Culture and the Soldier

Identities, Values, and Norms in Military Engagements

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Introduction: The Culture Puzzle

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I HAVE BEEN TOLD many times that culture – meaning identities, values, and norms reproduced over time – is important. In fact, when the topic comes up in the classroom, a conference, a workshop, or discussions among colleagues, almost all agree that it is indeed important. More to the point, militaries agree that culture is important. Later rotations of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) formations in Afghanistan included established academics who served as advisors to commanders, and the US military began to employ "human terrain teams" – not without controversy – in both Iraq and Afghanistan, all in recognition of the important role that culture plays in military operations. Cultural "awareness" has become a part of military predeployment training. Prior to my own deployments to both Haiti and Afghanistan, I sat through several afternoon-long presentations on the "culture" of the place to which I was about to be deployed.

But how is culture important to, or in, the military? Despite agreement on the importance of the concept, myriad questions remain. How has culture been thought of as an independent variable – the thing being measured? How has it shaped the employment of the military instrument in foreign policy? How has culture been operationalized as something useful that can be applied in a way that will change behaviours and indeed outcomes? Whereas the chapters in this volume illustrate the various ways in which culture shapes and is used by the military, this introductory chapter examines how culture has been developed – first through theorization and then through operationalization – within the field of security studies in general. Although culture is a vast and diverse field of study, receiving substantial theoretical attention, comparatively little has been done to show how it has moved out of the realm of theory and into military operations. This is to say not that the various theories and operational concepts have not informed military operations but that the proverbial loop has not been closed. Absent in the scholarship – short of a few think-tank reports or briefs internal to the militaries in question – is a critical assessment of how culture has been used by the military. In short, few have assessed the utility or

outcome of that use. This gap, the utility gap, is what this book aims to fill at least partially.

Moreover, culture – in the context of contemporary military engagements – is both a *force* and a *factor*. It is a force that acts on the military, shaping it, changing it, and making it do new things. It is also a factor in military operations, at times employed by militaries while conducting operations and at other times constraining or changing what they do from within. Culture works in both ways: as a force that acts on something and as a factor that works – either directly or indirectly – within it.

As with any concept as nebulous and contested as that of culture, a truly Lakatosian research program is not feasible, and the contributors to this volume do not claim to provide such a program.[1] Rather, while building upon the "hard core" of a common definition of culture, the contributors do so in different and sometimes divergent ways that reflect their unique methods and backgrounds. This variety reveals in turn the richness of any contested concept. This richness precludes the volume from having a single organizing framework and empowers the contributors to make their own claims about how culture either shapes the military from without or is used by and shapes the military from within.

Culture and Defence Policy

This is a volume of defence policy analysis. Therefore, it is important to begin with a discussion on how culture has been conceptualized within this narrow subfield. At the level of defence policy, culture takes on qualifiers that attempt to further refine what is meant by the term "culture" itself. Concepts such as strategic culture or military culture are frequently trotted out in foreign and defence policy circles, and often they refer to specific things. Strategic culture – for example – has been defined as the "integrated system of symbols ... that acts to establish pervasive and long-term strategic preferences ... [reflecting] national preoccupations."[2] Here culture is characterized as a force exerting itself on how a country will leverage its resources in the pursuit of security and prosperity. More to the point, strategic culture shapes how a country will think about and employ military forces.

Military culture – as distinct from strategic culture – is slightly different, however, and this difference is worth examining. Where strategic culture is an example of the force acting on the military, shaping when and how it will be used as an instrument of foreign policy, military culture is internal to the profession of arms. Military culture refers to how the military views itself compared with other militaries and as distinct from nonmilitary institutions. Although it

too can have a shaping effect, military culture (as opposed to strategic culture) comes from within the military itself.[3]

This distinction is important. With culture commonly understood as the identities, values, and norms reproduced over time, strategic culture is how they influence civilian decision makers when they envisage the role of the military in society. Canada's strategic culture is often framed in terms of a desire to maintain the federation (specifically the division between anglophone and francophone – and increasingly Indigenous – communities).[4] Or it presents itself as a reliable ally to others.[5] Decision makers use these factors when weighing the decision to employ the military. Conversely, military culture is the set of identities, values, and norms unique to the military as an organization, rendering it distinct from other elements of society. Although having little to do with the decision to employ the military itself, military culture deeply influences how it will carry out its operations once that decision has been made.

This distinction leads to the idea of culture as a factor weighed by the military for its own institutional needs or as a guide to operational design for military engagements abroad. In both cases, this internalized view of culture is shaped by the country's strategic culture but now focused internally or externally on a third party. It is shaped from two directions. The treatment of culture within the military is an outgrowth of the broader society's culture from which the military is derived. As well, how culture is treated depends on the unique activities of the military.

Militaries around the world have rediscovered the complexities of counterinsurgency operations in the past few decades, and as part of this rediscovery these militaries have started to see culture as a key factor to be considered in those operations. The relatively new counterinsurgency doctrinal manuals of the United States and Canada are but two examples where an understanding of the cultural nuances of the country in which soldiers are deployed is recognized as vital to the success of the mission. Indeed, recent scholarly work has revealed that this recognition goes beyond doctrine and is a significant attitude held among the rank and file. Paula Holmes-Eber and her colleagues found evidence that "cross-cultural competence" was recognized by the practitioners themselves as important to "successful military operations."[6] However, despite this recognized value, how culture is used in military operations and exactly what it means in them – the "cross-cultural competence" – is left underdeveloped.[7] This is not to say that the concept of cultural competence or intelligence, as over a decade of research on this question has produced, is itself underdeveloped.[8] Rather, the details of how increased cultural intelligence informs how operations are conducted are not making their way back into

the literature. Moreover, rather than focusing on military culture, as has been done elsewhere,[9] in this book we take a more holistic approach, analyzing how culture is used – as both force and factor – rather than how it is defined.

This book fills a large gap in the field of studies of culture and how it informs and shapes the military instrument. Such examinations are rare. In *American Military Culture in the 21st Century,* Edwin Dorn and his colleagues employ a large and detailed quantitative study based upon a survey administered to over 12,000 American military personnel serving in bases all over the world. This study captures the perceptions and attitudes of currently serving members in an attempt to create a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of US military culture.[10]

In *Understanding Military Culture,* English treats military culture as a discrete subset of a society's culture and conducts a focused comparison of Canadian and American military cultures and how they shape doctrines in Canada and the United States. Unlike Dorn and colleagues, English employs a qualitative, case study approach and finds that, though the two countries share many cultural traits, their differences should be not only celebrated but also protected. English makes the case that the relationship between culture and the military is underexplored, and the pages that follow here make that claim too. In *The New American Way of War,* Benjamin Buley examines how American wars have been fought and argues that there has been an excessive focus on means that has obscured deeper strategic insights. He places the blame for this myopia on particular cultural traits present in the US military.

Culture and the Soldier employs a more qualitative research design and is focused on a different level of analysis. Rather than attempting to tease out what constitutes military culture, as English and indeed Martin Van Creveld do,[11] this book engages with the concept of culture and examines how it is used by and how it shapes the military. In short, it seeks to bridge the gap between strategic and military culture. Where Dorn and colleagues offer description, this book seeks explanation. However, it parts ways with *Understanding Military Culture* by providing a more holistic understanding of what culture is and how it both shapes military engagements and is used by militaries to gain advantage. *Culture and the Soldier* takes on both approaches to the study of culture and the military. Few works in the defence policy subfield examine how culture is actually employed by and informs military operational planning, instead focusing on how culture in general shapes the military. This book engages with both approaches and offers an improved understanding as a result of this synthesis. To that end, the book defines culture as dynamic identities, values, and norms that are reproduced by and gain their meanings from their interactions.

The Meaning of Culture

"Culture," writes political scientist Marc Howard Ross, "is not a concept with which most political scientists are comfortable."[12] Ross substantiates his statement by arguing that, by attributing observations to cultural factors, generalizations become difficult if not impossible to make from those observations. Put simply, the nomothetic succumbs to the idiographic: the observations are taken as unique in space and time and are of no analytical value beyond an explanation of the particular observation. Moreover, the study of culture – for political scientists – is a cross-disciplinary endeavour. The scholarly work on culture is rooted in anthropology and sociology, and even in these fields culture is still a contentious concept. Indeed, renowned anthropologist Clifford Geertz famously extolled his field to engage in such "thick descriptions" since he saw the understanding of culture to be the essence of anthropology.[13]

Studying culture requires a breadth and depth of knowledge that can appear to be daunting. The contributors to this volume comprise practitioners and academics, and the latter include scholars of literature, conflict, sociology, and political science. Indeed, exploring culture demands the casting of a wide net. Thankfully, much work has been done to bring culture into the study of politics and even into the subfield of security studies. Here I review what has been done to date within this subfield in order to reveal how the operational definition presented earlier was reached.

Consensus has formed on several dimensions of how culture is defined. First, culture is considered as a way in which individuals give meaning to what they see in daily life. It becomes a framework for understanding experience. Second, culture is the basis for a common identity.[14] Indeed, culture and identity have been rolled together in that one implies the other.[15] Third, culture is now widely considered to be a social construction in that it is created by multiple individual interactions repeated over time.[16] It is not a primordial condition, for even the most deeply rooted cultural beliefs originated within the minds of individuals – they were constructed. This last area of consensus has broad implications because, if culture is a construction, then it can be changed. Culture, as Yosef Lapid writes, is "a more nuanced and finely tuned semantic field."[17] Gone is the monolithic idea that culture is a single, unchangeable thing. More recently, Nick Crossley has claimed that "culture arises within and through interactions ... [It is] something that we do together and derives its meaning and use in interaction."[18] Culture, argues Crossley, comes from within individuals and is then transmitted to others.

Ross, in his 2007 work, provides a comprehensive account of what culture is and how it shapes political life.[19] Two elements of his summary are worth noting

here. First, the process through which culture is transmitted and reproduced implies a certain (but also varying) degree of exclusivity. By creating a common identity and sense of "us," by definition a view of "them" is created as well. Culture implies that there are other social groups – other cultures – that are dissimilar: it implies diversity. Second, a common culture does not imply internal cohesion. Even within a single culture, conflict is sometimes present, but its level is normalized as all parties to the conflict agree to the general rules of the game. Recall the biker culture of the popular FX television series *Sons of Anarchy.* Within this culture – which eschews traditional authority – the different biker gangs are in a constant ebb and flow of conflict (often violent), rapprochement, and even at times cooperation. But only in rare cases do members defect from the overall culture by, say, turning to the police for the righting of a wrong. Rather, they remain within the confines of their common culture – as afflicted by division and incoherence as it is.

There are several ways in which culture has been used as an analytical tool. Some approaches attempt to ascribe a national character to a country, such as the work of Lucien Pye or Edward Banfield as well as the classic study on political culture by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba.[20] Other approaches focus on processes and broader discussions of identity and symbolism.[21]

In addition to the foundational discussion by Almond and Verba on political culture and how it further explains political processes around the world, politics can be seen through a cultural lens as a "passing parade of symbols" that at once transmits information as well as feelings about that information.[22] This is one way in which values and norms are transmitted and reproduced – in short, it is an example of culture in action. David Altheide has conducted extensive research on the idea of the politics of fear.[23] Through an examination of political discourse and media reporting, he shows how the parade of symbols is used to set the agendas and to shape the actions of foreign policy decision makers and the public's acceptance of them.[24]

Altheide, through this cultural approach, argues that "tying terrorism coverage to an expansive discourse of fear" has enabled political decision makers – foreign and public policy elites – to promote "audience beliefs and assumptions about danger, risk, and fear to achieve certain goals."[25] The surprising transition of Donald Trump from business and reality television to American politics is another obvious example of actors who leverage the politics of fear to their advantage. This feature of political decision making is not unique to the United States. Indeed, the referendum held in the United Kingdom in 2016 on continued membership in the European Union, and more pointedly the surprising result of setting the conditions for exit from the union, show that the politics of fear is alive and well on both sides of the proverbial pond. It is through a cultural

approach – one that examines politics from the perspective of identities, values, shared meanings, and norms – that this feature of political decision making is revealed.

Culture has also played a role in international relations (IR). Not surprisingly, it has suffered from the same problem in international relations as it has in politics in general: all analysts agree that it is important but then move on to more comfortable subjects. In the 1990s, this began to change. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent end of the Cold War, realism, the dominant IR paradigm at the time, started to struggle. Realism as a theory of international relations could not effectively account for the wilful dissolution of a bipolar world order dominant since the Second World War. This struggle made room not only for liberal IR thought but also for a more constructivist account of the relationship between states. Notably, the 1990s saw first a call for an increased focus on the intangible features of a state, to include muddy concepts like culture (from scholars such as Yosef Lapid and his colleague Friedrich Kratochwil) and then an answer from Alexander Wendt.[26] In his now classic article entitled "Anarchy Is What States Make of It" and his subsequent book, *A Social Theory of International Politics,* not only were the foundations set for constructivism within international relations, but also culture was seriously engaged with.[27] For Wendt, states are not constrained by an anarchic system; rather, how they perceive that system determines its structure. Should a state perceive other states as subordinates, the structure is hierarchical; should the state perceive other states as threats, the structure is anarchic and conflictual.

Wendt's most substantial contribution, however, was his constructivist epistemology. By seeing the relations between states and indeed the anarchic structure that many assumed was immutable as simply a higher-order product of the behaviours of people – a social construction – Wendt made a compelling case for how the structure of the international system can in fact change. As the title of his article suggests, anarchy is indeed what states (and by extension people) make of it.

More recently, efforts have been made to apply the well-developed, classic sociological theory of differentiation to explain relationships between states. In 2013, a comprehensive edited volume by Mathias Albert, Barry Buzan, and Michael Zürn, *Bringing Sociology to International Relations,* operationalized the idea of culture to inform the study of politics and, more pointedly, international relations.[28]

As a concept, differentiation has its origins in biology and was appropriated for use in sociology in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Concepts such as estates (from the French) or vocations (*Berufsstand* from the Germans) started the process of creating a division of labour within society, a

concept made famous by Emile Durkheim in the late nineteenth century.[29] In general, differentiation is theorized to come in three forms: segmentary, stratified, and functional. Segmentary differentiation, argue the authors of *Bringing Sociology to International Relations,* has its origins in the peace of Westphalia and the birth of the modern state system, whereby all states are considered generally similar units. All states are sovereign, and all states enjoy a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Much as the anthropological term from which it is derived suggests, segmentary differentiation implies that the removal of one segment does not jeopardize the overall functioning of the system or the functioning of the other segments.[30]

Stratified differentiation is seen as the state of affairs in international relations that defined the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, it is the structure of international politics that Kenneth Waltz identified in his launch of neo-realism in 1979 with *Theory of International Politics,* whereby states are ranked in terms of relative capabilities, and this structure determines the relationships between states.[31] The structure of the system is stratified – it is a hierarchy – with some states on top and others at the bottom.[32]

Finally, in functional differentiation, states within the international system assume (or are assigned) specific roles. Borrowing heavily from Durkheim's ideas in his 1893 classic *The Division of Labor in Society,* the authors of *Bringing Sociology to International Relations* argue that functional differentiation – or more accurately the shift from a stratified to a functional system – is what is occurring today. Functional differentiation clearly explains the idea of global governance argued about today.[33] That said, the authors of *Bringing Sociology to International Relations* are careful to indicate that these different systems are not mutually exclusive in that functional and stratified systems exist within a larger segmentary system.[34] Most broadly, thinking of international relations in terms of differentiation theory helps to reframe the relatively recent phenomenon known as globalization in terms of a degradation of the segmented system as the "production and distribution of culture [become] globalized" at the expense of national modes of cultural reproduction.[35] States become increasingly interconnected (and therefore differentiated) and less segmented (or sovereign). Through this increased interconnection, some elements of culture become globalized. Differentiation theory as applied by Albert and coauthors goes some way toward clarifying how culture has shaped IR theory in recent years. It shows how culture was a force on theories of international relations.

IR scholars have continued the trend of simply arguing that culture is important and rarely applying it to the study of relations between states (with Wendt, Albert and colleagues as exceptions). In short, culture remains theorized, only sometimes conceptualized, and rarely operationalized. It is upon these

foundations that the authors of this volume have developed their views of culture in the hope of moving beyond this overtheorization.

Culture and Security Studies

Culture has taken on a variety of meanings within political science as well as the field of international relations within the discipline itself. However, this book is focused on issues of foreign and defence policy – specifically the study of how culture has shaped and is used by the military. Culture has been both theorized and employed as a variable within the study of security.

In response to the dominant, state-centric view of security studies that took place through much of the Cold War, a small group of scholars began to look for alternative ways to think about security. Taking a broader view of security than simply the objective presence or absence of military threat, scholars such as Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde theorized security through a cultural lens. For them, security was a subjective concept constructed by elites who identified a certain objective threat and then applied the label of security to it. This process, known as "securitization," made security subjective, beholden to the attitudes, perceptions, and values of the people who identified certain objective features as threats to security. In short, this approach to security studies – known as the Copenhagen School – placed culture first. How security is conceptualized – argued the Copenhagen School – is driven by culture.[36]

This idea of securitization forms the first of three tools that this particular approach to security studies employed. The idea of regional security complexes is the second theoretical tool used to explain patterns of securitization and – more positively – desecuritization. Regional security complex theory (RSCT) comprises two basic features. The first feature is the "essential structure" of the RSCT.[37] It must have a boundary, be socially constructed, be imbued with some sort of polarity, and lack any third-party power – meaning that it must be anarchic.[38] The second feature is the nature of the RSCT. Specifically, is the regional security complex characterized by general feelings of amity or enmity between units within a given region? For adherents to this theory, the idea of amity or enmity – feelings of friendship or hostility toward others – adds a new dimension to the traditional concept of power as the key indicator of conflict between states.[39] This is an effort by RCS theorists to incorporate culture into their analyses. As Buzan suggests, in "adding the dimension of amity/enmity to the picture, one gets a clearer sense of the relational pattern and character of insecurity."[40] Culture is operationalized here as a pattern of relationship between two countries. Within RSCT, the general attitude of states toward one another is critical to understanding the security (and by extension the stability) dynamic of a region.

Taking these features and assembling them into a tool, Buzan and Waever have operationalized the idea of the RSC into "an analytical concept" that is also malleable.[41] The concept must be flexible, for "these regions (RSCs) are socially constructed in the sense that they are contingent on the security practice of the actors ... the region might reproduce or change."[42] Understanding this, Buzan and Waever propose a series of RSCs that applies to the contemporary period. For them, though the idea of an RSC is flexible, it is bounded. In *Regions and Powers,* they suggest that RSCs really only changed once – with the end of the Cold War.[43] The model can account for change, but that change will be slow.

The third tool in the "toolbox" of the Copenhagen School is the concept of sectors of security. This concept is most clearly framed in a book by Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde. For them, sectors of security are employed as a tool to identify referent objects that need to be secured against some form of threat.[44] They identify five sectors that suitably broaden the concept of security without risking intellectual erosion. They suggest military, economic, societal, environmental, and political sectors as mechanisms for disaggregation.[45] Because a sector approach forces the analyst to disaggregate the scope of the question, the relationships among the sectors are revealed as vital for determining outcomes while recognizing that sectors do not exist independently. Essentially, the analysis does not end with the sector discussed; rather, it should carry on to be reassembled with the other sectors so that a complete picture can be appreciated.[46]

The sectors are self-explanatory. Indeed, the military, political, and economic sectors are obvious, and the environmental sector is not foreign to efforts over recent decades to broaden and deepen the concept of security. The societal sector – though equally self-explanatory – is worth noting; coupled with the emphasis on the relationships among the sectors in general, it shows how the Copenhagen School incorporates the concept of culture into the analysis of security.

However, acceptance of the approach of the Copenhagen School is by no means universal, nor is it the only approach that incorporates culture. Indeed, Bill McSweeney, a critical theorist, has paid special attention to Buzan's apparent reification of the state in that this approach proposes that "the state be secure unconditionally, and that a necessary prerequisite for that is not the security of the people, but the *absence of threat to the state* on the part of the people."[47] McSweeney argues that, despite the broad, constructivist approach to security that the Copenhagen School takes, it still falls into the neorealist trap of state-centrism. For him, the Copenhagen School does not go far enough. So how does his approach differ? What does his approach do that the Copenhagen School apparently fails to do?

McSweeney claims that the study of international relations and security studies in particular have evolved through several periods of development, beginning with the end of the First World War in what he calls the period of political theory. This period, running until the beginning of the Cold War, emphasized a multidisciplinary approach and the creation of theoretical constructs such as the "security dilemma" with which to understand the events of the time.[48]

With the onset of the Cold War through to its end in the 1980s, the study of security evolved into the period of political science, in which the field was no longer the exclusive purview of military and diplomatic leaders and instead incorporated civilian scholars.[49] Here the study of security evolved into a discrete field with dedicated journals, schools, and, more importantly, funding. The persistent, perceived threat posed by the Soviet Union during this period pushed the field into maturation.

With the end of the Cold War, McSweeney argues, security studies entered the period of political economy. With the challenge to neorealist IR theory by neoliberalism occurring at the same time, the period of political economy expanded the idea of security to include the concepts of economic interdependence and integration in general.[50] The rise of the term "globalization" to household status attests to this shift.

The fourth period that McSweeney identifies "has scarcely begun" but is characterized by a sustained critique of behaviouralist assumptions that have influenced IR thought in past decades.[51] Indeed, the emergence of meta-theories of constructivism and "post-positivism" – borrowed from sociology – have started the period of sociology in security studies. The study of security is now looking to culture.[52]

For McSweeney, the Copenhagen School, despite its claim of taking culture into account, is simply neorealism in disguise since it still maintains that the state is the primary object to be secured, not people or identity. Rather, argues McSweeney, evocation of the role of societal cohesion – through ideas such as Buzan's state[53] – is simply another means of social control. A strong idea of the state simply means that the state is able to control its population. McSweeney claims that, if the society is strong, then it is seen as a challenge to the state, not a complement to it.[54] State and society, he argues, are in tension and cannot exist together in strength. A strong state imposes itself on the population, whereas a strong society resists this imposition. McSweeney proposes instead to think of identities and interests rather than behaviouralist motives grounded in functionalism. He argues that, rather than loyalties changing (as a functionalist would), it is a group's identity that changes and then incorporates new political expectations (or interests).[55]

McSweeney's focus on identity in particular is a good example of how culture has been used within security studies. Moreover, it shows that, even within approaches that privilege culture, there is considerable difference in terms of how culture is interpreted and used to further examine the concept of security. Where the Copenhagen School pulled in concepts of culture to further develop what is still a rather state-centric approach to security, McSweeney suggests instead that culture is the only referent object of note, eschewing the state.

Culture – though widely theorized, as shown above – continues to be a contentious concept. Its place within the literature – at all levels, whether discipline, field, or subfield – continues to be debated and theorized. This trend of overtheorization has meant that culture is somewhat of a residual category. If a variable or a phenomenon cannot otherwise be categorized, then it must be a cultural one. The contributors to this volume hope to move beyond the theorizing of culture and to show how (1) identities, values, and norms shape the military as an organization and (2) how militaries leverage or work with the identities, values, and norms of either their own organizations or those of others – including societies in which they find themselves deployed.

This book does not offer critiques of how culture has or has not been applied in terms of professional military education and training in Canada or the United States. Although some contributions touch on aspects of this education (such as Sokolsky and Lin's chapter or my own discussion of operational design in Chapter 9), these discussions are focused on policy and operational design implementation, not on education and training in preparation for operations. Moreover, this volume does not examine the cultural content of doctrine or the anecdotal examples of individual units and soldiers' efforts to apply culture to operations in the field. Rather, the book focuses on the translation of policy theory into policy practice, which would eventually inform military education and training and doctrine in the field. An obvious next step would be to carry out such a study.

Organization of the Book

This book is divided into two parts. Part 1 examines how identities, values, and norms shape the military as an organization, in short how culture is an outside force that acts on the military. Part 2 examines how identities, values, and norms inform deployed operations – now referred to as "military engagements." In essence, Part 2 looks at how culture itself is a factor in military planning and operations. In Chapter 1, Stéphanie Bélanger begins with the premise that culture shapes how the experience of combat is remembered. Indeed, she interrogates how combat is witnessed and claims that culture – specifically anglophone

and francophone cultures within the Canadian context – imbues memories of combat experiences. Moreover, the experience of combat amplifies existing anglophone and francophone cultural differences in identities, values, and norms and how they are reproduced. Bélanger measures these features through detailed interviews with recent veterans, and these interviews reveal that anglophone and francophone veterans emphasize different aspects of similar experiences – in this case combat in Afghanistan. There was variation in terms of readiness and perception of success, on the one hand, and impressions of general public gratitude (regardless of what was accomplished), on the other. Moreover, these variations were consistent with self-identified cultural differences. Bélanger closes her chapter with a discussion of the implications of these differences, which range from the challenges of generating a cohesive and consistent fighting force to transitioning that force back to civilian life once the conflict is over.

In Chapter 2, Vanessa Brown and Alan Okros examine the current role of gender in the Canadian Armed Forces as a critical component of understanding how culture is treated by the military. Their central argument is that "gender" in most military contexts refers to women rather than the representation of masculinity and femininity; however, for a number of reasons, the military must now engage with the issues of masculinity and femininity in a meaningful way. Brown and Okros start with a brief history and critical assessment of the evolution of the role and status of women in the Canadian military, highlighting the disconnects between the declarations of victory in achieving "gender integration" and the reality of making gender invisible. They explain why and how the CAF failed to achieve cultural integration, with an emphasis on the inability or unwillingness of the profession to examine the role of masculinity in the military. Brown and Okros then propose a way ahead for the CAF by applying what they call a loose gendered culture as the framework within which to recast soldierly identity.

In the last chapter in Part 1, James McKay claims that the Canadian experience in Afghanistan (2002–11) differed from what Canadians had become accustomed to since the Korean War. Such differences were stark and echoed across Canadian media and through society. Casualties are normally the subject of study in terms of their effects on public opinion polls. There are a number of works in this vein using the same time frame. Yet these studies do not fully examine the relationship between casualties and society. Casualties also influenced how the Canadian government, military, and public dealt with the deaths of CAF personnel overseas. All of this leads to the question of what it means or tells us. McKay explores a number of competing explanations. One might be the

adoption of American customs and practices because of cultural contact or evidence of a military subculture that operates like an epistemic community. Another might be public reactions to government actions. Yet another might be cultural practices adopted by elements of civil society to cope with traumatic events. McKay summarizes Canadian losses from 1945 to 2011 and examines how military deaths were treated in Canada over that period, claiming that there was a shift within Canadian society in terms of how casualties were viewed. Values and norms changed over the time in question, and McKay provides some compelling evidence for this claim.

Having established in Part 1 how culture acts as a force on the military, this book shifts in Part 2 to examine how culture is a factor considered by the military. Kicking off Part 2 is Chapter 4 by Pierre Jolicoeur and Frédéric Labarre. This chapter presents an example of how culture has been leveraged for propaganda, using the conflict in Ukraine as their case study. Accusations of the falsification of media reporting, fake news, and the manipulation of facts have been levelled against Russia and Ukraine equally in the mainstream media, on the internet, and in social networks. Jolicoeur and Labarre consider propaganda as an essential feature of totalitarianism and claim that the dubious reporting witnessed in the context of the Ukrainian conflict invites a return to totalitarian government in Russia. They then claim that the culture of the Russian people and ultimately the culture of its institutions, including the military, are affected by this manipulation. In short, they examine the place of culture in the role of propaganda in establishing totalitarian regimes and how culture affects the military in Russia. Their analysis considers propaganda as both a component and an indicator of totalitarianism because the message orients public aggression and is designed to protect the existing regime by wiping out any competing narrative. Moreover, leveraging culture as propaganda foments fear and a desire to further securitize issues, enhancing the role that the security sector – including the military – will play in the state and further reducing tolerance for divergent opinion.

Building on the work of Jolicoeur and Labarre, Iryna Lysychkina's chapter examines how the concept of image has been used by security sector agencies as a tool to achieve political aims in both the United States and Ukraine. Lysychkina, a recent graduate of the Marshall Center, about which Sokolsky and Lin write later, presents the concept of the "corporate image" as a strategic communication tool for security sector agencies. She first develops a framework for the idea of image for a security sector agency through the concepts of image formation and image reparation. She then applies this model to American and Ukrainian cases. Lysychkina also offers some guidance on how a security

sector agency can include ideas of image formation and reparation in its policy development.

Robert Rubinstein and Corri Zoli write, in Chapter 6, that during the past twenty-five years both militaries and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations have been working in the same areas of operation more frequently than in the past. In response to encounters during complex emergencies, there have been various efforts to enhance their interactions. Some of these efforts have advocated the development of guidelines for cooperation, whereas others have sought to bring these activities into a single and more fully integrated mission. Rubinstein and Zoli use social and cultural analysis to show that these efforts have resulted in short-term gains for interventions in humanitarian crises because of acute events but in long-term losses in humanitarian effectiveness in the context of responses to complex emergencies in ongoing conflicts.

In Chapter 7, Andy Belyea examines the paradox of connection through two mechanisms. First, he examines how culture was used by the CAF during its time in Afghanistan and paints a vivid picture of how the CAF struggled with the unique and competing identities, values, and norms of Afghans. Second, he examines CAF soldiers in Afghanistan through the concept of home and belonging and makes some intriguing connections. Despite increasing connectivity, people continue to feel even more isolated and alone. Belyea examines this paradox by looking at Canadian soldiers recently returned from deployments to Afghanistan. He uses the notion of home and belonging to fully explain how they not only feel alone but also are subject to trauma despite being equipped with the latest in information communication technologies designed to make them feel more interconnected. Belyea claims that, as our perceptions of *home* and *belonging* in particular become ever more mobile, transient, virtual, and unstable, soldiers today are exposed to significantly greater risks of what is being increasingly referred to as "moral injury" and trauma. Indeed, the inability of soldiers to understand the culture in which they are operating simply increases this risk. Cultural education is more than an enabler of operations; it also helps to inoculate soldiers from trauma.

In Chapter 8, Joel Sokolsky and Shaohan Lin argue that militaries use their unique, common cultures to create an epistemic community of sorts or – as they refer to it – a fraternity of the uniform. This sense of belonging and identity is an epistemic-like community whose links are not only professional but also frequently personal and foster a culture of alliance and cooperation. Sokolsky and Lin use the case of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, an American-German undertaking located in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. However, this tendency is countered by NATO's own international

fraternities of politicians and bureaucrats, the latter comprising civilian defence officials and diplomats (some of whom attend the Marshall Center as well) who can also be seen as constituting epistemic-like communities with their own links with counterparts within American and other NATO governments. Sokolsky and Lin examine this tension as well as provide an example of cultural diffusion among various militaries. These cultural ties can both enhance military engagements and provide additional friction.

In Chapter 9, I claim that the concept of the social licence to operate (SLO, a concept from the literature on corporate social responsibility) can help in obtaining local support. Moreover, I argue that, in order to obtain this licence, militaries need to have a better understanding of the cultural dynamics at play. Indeed, to simply know the correct people with whom to engage requires an understanding of the culture of the country in question. I then suggest that social capital can be both a proxy for the dynamic identities, values, and norms that comprise this volume's definition of culture and an analytical tool. I show how understanding the forms of social capital present in a given environment can help soldiers to obtain a social licence from the population in which they are operating. Modern conflict involves more than simply engaging the "enemy" with lethal fire. It includes engaging the local population, and this engagement requires a social licence that cannot be obtained through the threat or use of force alone.

Finally, Stéfanie von Hlatky offers some concluding thoughts that present not only the major thematic findings of the volume but also a series of implications for both policy and future research on this growing and important topic of how culture is used by and understood in the security and defence community. The conclusion weaves together the two faces of culture for military engagements: how culture has shaped the military and how the military has used culture. More importantly, it offers some tentative recommendations and forecasts for future military engagements.

Culture has received extensive theoretical treatment. Indeed, this discussion is but a fraction of the extensive and ongoing research on culture, but it does illustrate the limitations of the scholarship in that, because of the extent of theorizing, it is at risk of being overtheorized. Relatedly, this focus on theory has come at the expense of utility. Especially within the security sector, and the defence policy subfield in particular, culture is often acknowledged but rarely engaged. In short, we are asking practitioners to make the "cultural turn." Further analysis is needed, however, and the chapters in this book do just that: they present some compelling analyses of and lay the foundations for culture to be meaningfully understood and employed in contemporary military engagements.