” with the capability to respond to full-scale war at any time;
- b) The ideological shift from missions of war to missions of peacekeeping or fighting small wars as a response to technological change;
- c) A shift in focus from national interests to individual benefits and the welfare state;
- d) The ongoing demand in industrialized societies for democratic growth and the expansion of citizens’ rights (e.g., all-volunteer military vs. conscripted military); and
- e) The implications of the “baby boom generation” and their limited family size, leading to a potential shortage of youth for military service.

The social trends that Segal and Tiggie (1996) identified are all related to the conclusion of the Cold War, the change in ideologies that encompassed the recognition of an emerging global village, and the interdependence of nations, the global division of labour, and the increasing reliance on multinational forces to buttress challenges to world peace. According to Segal and Tiggie, the ultimate shift brought about by these social trends (except, perhaps, the trend towards smaller family size and a potential shortage of youth for military service) pointed directly to a movement away from making war, to one of making peace at the international level and, importantly, to the reliance on developing military capability through the all-volunteer method.

Moskos (2001) used the institutional/occupational paradigm to explain the emerging problems of recruitment and retention in the context of an all-volunteer military. An institution, according to Moskos, attains its legitimacy from its values, norms, and purpose, which place the institution above and beyond the self-interest of the individual for a presumed “higher good.” Members of the institution are regarded as responding to a calling that separates them from the rest of society. In the case of the military,

role commitment is diffused to coincide with the expectation of performing tasks as opposed to being limited to specific specialties. In terms of compensation, Moskos explained that whereas the civilian sector is governed by marketability, compensation in the military institution is determined by rank and seniority. However, each of these characteristics of the military institution may make recruitment and retention a challenge in the context of an all-volunteer force. Further complicating the situation for countries such as Australia, the US, and Canada are the changing characteristics of labour markets aided by the retirement of the baby-boom generation and the escalating levels of social differentiation and ethno-cultural diversity (Leuprecht, 2006).

Despite these potential challenges, militaries in most industrialized countries generally consist of all-volunteer personnel who have been drawn to the military for a variety of reasons, the most salient of which, presumably, is patriotism. There are, however, other motivating factors that may draw individuals to military service, including personal gain in terms of personal development, adventure, educational opportunities, and job security. In the case of Canada, for instance, there is evidence to suggest that some enrollees at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) are attracted by the availability of a subsidized quality education, by the discipline, and by the adventure that may come with officer training after graduation (Browne, 2006). This appears to be the case in spite of the fact that graduates are required to serve an obligatory period of 5 years of service in the Canadian Forces (CF) after graduation (Browne, 2006). Nevertheless, the psychology behind this arrangement is that although the officer cadet may have the intention of leaving the CF after the obligatory 5 years, it is generally hoped that socialization, training, and the adventure associated with the military profession will convince them that the military is indeed a noble career and so entice them to stay. Nevertheless, this is not to suggest that young men and women are consistently lining up to join the military. Leuprecht (2006) contends that with the aging baby-boom generation and the steady decline in birth rate that has been observed for approximately the past 50 years, labor force requirements and military enrolments in Canada will have to depend on increased immigration levels. In a multinational force context, young officers in component national militaries will have had very different experiences, particularly those officers from countries in which the economy can neither support such benefits nor such opportunities. Such differences among contingent nations could easily threaten group cohesion and morale, and ultimately, operational effectiveness.

In contrast to the institutional model, in which patriotism may play a strong role, Moskos (2001) stated that the legitimacy of an occupation in the civilian sector is derived from the market forces of supply and demand. Any effort to utilize such labor market analyses to reclassify a military, for instance, would be premised on the core assumptions of cost-effectiveness and, in addition, would be more focused on monetary compensation and a parallel compensatory relationship between the skill differences of individual service members. Additionally, unlike the institutional concept, the occupational model serves self-interest and not a presumed “higher good” (although, as seen earlier, civilian values such as job security are also factors in military recruitment and retention). Still, the econometric approach for analyzing the military, according to Moskos, downplays the noneconomic and value dimensions of military institutions. Since the econometric approach focuses on that which is measurable, it ignores the inherent qualities of the military, such as duty, honour, country before self, courage, and integrity. Once again, the implications of the occupational model, or civilianization of the military, may be particularly acute in the context of an all-volunteer force.

Moskos (2001) made further differentiations between the military institution and civilian occupation and indicated the impact of each model on its members. For the conventional military, membership, in spite of differentiation of tasks, is of utmost importance, whereas for civilians in an occupation, identity hinges on similarity of work, regardless of the organization in which it takes place. Perhaps this distinction is indicative of the role of military ethos and the commonality of purpose which, for the most part, exists across nations and militaries (see Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari, 1999, on the notion of a common “military culture”). Consequently, in the context of multinational military forces, membership, not tasks, facilitates the harmonization of a multiplicity of military contingents and can enhance military effectiveness.



However, in spite of this harmonization, Soeters' (1997) study of the value orientations of 13 military academies indicated the important role that culture, and in particular, the compatibility of the cultures involved, can play in the formation of multinational military organizations. Soeters also pointed out that some national cultural combinations (e.g., Dutch/English or Dutch/German) are more harmonious than others (e.g. Norwegian/Italian). Implicit in this is the notion that the more distinct the cultural features among multinational contingents, the greater the likelihood of conflict, tension, and low morale within and between units and contingents. Soeters warned that insufficient attention to the role of culture, therefore, may result in mission failure, particularly in multicultural contexts.

Moskos' (2001) institution/occupation model in the 1970s predicted a number of trends that have since developed, in part due to the political and social changes that have taken place, particularly the collapse of the Soviet Union. With the end of the Cold War came a dramatic shift from mass conscript militaries throughout Western Europe to volunteer forces (Moskos, 2001). Indeed, the "post-modern military," that is, the military that has emerged since the end of the Cold War and that has been shaped by volunteerism and civilian societal trends (particularly technological and cultural change), seems more integrated with civilian society than its predecessors prior to and during the Cold War period. Moskos further described fundamental changes to military operations, including the increasing reliance on multinational forces whose legitimacy is sanctioned by authorities external to the nation-state. It is the onset of these changes that has given impetus to the development of several current trends, described by Moskos as: perceived threat, changes in force structure, the dominant military professional, compensation, media relations, civilian employees, the role of women, the spouse and the military community, and sexual orientation in terms of gays and lesbians in the military. Although some of these trends have been dealt with elsewhere (see McKee, Chapter 2), a brief discussion of each trend will follow below.

*Perceived threat* may be defined in the contemporary context as interstate violence as perpetrated by, for example, a number of former Soviet and African states, constructed on the premise of "ethnic cleansing" or ethnic struggles, respectively. Since the terrorist attack on the US on September 11, 2001, perceived threat now seems to include a threat to world peace. Consequently, military institutions now train to engage in operations other than war, which are usually commanded under the structure of multinational forces and authorized by international organizations such as the UN or NATO. This increasingly popular military structure signals a change from the state-to-state military operations of the past. Military operations in the current security environment are constructed according to a group-to-state design that often involves many nation-states, in terms of physical attack and in terms of physical response and support. Hence, there is an increasing dependence on multinational forces in response to unconventional warfare, which generates a more urgent need for effective intercultural relations in order to achieve mission success within the context of a multinational force structure.

*Force structure*, according to Moskos (2001), changes as the nature of the perceived threat changes. The historical dependence on large conscripted forces shifted to a large standing army of conscripts, as Moskos describes it, in the US during the Cold War period. Subsequently in 1973, in response to opposition to the Vietnam War, conscription was replaced with an all-volunteer force, and a more professional structure was injected into the US military. The end of the Cold War, however, seemed to have reduced the urgency of a large military and a reduction in size during the 1990s appeared to be adequate to meet needs. The Canadian military during the 1990s experienced a similar reduction in its force strength, which was also traceable to the end of the Cold War.

The *dominant military professional*, Moskos' (2001) third identified trend, relates to the change in the type of soldier of the past to the more contemporary professionally versatile soldier. The new professional mindset still has the warrior aspect of soldiering inculcated but is part of an officer corps that is more skilled in diplomacy, media relations and international diplomacy. Importantly, these skills facilitate the medium through which a member of the military officer corps can transfer and adapt to a position in the military elite class.

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*Compensation*, as one of the new trends, has undergone drastic change over the years. Moskos (2001) indicates that there is a noticeable difference in compensation for the drafted armed forces compared to the all-volunteer force. Moskos points out that in 1999 dollars, the per capita cost in 1964 (i.e., the last year of the peacetime draft) of an active-duty member who was single was \$29,140 per year. In 2000, compensation (plus allowances) for a private was \$23,666 per year. Further emphasizing his point, Moskos explains that during the draft years, a master sergeant made seven times more than a private, and that in 2000, the comparative difference had decreased to only twice as much. Consequently, according to Moskos, the all-volunteer force is less expensive in terms of compensation and benefits than was the conscripted armed force.

Moskos (2001) describes *media relations with the military* in conventional wartime as a time when the media was an integrated element of the military, to the point where media personnel wore military uniforms. These relations have drastically changed to the point where the media has become an independent entity that usually establishes itself somewhere in close proximity to the theater of operations, even before the military arrives. This change in relationship and independence has shifted control of military news from the military to the now independent media, where the immediacy of news reporting is facilitated by new technologies. Moskos also suggests that there is a dramatic difference between the militaries of the Cold War and post-Cold War periods, the first of which has generally provided the context for many military films depicting positive images of the military as opposed to the negative images associated with today's American military, in particular.

The increasing role of *civilian employees* in the military is a trend that is emerging as a consequence of low-level jobs being transferred from the military to civilian employees, thus freeing up military personnel for other responsibilities. Moskos (2001) asserts that the integration of civilian employees is a reflection of the increasing reliance of the military on more technologically complex weapon systems, and the concomitant need for associated experts. In addition, much of the logistics responsibilities are contracted out to civilian employees who have become very involved in military functions.

*Women's role in the US military* is another trend identified by Moskos (2001), who utilizes it to highlight developing trends in contemporary armed services. As a microcosm of the larger society, the integration of women in the military is consistent with changing patterns in the labor force, where women are consistently found in more non-traditional roles and in some cases functioning at increasingly higher levels. Although the US has limitations regarding the roles that women can perform in the military, all positions in the Canadian military, including the combat arms, have been open to women since 2001, when the last restriction (to service on submarines) was removed (Davis & McKee, 2004). In other nations, particularly where compulsory service is mandated (e.g., Israel), gender integration has been more fully realized than in, for example, the US case.

Moskos (2001) highlights *spouse and military community* as a trend that impacts the military. In the 1950s the military was an organization in which the young drafted men were, for the most part, unmarried. This trend significantly turned around with the all-volunteer force where soldiers are more likely to be married compared to their civilian counterparts, resulting in budgetary concerns in terms of housing and medical expenses, particularly for male commissioned officers where membership included wife and family. This extension perhaps carried with it expectations for the wife to undertake a role in military social functions but this seems to be changing as female spouses are increasingly taking employment outside the home.

*Homosexuality in the military* is one of Moskos's (2001) trends that is still the subject of some debate in the US context. Embedded in the US policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is the suggestion that with some level of discretion gays and lesbians can be part of the US military, but they must not be open about their sexual orientation. This suggests that the US military lags behind the wider US society in which homosexuals may be more open about their sexual orientation; and indeed in Canada and other nations

(e.g., the United Kingdom) homosexuality is relatively more accepted in both the military and the wider society.

The last trend that Moskos identifies concerns *postmodernism and the military*. He provides evidence to suggest that postmodernism has arrived, so to speak, at the military's doorstep. Moskos looks at postmodern developments such as the US Army contracting a consultant to replace the "masculinist vision" with an "ungendered vision" of military culture, the 1997 discharge of a female pilot from the Air Force for an adulterous affair with the civilian husband of an airwoman, and other charges relating to insubordination and making false statements. As one aspect of postmodernism, Moskos points to acknowledgement of religious diversity where Native American Indians were allowed to use the peyote plant in religious services. These are only some indications of the postmodern trends that have caught up with the military and that have brought it more in tandem with the wider society.

As discussed earlier, the post-Cold War context has had significant implications for conscription. Countries such as the US, France and Australia, for example, have had to some extent adopted and enforced policies of conscription at some point during their history. Canada, on the other hand, has never adopted conscription in the true sense. Canada has, during times of war, enlisted personnel to serve at home as a replacement for military personnel deployed overseas to participate in war. However, due to the small size of their militaries, countries such as Australia and Canada will not likely have the capacity or resources to deploy simultaneously large contingents of military forces to numerous countries, as has been the case with the US. This was borne out in the case of Australia in the 1990s when there was some concern about the strain that the deployment to East Timor had created for the Australian Regular Army (Brown, 1999). In the 1990s conscription was suggested in Australia to address the potential shortage of service personnel. Brown points out that there were important deterrents against this, however, including the economic cost in terms of salary and the surplus of personnel that this policy would have generated if, for instance, all 18-year-olds had to serve 2 years of obligatory service. Even selective conscription, according to Brown, would have augmented the Regular Army by approximately 35,000, or 11,000 more than capacity. To avoid the challenges of such a surplus, voluntary enlistment for the Regular Army, rather than conscription, was utilized.

Thus, the social system from which a military force is derived, including its values, culture, and ideology, determines to a large degree the size of a military force and its method of mobilization. Such factors also shape the relationship that exists between a society and its military. Moreover, the ideological cultures from which the contingents in a multinational force are derived will have implications for the effectiveness of multinational military operations. While members from all-volunteer cultures may join their respective militaries out of a personal willingness to participate, members from conscripted cultures, as the term suggests, are compelled to enlist. This could have enormous consequences in terms of loyalty, truth, duty, honour, and all the other values that shape military ethos, both within and among nations in a multinational force. Thus, as discussed earlier, the all-volunteer military that has become popular since the end of the Cold War may experience some cultural challenges when functioning under a multinational force in which conscripted military contingents are also participating. Similarly, if national contingents that are derived from cultures that enforce conscription must function with contingents from cultures that have all-volunteer militaries, then unit performance may be jeopardized due to the perceived inherent conflict in the concepts of conscription and all-volunteer service. As will be discussed in the next section of this chapter, it is this cultural conflict that could play a significant role in the extent to which the public will accept and tolerate casualties in military operations.

### **8.3 CASUALTY TOLERANCE**

As with conscription and other military related areas, national cultural differences can lead to differences in attitudes regarding casualties. Smith (2005) refers to attitudes towards casualties (either casualty aversion or casualty tolerance) as the "casualty factor" and contends that concern over casualties,

particularly in democratic societies, has grown so strong that it plays a vital role in the decision making of nations regarding whether to curtail or initiate military action or to participate as part of a multinational coalition or alliance. The casualty factor is a broad concept that can appear in the literature in different forms including casualty aversion, casualty fear, casualty dread, and casualty phobia (van der Meulen & Soeters, 2005). However, the importance of the casualty factor, regardless of the term used to describe it, dates back to the mid-19th century with the creation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to care for the wounded, both military and civilian, in wartime. Casualty tolerance in military terms implies that a number of casualties are expected and permissible. However, as will be discussed, casualty tolerance is often conditional. Casualties seem to be an implicit aspect of war, since the nature of war is defeating the enemy by any means possible, including lethal means. There is therefore an expectation that people will be wounded or may die in operations. Indeed, unintended civilian casualties have been sometimes framed as “collateral damage.”

Burk (1999) asserts that public support for US participation in military missions rapidly decreases if American casualties ensue. He supports his argument with the case of the Somalia peacekeeping mission where public support was initially strong but quickly decreased after 18 soldiers were killed in the streets of Mogadishu. Burk also argues that the public’s intolerance for casualties limits the extent to which the US government can be effective in its use of armed force in defending US national interests and in its role in securing peace around the world. In distinguishing between public tolerance or intolerance of casualties, Burk (p. 56) provided the following: “[T]he casualties hypothesis states that American public opinion at present will not support the deployment of military forces abroad if that deployment results in the lives of American soldiers being lost.” He makes a distinction between such public support and the perceived fluctuation of support that inherently encompasses potential casualties. He continues: “It is a strong claim that should be distinguished immediately from a related but substantively weaker claim that public support for military operations takes the risks of casualties into account.”

According to a Rand research brief (see Boettcher & Cobb, 2006), a study that examined the relationship between US casualties and public support for military intervention indicated that the public’s aversion to US casualties in some military interventions was related more to a decline in public tolerance for casualties than to the merits of the operations. Even among those who support military interventions such as war, the real impact may be experienced when casualties occur and, to some extent, when casualties touch an individual or community at the personal level. For instance, Canadian support for the NATO mission in Afghanistan has fallen, to some extent, with the rise in casualties.

In the US, the public may play a significant role in political military decision making in terms of the level and duration of a military mission. According to Johnson (2001), commentators suggest that because of the American “casualty-avoidance mindset,” political leadership in the US will undoubtedly experience political risk as a consequence of supporting military operations that generate casualties. In Johnson’s view, this challenge is premised on acknowledgement of the level of influence that public opinion in the US has on decisions regarding military involvement. Nevertheless, Johnson suggests that casualty tolerance is affected by a number of factors including the media, mission objectives, and perceived threat to US vital interests. One other highlighted area is referred to as the “family factor,” that is, the need for the state to convince families that sending off their loved ones to war zones, where they are likely to be in harm’s way and where there is a potential for loss of life, is indeed worth the potential personal loss.

To further support his argument, Johnson cited an address to the National Press in 1984 by Casper Weinberger, the former US Secretary of Defense. Johnson (2001) points to six underlying conditions for employing American troops appropriately as articulated by Casper Weinberger, the most prominent of which was “vital national interest” as opposed to “national interest,” a distinction he considered pivotal to understanding the casualty avoidance mindset of the American public. Differentiating between the two concepts, Johnson explains that a vital national interest is directly linked to the peace and security of the US and suggested that when vital national interest is threatened, the security of the US would be at risk.

In further linking this distinction to the acceptance of casualties, Johnson invoked military ethos in terms of the commitment to fight and even die in defence of vital national interests. To further validate his argument, Johnson drew on the importance of water to humans as being analogous to the need for oil in some countries. Consequently, Johnson saw the free flow of oil from the Middle East as vital to the peace and security of the US, and in defending such a vital national interest argued that public support (or the lack thereof) should not compromise US involvement in the Middle East.

In contrast to vital national interest, national interest relates to principles set out in the US Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and includes economic freedom, individual liberty, and human rights. Although backed by political and economic support, these interests may not be seen as worthy of fighting a war and the subsequent loss of lives. Put differently, the American public would not necessarily support foreign intervention in the promotion of national interest since threats to national interest do not pose a threat to the peace and security of the US. Likewise, the American public plays a role in determining what is deemed to be of vital national interest, as it is the public's validation that will help to define it.

Hyde (2000) contends that, due in large part to the *perception* that the American public has an aversion to casualties, dictators, terrorists, and allies alike are challenging the status of the US as a superpower. Hyde describes the notion of US public casualty aversion as a misconception, and further argues that included in the public's formula for support or rejection of a military operation is its ability to weigh the costs against the benefits and prospects for success, aided by the ability of civilian leadership to present their arguments in "a positive ends-and-means" context. Hyde also asserts that the presumed casualty aversion of the American public blankets the real casualty aversion held by civilian and military elites, which has threatened the US status as a superpower. Accordingly, the casualty aversion of civilian elites negates coercive diplomacy and undermines deterrence while the casualty aversion of senior military elites siphons away bold decision making and aggressive planning and ultimately destroys the military ethos. It is Hyde's contention that inappropriately attributing casualty aversion to the public compromises US foreign policy and US military credibility.

At least until the recent war in Iraq and the conflicts in Afghanistan, casualties at both the military and the civilian levels had been decreasing since the end of World War I and World War II (e.g., in Korea and Vietnam; Cochran, 2007). In view of this decrease, a humane component to warfare, in terms of limiting casualties, has surfaced. As a result, and as mentioned, there is a perception that public aversion to military and civilian casualties now plays an important role in decision making in terms of military intervention (Johnson, 2001). In analyzing civilian attitudes towards casualties during the Iraq War, Cochran contends that approval of the US president decreases when public opinion suggests that the US should enhance its efforts to protect civilians and when the public thinks that the US has failed to limit civilian casualties. Although some survey respondents felt that the US was doing as much as it could and that the US was successful in limiting civilian casualties, other survey responses indicated that attitudes changed as the war progressed. Cochran suggests, however, that there are more questions to be answered, including whether attitudes change in response to actual absolute numbers of civilian casualties or in response to highly publicized events regarding civilian casualties.

Although research indicates that casualties have been an important concern for centuries, not all nations, including western democracies, respond to the casualty factor in the same way. For example, Suter (2003) states that the Australia, New Zealand, United States (ANZUS) Security Treaty signed by the three nations guarantees mutual support in the event of an attack on any of its signatories. However, after the Australian loss of lives in Vietnam in the 1960s that resulted from supporting the US, a rift developed between the public and the Australian Defence Force and lasted for a number of years. Suter further explains that as a close ally, Australia had fought alongside the US in every war that the US had fought during the 20th century, a practice that has carried over into the 21st century. However, Suter (2003) also notes that Australia's military support for the US intervention in Iraq brought about the largest anti-war rallies in Australian history. It is important to understand, nevertheless, that attitudes toward the casualty factor can

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change over time, as the public fully supported the Australian troops once they were committed to the war. This indeed suggests that there is a political dimension to the casualty factor, which shapes and reshapes it to reflect changing public opinion, foreign policy, and political and economic ideology.

The cases of Iraq and Afghanistan may further illustrate this point. At present, the multinational military presence in both of these countries is exposed to a number of non-military personnel who fill roles external to the military and may include international agencies, the media, and distributors of humanitarian aid. The role of the media provides a running account of events as they take place, to the point where reports of casualties are transmitted sometimes even before formal military announcements are made, which could easily influence the tolerance level and public opinion in regard to casualties. One of the major concerns for the public is the cost of these wars in terms of human casualties, the wounded, and monetary output. For example, in relation to the War in Iraq, duration and costs seem to have impacted the public's tolerance for the war and the accompanying costs, particularly human casualties. Although support for the troops remains high in the US, support for the war itself has been declining. In its early stages, the war received high levels of public support. Ostensibly, the basis for the war was Iraq's potential to launch an attack on the US with weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This approach generated much legitimacy for the war, as it was specifically linked by the US government to the attacks and atrocities of 9/11. Any perceived additional threat to the US dispensed in the vocabulary of terrorism elicited both public interest and public support, and the war in Iraq generated and sustained both for some time. However, that support has decreased substantially over time. At both the societal and political levels there has been much debate about the justification for the war and the associated human and monetary costs. The debate generally revolves around US military casualties, including the wounded and maimed, and to a lesser extent, Iraqi civilian casualties. It is also contended that the longer a war is prolonged, even one initiated on the basis of "terrorism," the more costly it becomes, and in the case of the US, particularly more so because of an economic decline. This situation leads to more questions from the public as to the legitimacy and costs of the war, both militarily and monetarily.

Moreover, and as suggested above, a key aspect of the issue of casualty tolerance in the context of multinational military operations involves differences among participating nations with regard to casualty tolerance (van der Meulen & Soeters, 2005). If different nations within a multinational force have different levels of casualty tolerance (which are likely related to their cultural values, as well as their support regarding a specific mission), then there may be tensions within a multinational force. For example, tensions may revolve around the issue of whether the mission should continue or not, or whether a national contingent should pull their troops or contribute additional troops to a mission. Regarding Canada's mission in Afghanistan, for instance, the media and popular discourse suggests that the country has taken more than its "fair share" of military casualties, and some in Canada believe that other nations should share more of the casualty burden. Similarly, Canadians' support for the mission in Afghanistan has been described as "soft" and shifting, particularly in relation to the rising number of Canadian casualties (National Public Radio, 2007). An important point to be made here is that the level of tolerance for casualties is shaped, to a large degree, by the ways in which it is presented by competing forces that disseminate information both externally and internally and that, as will be discussed in the next section, help to determine public opinion about military intervention.

### 8.4 PUBLIC OPINION

Boettcher and Cobb (2006) suggest that there are three distinct parts to a primary policy objective that are predictive of public opinion for launching a military intervention. They identify these parts or sections as the top, the middle, and the bottom. The top section is indicative of missions to restrain an aggressive and threatening adversary, the middle section refers to regime change and democracy building, and the third section pertains to humanitarian missions. According to Boettcher and Cobb, the level of public support that each type of mission will generate in the US decreases from the top to the bottom sections. For example, Boettcher and Cobb argue that threatening terrorist aggression towards the US will

immediately generate public support and, as has been the case regarding Iraq in the aftermath of 9/11, critics advocating withdrawal will be perceived as “surrendering to the terrorists.” However, as discussed earlier, public response to military intervention can change over time and may differ across nations, a fact which has special significance for multinational military operations.

Indeed, the variation in public response to military operations depends on a number of factors. Moskos (1971) traces the evolution of public response to military operations from the Second World War, to the Korean War, to the Cold War period, and to the Vietnam War. World War II, for example, gained the full support of the American public, a level of support which has been unmatched for any other war in which the US has been involved since. In the face of high numbers of casualties, the obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was perceived as a strategy to shorten the war and reduce American casualties. On the other hand, the Korean War generated some ambivalence towards the involvement of the US. Moskos claims that ultimately, the stalemate of the conflict contributed to negative accounts of troop behavior, prisoner-of-war collaboration, lack of troop motivation, and the deterioration of military discipline. These attitudes seemed to have spilled over into the Cold War period during which time the military was again submerged in political controversy that revolved around the issues of military leadership and the institutional responsibility of the military. Moskos contends that this eventually led to negative portrayals of the military and, as the anti-war movement gained momentum, criticism from cultural elites and intellectual circles were directed at the military system generally. Both the legitimacy of the war and military service were being questioned, and it is asserted by Karsten (2001) that this situation led to the demise of the draft.

Public opinion of the military tends to fluctuate between two extremes. On the one hand, the military is perceived as a reflection of societal values and is dependent on civilian policy makers, while on the other hand, the military is perceived as reflecting values that are different from society and as possessing an independent influence that it ultimately imposes on the wider society. According to Moskos (1971), neither perception is totally false; however, he suggests that the issue is the interpenetration and institutional autonomy of the military and civil society. Although there is some recognition of the interdependent relationship of the military and civilian spheres the debate is much broader than implied.

In Canada, for instance, the military is guided by societal and functional imperatives (i.e., the civil/military interface) that surround it with a tension that is linked to its unique characteristics as a profession of arms. It is differentiated from Canadian society while simultaneously securely embedded within the same Canadian society, of which it is perceived as a microcosm, shaped by the wider values, norms, and belief system (Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada, 2003). In other words, the military functions under two competing structures. Under the societal structure, the military must maintain a level of professionalism and effectiveness and must reflect Canadian values and norms in defending the nation and its interests, and to do so, it has to be fully integrated into Canadian society. Under the military functional structure, the military is characterized as distinct from Canadian society because of the military factor that creates its uniqueness. These two competing imperatives are further entrenched by the twin oversight of civil and military authorities, that is, a Chief of Defence staff – military authority, and a Minister of Defence – civilian authority (Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada, 2003).

The role of the CF in operations is shaped by the public’s perceptions of the military in Canada, and it is expected to represent the value system of Canadian society. The value system by which the CF is judged is inherently different from that of the US military and this links back to differences in culture, history, economy, and polity as well as the difference in international status of the two countries. The CF has for the most part been in a support role during war and has been better known for its peacekeeping, nation building, and humanitarian work. Canada is not known for declaring war on any nation, as is the case with the US as recently as in 1990 with the Gulf war or *Desert Storm*, or more recently, the Iraq war or *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, in which Canada is not a contributing ally. The war in Afghanistan sees the CF in a combative role under the auspices of the UN and NATO. Public opinion on this engagement by

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the CF has been generally high as the war itself has been under the functional authority of the UN and NATO. Nevertheless, with the sustained engagement of the CF and the extension of its role there, coupled with increasing numbers of lives lost, public opinion and support have fluctuated since the beginning of the conflict.

Historically, the role of the CF in multinational military operations has been quite different from that of the US, as it has focused more on operations other than war such as peacekeeping, peacemaking, and humanitarian relief operations (Wood, 2007-2008). However, the overarching role of the CF has expanded and now includes combat. The role of the CF has more recently been characterized as participating in what is known as the “Three Block War.” This concept, coined by former US Marine Corps Commandant Charles Krulak (1999), suggests that during a combat operation, while establishing stability to conflict areas, military units may also have to perform humanitarian roles, and at the same time engage in war-fighting in the same city in three different locations or city blocks (Horn, 2006). This changing, more complex, role of the CF is acknowledged as part of the transformation that the organization has been undergoing. For example, Gosselin (2007-2008) points out that the CF culture is slowly changing to one focused more on operations, and that this culture change will lead to a change of identity in the CF. It remains to be seen what the impact will be on public opinion.

For a multinational force, differences in public opinion about military intervention could have serious implications and may even threaten a mission. Such implications are tied to the fact that a multinational force is made up of a number of individual national contingents and to the fact that public opinion can be quite diverse in reflecting cross-cultural and cross-national differences in perceptions about military interventions. For example, international public opinion polls indicate that there are cross-national and cross-cultural differences in attitudes towards international security and specific military interventions. A BBC World Service poll (2007) of 23,000 people conducted across 22 countries in September 2007, for instance, found that the majority of citizens polled across the world (67%) thought that US-led forces should leave Iraq within a year. Similarly, 61% of Americans, 65% of Britons, 63% of Australians, and 63% of South Koreans thought that US forces should withdraw from Iraq within a year. Further, among Canadians, a total of 67% felt that the US should withdraw its forces either immediately (32%) or within a 1-year time frame (35%). In contrast, Kenya (46%), the Philippines (47%), and India (47%) did not have majorities favoring withdrawal within a year. Thus, there seem to be both differences and similarities across nations and cultures regarding public opinion towards the war in Iraq, as has been the case for other conflicts.

## 8.5 CONCLUSION

Military operations pose a number of problems when a military has to bring its various service environments together to achieve the objectives of a mission. This is in large measure due to the fact that each service environment develops a culture that is specific to its service. In Canada, for instance, although each service environment functions under the umbrella of the Canadian military, when working as joint operations, service environment-specific cultures may collide and cause some conflict, whether in regard to training or even camaraderie. However, such cultural differences may be overcome, relatively easily, through the overriding commitment to military ethos and loyalty to a nation in defending its interests (English, 2004).

In a multinational force, cultural differences among the various national contingents may be magnified, particularly when the contingents are from countries with vastly different societal-cultural practices, languages, religions, histories, political systems, belief systems, and economies. Cross-cultural training is of paramount importance in order to emphasize the commonalities among national contingents and to work to harmonize differences in terms of recognizing the contribution of individual contingents to mission success. The role of these contingents and the success of the mission as it progresses will



undoubtedly impact the public support that each contingent receives back home. Distributed leadership among nations may facilitate mission effectiveness, as commitment and loyalty to the mission itself remain important factors in mission outcome.

As discussed in this chapter, societal-cultural factors may influence whether or not a nation practices conscription or relies upon an all-volunteer force to generate its military human resources, whether its public will tolerate casualties, and the extent to which public opinion will support military missions. Implicit in the word conscription is the absence of the freedom to choose. Historically, in times of war, some countries relied on conscription to satisfy their military human resource needs, while others employed a variation of conscription. The US and Canada, though culturally aligned to some extent, have both employed various forms of conscription, but for different purposes. Other nations, such as Australia, Israel, France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, have also adopted conscription, guided by their cultures, histories, economies, and political systems. The all-volunteer force that recognizes the rights of the individual is now relied upon in both the US and Canada to generate their military human resource requirements. Although research indicates that societal-cultural factors inherent in these two approaches to military mobilization could result in tension and threaten cohesion in a multinational military context, good leadership and how it is applied may be able to resolve many of the issues, particularly through the concept of military ethos, which is shared by many cultures and nations (Elron et al., 1999).

Casualty tolerance, as indicated in this chapter, is flexible and fluctuates with the duration of a military operation and its associated costs. The Iraq War is a case in point, particularly from the perspective of the US where tolerance for casualties initially seemed high and has decreased over time. Similarly, the public response to Canada's role in Afghanistan has fluctuated over time, in part due to shifts in casualty tolerance. This is perhaps understandable given the humanitarian, peace support, and combat roles that the Canadian military has traditionally played. The same can be said for other nations that have been playing key roles in Afghanistan or Iraq. The UK's tolerance for casualties has been mixed and has seemed premised on its overwhelming support for the war itself. Australia's approach to participating in multinational forces conveys a level of tolerance for casualties that may be at odds with other national contingents that suffer great losses. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that the view of casualties displayed by the Australian public in recent history is reflective of the significant role that the Australian public plays in the country's foreign policy.

Indeed, national public opinion regarding military interventions, much like casualty tolerance, is culturally contingent and changes over time. In terms of the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq, there seems to be internationally shared (although not unanimous) public opinion that makes both wars unpopular. This is a cross-cultural reaction that indicates that the publics of national contingents will, to a large degree, help to determine the extent of their nation's military involvement, the force strength that it will have, and the duration of the stay in the war-torn country. It can even determine a change in a nation's current role. Public opinion is a key societal indicator of whether foreign policy is effective and influences the way in which leaders will respond to the reaction of the people. If national contingents do not have the support of their populations back home, then their role in the multinational military force can become problematic, not only for their government, but also for the mission at hand, its leadership, and ultimately for mission effectiveness and outcome. Cross-cultural education and training for national contingents, designed for international military cooperation, may alleviate many of the cultural issues that members of a multinational team may experience. Such education and training should also provide a better understanding of societal-cultural differences and values that can be derived from cross-cultural, cross-national teams working to achieve a common outcome.

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## **Chapter 9 – CONCLUSIONS**

by

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### **9.1 GENERAL**

Critical to the success of multinational military operations is a clear understanding of the varying cultural backgrounds of national contingents. Existing research suggests a host of different ways in which cultural differences may impact missions and jeopardize the successful completion of operations. This report has attempted to identify some of the major intercultural factors that may affect multinational military operations, as described in the literature pertaining to this area. While research examining some of these concerns has been ongoing over the period of the writing of this report, much still remains to be explored. However, what this review has shown are some of the ways in which many of these issues can be, and have been, addressed. What follows are some of the major conclusions drawn from the chapters of this report alongside recommendations stemming from this work.

### **9.2 KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **9.2.1 Organizational Factors**

Differential salaries, conditions, and terms of employment among contingents were noted as a possible source of discontent in multinational military operations. While these conditions and terms are determined by each nation and cannot be changed for multinational missions, a greater awareness of these differences might allow commanders and other leaders in the field the ability to avert animosity or conflict related to these differences. It would prove useful, therefore, to retain an updated inventory of each nation's military conditions of employment as a reference guide. This could help raise commanders' sensitivity to differences between contributing nations and may help in the avoidance of conflict pertaining to these differences.

The fact that different nations have different organizational rules and regulations may present problems in operations. However, the research reviewed in this report indicates that just as concerning may be the differential application of rules by the various nations, with some operating more "by the book" than others. This has given rise, in some instances, to allegations of unfair treatment. Once more, awareness of the rules and regulations of each contingent would help form the basis of the development of a mutual understanding of how best to allocate sanctions. Such an understanding could form the basis of a more comprehensive stand on operational justice that would satisfy national needs and practices but allow for less disparity between contingents.

In operations, the use of English as the lingua franca appears to be fairly universal. However, the research showed that even fluent English speakers could have problems with the use of jargon, acronyms, and nonverbal communication. What clearly is needed here is the development of a common lexicon that can help ensure that some contingents do not feel left out. Furthermore, training for commanders to sensitize them in the delivery of both verbal communications and nonverbal communication could ease discomfort and heighten understanding. This could be assisted by the more formal use of liaison officers between national contingents. These specially trained individuals could assist in cross-cultural communications and ensure that commanders have a resource at hand for consultation. These officers could also help to cement relationships between contingents even before deployment. Such roles have been seen to be effective in helping to ensure that fewer integration problems occur between contingents posted at different times and for different lengths of deployment.

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The use of military contingents from increasingly diverse national backgrounds has also presented problems with regard to interoperability. Some nations use sophisticated weaponry and tools that are not available to other militaries. This can create difficulties for commanders in assigning responsibilities to various contingents. Research indicates that by understanding these limitations prior to deployments, commanders can better assign contingents to specific tasks in keeping with their national or cultural preferences and consistent with the most effective uses of their technology.

Not only need commanders understand the culture and traditions of host nations and other national contingents, but they increasingly must work alongside non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These latter organizations have different structures and modus operandi than military organizations. While work has been ongoing regarding the relationship between these non-military aid groups and the military, more research highlighting best practices and common problems needs to be undertaken. There is clearly also a need for the development of a greater awareness and appreciation of these aid organizations on the part of military commanders. This may be provided by way of secondments of military personnel to these groups and through continued exposure in operations.

### 9.2.2 Leadership and Command

The increasing prevalence and complexity of multinational military operations means that present and future military leaders and commanders will face a myriad of challenges, including the integration of culturally diverse groups and the establishment of effective command and control structures. The new security environment will demand a greater range of leadership skills and competencies than previously required, including the ability to overcome cultural barriers to effective teamwork, the ability to integrate diverse teams, and the ability to engender trust and mutual respect among often very diverse partners. Indeed, abilities in mediation, conflict resolution, negotiation, diplomacy, cultural sensitivity, and behavioral flexibility are all central to the task of leading a multinational military team. In short, increased cultural diversity within multinational military forces will increase the level of complexity in the military commander's task on many levels, and multiply the challenges involved. In the context of such operations, the focus will need to be toward achieving unity of effort or purpose, as opposed to unity of doctrine or command.

It is clear that with the increasing frequency and complexity of multinational military operations, there will be a strong need to identify the specific training and education requirements of multinational military leaders and operations. It is also clear that multinational training, in the form of multinational planning exercises and multinational immersion training for instance, and at different stages of deployment (e.g., both prior to and during deployment), may be beneficial. The principles contained within the global leadership training model (Graen & Hui, 1999), along with the integrating mechanisms and conditions proposed by Elron, Shamir, & Ben-Ari (1999), and the cultural lens model proposed by Klein, Pongonis, and Klein (2000), may provide a potentially rich basis for such leadership training and education. Further, commanders and leaders must introduce cultural diversity training to their teams with urgency and follow this up with action, for all personnel who are deployed in a multinational military operation should have training in the cultural aspects of their work. As mentioned above, liaison offices may also assist commanders and team members with cultural awareness. Although a great deal of work has been done in this area, more work in the education and training of multinational military leaders and teams, particularly in terms of cultural diversity, will be needed, as these challenges promise to become even more complex in the future.

### 9.2.3 Multinational Military Teams

Military units seek to engender a strong sense of belonging to a "team." Developing this loyalty to a group for whom one would be prepared to make sacrifices has been critical in ensuring group cohesion and solidarity. This can, however, lead to ethnocentrism, social isolationism, prejudice and stereotyping,

and marginalization. In multinational missions, these attributes run counter to the desired goal of unity of purpose and effort. The concept of a team, in such environments, must encompass a wider group and allow for the inclusion of others with sometimes vastly different cultural outlooks and traditions.

Key components to building a sense of team among a wider group include a host of inter-group activities. Inter-group planning has been seen as a critical factor in ensuring that all contingents feel a part of the operation. Research indicates that the greater the inclusion of all contingents in the planning phase prior to deployment, the lower the likelihood that cultural issues will arise in theater. However, the same is true throughout all phases of an operation. Greater coordination and communication between contingents can ensure that all teams feel included in the operation and that all are valued. This can also assist in building trust, overcoming stereotypes, and lessening the negative impact of cultural differences. This goal can also be achieved through inter-group training. Personnel can begin the process of debunking stereotypes and creating team spirit and group cohesion through multinational training efforts prior to serving together in operations. This can also minimize disruptions to operations, as it allows for the identification of issues in a safer environment than in the heat of the theater.

Some key barriers to teamwork exist in military and non-military settings. One of these is the cultural dimension of power distance (Hofstede, 1983). Some cultures value a more egalitarian approach to power and allow for a more collaborative and interactive approach between leaders and their team members. Other cultures provide leaders with more directive power. Team members used to the former approach may resent what they see as too restrictive a relationship when dealing with those who are used to the latter power relationship. Another cultural barrier to teamwork involves the varying tolerance for uncertainty. When working alongside contingents or individuals from cultural backgrounds that have a higher tolerance for uncertainty, team members may be uncomfortable and unwilling to consider options that they consider too risky. Similarly, contingents with a high tolerance for uncertainty may dismiss the low-risk orientation of other contingents as too restrictive.

Some cultures engender greater individualism than others, which have a more collectivist outlook. This does not mean that those from more individualist cultures cannot or will not engage with others as members of a team. Rather the engagement will be in a different way from those coming from collectivist societies. Research indicates that individualists often view the mission as primary and relationships among team members as secondary; collectivists view team relationships as critical to producing a viable team product. These culturally determined factors can influence the creation of teams from multinational contingents and result in the reinforcement of stereotypes and the development of negative attitudes towards others.

In the same vein, some cultures place greater value on hypothetical thinking while others emphasize concrete thinking. Team members coming from these varying perspectives can have problems comprehending others approaches to issues. This will impact the capacity of the group to form a cohesive team and to cement relationships between members based on mutual understanding.

#### **9.2.4 Cultural Predispositions and Psychosocial Aspects**

Whether through heredity or socialization, people from different cultures internalize different value systems, skills, habits, and tastes, all of which shape the expression of personality traits. Research indicates that people from the same culture show broadly similar personality traits in comparison to individuals from other cultures. This finding allows for greater awareness of some important points of potential conflict that may arise between members of various national contingents when in a multinational military operation.

For example, research shows that national cultures vary in activity orientation. Some cultures emphasize the importance of “doing” work or tasks with the priority on making sure that the work gets done.

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Other cultures place more attention on “being,” that is, on relationships and on the enjoyment of the activity. In the military context, this can present problems, as those from “being” cultures may regard as rude the way in which those from “doing” cultures approach a given task.

The ways in which people approach decision making may be impacted by cultural differences in reasoning. Some cultures avoid confrontation and seek ways in which to bridge the gap between two opposing viewpoints. Other cultures value argumentation and debate around options, highlighting differences rather than seeking to blur them. Furthermore, research shows that there are some cultures that value concrete thinking grounded in personal experience, whereas other cultures see utility in hypothetical thinking, developing “what-if” scenarios, and speculating on possibilities. In the military context, these culturally influenced ways of thinking can lead some commanders to feel that others lack decisiveness or, conversely, are impulsive. Either way, this can impact relationships and lead to difficulties in communication and in the building of trust.

Essential to the success of military operations involving multinational and multicultural contingents is the building of trust. This component of a successful operation can take time and requires understanding. Cultural differences may impede the development of a trust relationship as they may lead people to feel that they cannot rely on others as their behavior is too dissimilar to their own and too unpredictable. Overcoming the cultural hurdle becomes critical to the development of trust within a multinational team.

Research clearly indicates that some of the key components of trust relate to notions of professionalism and ethical behavior. Being ethical in one’s dealings with others and acting in a professional manner may mean different things to people of different cultural backgrounds. Dealing in the black market or handling prisoners in a certain way may be seen as ethical among one military contingent but as unprofessional and unethical by another military contingent. Such culture-related differences can cause tensions and misunderstandings among contingents and so affect mission success.

### 9.2.5 Communication

Communication is at the heart of multinational military operations. However, military personnel from different countries may bring diverse styles of communicating and understanding communications to their interactions, which can lead to problems. In addition to misunderstandings, other communication problems can include inability or unwillingness to share information, the stress and increased cognitive effort of communicating in a second language, degraded perception of one’s ability based on language fluency, and being overlooked for assignments due to lack of language fluency.

Cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede, 2001) can provide a useful framework for identifying, understanding, and dealing with cultural differences in communication. Each one of the dimensions has implications for how people communicate and understand communications. For example, a soldier from a high context culture would tend to use an indirect style of communication, with much of their communication coming from the context and common assumptions of his culture. In contrast, a soldier from a low context culture would tend to use direct, explicit communications, and may miss much of the contextual information because they are not looking for it. Knowing that the first soldier is from a high context culture would suggest to the second soldier to look for contextual information. Training on these cultural dimensions would give military personnel a framework for better understanding themselves and their multinational partners, and for avoiding and dealing with miscommunications.

Because the multinational component of military operations is only likely to increase, training in multicultural communication should be part of standard military training programs. Communication competence in multinational settings involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively with members of other cultures. These can be developed using a wide variety of techniques, including training, education, experience, and role models. Possible training approaches include pre-deployment



training and resources available during deployment for specific information. Joint or multinational training would help develop skills in working with those of other cultures. However, specific courses in multicultural awareness are not enough. Cultural issues must be integrated into all military training courses starting at the most basic levels. Consideration of cultural differences must become part of the thinking and operating of military personnel.

### **9.2.6 Technology**

Technology from one nation may be incompatible with the technology of another nation. Or, the level of sophistication of one country's technology may be significantly higher than that of another country. Further, a contingent from a less technologically developed country may not be trained on the operation of the sophisticated technology used by a multinational team. All of these situations have the potential to hinder the smooth operations of the team in terms of their technology capabilities.

The previously mentioned cultural dimension of power distance also has implications for the use of technology in multinational operations. Low power distance countries would tend to share technology and expect others to share theirs. High power distance countries, on the other hand, would see sharing technology as based on power, including national status, economic advantage, and military authority. Multinational forces that include high power distance countries do not often share technology and information equally. Another cultural dimension, uncertainty avoidance, also has implications for the impact of technology on multinational operations. The distributed environment of multinational operations is uncertain and technologically complex. Team members in a multinational team that includes nations that are high on uncertainty avoidance may find such a technologically complex environment threatening. Further, their relatively lower level of technological knowledge may also degrade their influence within the team.

In short, technology has advanced to provide complex and sophisticated support for distributed, collaborative, and networked systems, including multinational military teams. However, technology by itself typically cannot provide the solution to the problems that may arise in such contexts. Rather, the role of the human and cultural differences in the implementation of these technologies must be addressed.

### **9.2.7 Societal Factors**

In addition to the factors elaborated above, a number of broad societal factors may influence multinational military operations. These include whether a military is mobilized through conscription or through an all-volunteer force, societal attitudes towards casualties, and public opinion about military operations in general. For instance, the societal system from which a military force is derived, which includes its values, culture, and ideology, determines the size of a military force and its method of mobilization. Moreover, the ideological cultures from which the contingents in a multinational force are derived may have implications for the effectiveness of a multinational military operation if, for instance, contingents vary in their methods of mobilization. This difference may have implications for cohesion, morale, and military ethos, among other team processes. Similarly, culture-related differences in casualty tolerance may have implications for multinational military teams if some contingents have a high tolerance for casualties and other contingents have a low tolerance for casualties and thus decide to withdraw their troops or end their role in a mission. Indeed, casualty tolerance can play an important role in the decision making of nations. There is also a political dimension to the casualty factor, as it reflects public opinion and the foreign policy of a nation and, like casualty tolerance, public opinion is culturally contingent and changes over time. For a multinational force, differences in public opinion about military intervention could have serious implications for a mission. Once again, cross-cultural training can alleviate some of the tensions that may arise related to such societal factors, and once again, it is the task of the multinational leader or commander to resolve the issues that arise and strengthen cohesion, despite cultural and societal differences.

## CONCLUSIONS

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### 9.3 FINAL COMMENTS

Key to the success of future international missions involving a number of national contingents will be the increased awareness of all military personnel of important cultural differences. Research has shown that the assumption that all militaries operate in the same way and reveal a universal “military culture” is oversimplified and is unsupported by experience in multinational operations. National culture impacts military culture such that militaries from different nations function and act in different ways.

This report has attempted to identify some of the more important culture-related lessons learned from previous multinational military operations. There were a number of common conclusions from respective authors. One of the most compelling was the call for efforts to instill greater cultural sensitivity and awareness through pre-deployment programs and training for all personnel. This is perhaps nothing new for some countries, but it does not appear to be an integral aspect of the military training of all nations. That this training should include non-commissioned personnel as well as officers is also of importance, given the nature of interaction between military contingents and between military and civilian organizations. Centers of excellence in such training already exist, for example, in Mannheim, Germany, the Pearson Peacekeeping Center in Canada, and Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Other ways in which to provide hands-on training include Multinational Experiments (MNEs), which also serve to identify issues and problems in simulated operational environments (e.g., see Lichacz & Farrell, 2005).

It is important that commanders receive more specialized and detailed training prior to deployment than other personnel. Such training might usefully include development of communication skills to ensure that cultural bias does not enter into the transmission and flow of information. This training could also assist in helping commanders better understand nonverbal communication and cultural sensitivities around how, when, and where messages are relayed to other contingents. Commanders will also require more readily available information on each contingent’s conditions of employment and organizational rules and regulations.

However, it is clear that the current and future global security environment will demand a richer form of interoperability than technical interoperability or even cognitive or informational interoperability can provide. An understanding of interoperability that takes into account dimensions such as information systems, doctrine, and command and control still neglects those dimensions of interoperability such as language, ethics, and social beliefs that pertain more to culture and the human dimension of interoperability than the more technical and informational forms of interoperability do. Ultimately, it is cultural interoperability – the common ways that militaries do their work – that contributes to mission success. Given the reality of cultural differences, however, it is vital that cultural awareness of such differences becomes part of the thinking of military personnel who participate in multinational military operations, so that cultural differences can be bridged and integrated, and cultural interoperability may be possible within multinational military collaborations.

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## CONCLUSIONS

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<b>14. Abstract</b>			
<p>Since 1990, there has been a significant increase in the number of military operations requiring nations to contribute forces as part of a multinational alliance or coalition. Evidence suggests that differences in the organizational and national cultures of contributing countries can impact the operational effectiveness of the multinational force. The purpose of the NATO Human Factors and Medicine (HFM) Research Task Group (RTG) on Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors (RTG-120) was to consider the intercultural factors that influence multinational military collaboration in the areas of organizational factors; leadership and command; teams; pre-dispositional and psychosocial factors; communication; technology; and societal factors. Throughout these areas, a common theme was the need to instill greater cultural sensitivity and awareness through pre-deployment programs and training for all military personnel. It is hoped that the knowledge generated on these topics will promote an understanding of diversity in the areas of human culture, organizations and technologies of relevance to multinational military operations, and ultimately contribute to the effectiveness of these collaborations.</p>			





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