The Cultural Element in NATO Military Doctrines: Important, but a Declarative Issue?

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Abstract. Despite the historically perceived importance of the cultural element in warfare, after the end of the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and other culturally distant countries, it is believed that the cultural element has lost its importance. According to some experts, the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine marks a return to conventional warfare, in which a state's material military capabilities play the most significant role in determining its power. But in fact, in this war, soft interoperability, the most essential aspect of which is the cultural element, gained considerable prominence by demonstrating once again that understanding one's own culture and values comes before understanding others. This study aims to look at the cultural element more broadly through the prism of interoperability and, specifically, through soft interoperability, and answer the question of how the cultural element, specifically the cultural competencies of military personnel, is manifested in NATO military doctrines, given that NATO is an international security organization with obligations that extend beyond simple defence.
Keywords: Soft Interoperability, Cultural Element, Cultural Competencies, NATO Military Doctrines.

Kultūrinis elementas NATO karinėse doktrinose – svarbus, tačiau deklaratyvus klausimas?

Santrauka. Nepaisant istoriškai suvoktos kultūrinio elemento reikšmės karyboje, pasibaigus karams Irake, Afganistane, Sirijoje ir kitose kultūriškai nutolusiose šalyse, kultūrinio elemento svarba karyboje sumažėjo. Dalies ekspertų teigimu, Rusijos invazija į Ukrainą

žymi grįžimą prie konvencinės karybos, kurioje didžiausią įtaką turi valstybės materia-
liniai kariniai pajėgumai. Visgi net ir šiame kare švelnioji sąveika, kurios svarbiausias
komponentas – kultūrinis elementas, dar kartą įrodė savo svarbą, patvirtindama, kad savos
kultūros ir vertybių supratimas karyboje ne mažiau svarbus nei kitų kultūrų pažinimas.
Šiuo tyrimu siekiama pažvelgti į kultūrinį elementą per sąveikumo prizmę, ypač – švel-
niąją sąveiką, ir atsakyti į klausimą, kaip kultūrinis elementas, konkrečiai – karių kultū-
rinės kompetencijos, reiškiasi NATO karinėse doktrinose, atsižvelgiant į tai, kad NATO
yra tarptautinė saugumo organizacija, kurios įsipareigojimai peržengia įprastą, išimtinai
materialiais ištekliais grindžiamą, gynybą.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: švelnioji sąveika, kultūrinis elementas, kultūrinės kompetencijos,
NATO karinės doktrinos.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, small wars, peacekeeping missions, and
non-military missions of varying asymmetrical degrees and intensities
have gained importance in military planning. Additionally, the expan-
sion of international terrorism and the growing number of military
interventions globally have significantly altered the strategic, opera-
tional, and tactical thinking in the preparation of military operations.[1]
In order to adapt to the challenges posed by the changed security en-
vironment, the Western armed forces have made significant efforts to
improve interoperability in joint operations involving different military
branches or while cooperating in multinational coalitions.[2] While in-
teroperability is universally agreed to be required across Western mil-
itary services, many academics and practitioners are now recognizing
the significance of the soft dimensions of interoperability, the most es-
sential aspect of which is the cultural element.[3]

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[1]   Wilfried von Bredow, "New Wars, MOOTW, CRO, Terrorism, and the Military," in
Social Sciences and the Military: An Interdisciplinary Overview, ed. Giuseppe Cafo-
rio (Cass Military Studies, Routledge; 1st edition, 2006), 170–171.

[2]   Steven Paget, "Mind over Matter? Multinational Naval Interoperability during Oper-
ation Iraqi Freedom," *Defense and Security Analysis* 36, no. 1 (2020): 65–87, https://
doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2020.1712025.

[3]   Anna Danielsson, "Producing the Military Urban(s): Interoperability, Space-Making,
and Epistemic Distinctions between Military Services in Urban Operations," *Political
Geography* 97, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102649.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a useful example of how having superior technology is no longer a guarantee of military success, even in conventional warfare. In this war, soft interoperability gained considerable prominence by demonstrating once again that understanding one's own culture and values comes before understanding others. Despite the perceived significance of the cultural element in warfare,[4] academic research on the institutionalization of the cultural element in military doctrines is still in short supply. At the NATO level, although interoperability receives a lot of attention, the cultural element as a fundamental component of soft interoperability does not. Research on the cultural element is often directed to the implementation of cultural competencies in practice. For example, Anne Julia Hagen in her paper focuses on two NATO member states and their armed forces, the United States and Germany, and investigates the role that cross-cultural competence has for NATO in a military context.[5] In a paper published by Febbraro et al., experts from a NATO research task group analyze multinational coalition forces and the various relevant cultural difficulties they face from a theoretical and practical experience standpoint.[6] The development of theoretical models, the institutionalization of the cultural element in military doctrines, and the practical application of the cultural element are often given significant emphasis by NATO member states.[7]

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[4]   See Frank Jacob and Gilmar Visoni-Alonzo, "The Theory of a Military Revolution: Global, Numerous, Endless?", *RUHM* 6, no. 3 (2015): 189–204, 204, also Patric Porter, "Good Anthropology, Bad History: America's Cultural Turn in the War on Terror," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Languages and Conflict,* eds. Michael Kelly, Hilary Footitt, Myriam Salama-Carr (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04825-9_2, 2019: 29–50, 47. Also Sarah S. Kaiser, *Intercultural Perceptions* (Air Command and Staff College, Air University, 2016), 15.

[5]   Anne J. Hagen, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Cross-Cultural Competence. A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing? Cross-Cultural Competence in NATO and Its Missions* (Germany: Universität Potsdam, 2022), https://doi.org/10.25932/publishup-53446.

[6]   Angela R. Febbraro et al., *Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors* (Neuilly-Surseine: NATO Research and Technology Organization, 2008).

[7]   See Robert Albro and Bill Ivey (eds.), *Cultural Awareness in the Military: Developments and Implications for Future Humanitarian Cooperation* (Palgrave Pivot, London,

This research aims to look at the cultural element more broadly, through the prism of soft interoperability, and answer the question of how the cultural element, specifically the cultural competencies of military personnel, manifests itself in NATO military doctrines. An analysis of the cultural element in NATO military doctrines is chosen for several reasons. Firstly, NATO implements the greatest number of wide-range international operations; therefore, NATO military forces experience the greatest need for soft interoperability. Secondly, the principle of the operation of the organization itself – the interaction of armies of different states – increases the need for soft interoperability while states cooperate and coordinate their activities. Thirdly, NATO military doctrines are covered by NATO standardization agreements (STANAG), which have been ratified by member countries. It implies that the systemic level regulates the unit level by implementing a cultural element. Therefore, the object of the study is the cultural element – particularly the cultural competencies of military personnel – in the NATO military doctrines.

The application of the document analysis method is aimed at disclosing how and in which NATO military doctrines the cultural element is highlighted, without assessing the implementation of the cultural element in practice. The method of content analysis aims to systematically examine military doctrines and reveal how the cultural element is manifested in different military doctrines. The chosen information analysis methods are analysis of primary data, qualitative content analysis, and the interpretative method.

2018), also John Bird, "Culture, Regional Expertise and Language (CREL) Competency: Ramping-up for Global Response and Regional Engagement," *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin*, 2014, 6–10, also Pieter R. DeVisser and Robert Greene Sands, "Integrating Culture General and Cross-Cultural Competence and Communication Skills: Possibilities for the Future of Military Language and Culture Programs," *The Journal of Culture, Language, and International Security* 1, no. 1 (2014): 34–63, also Michelle Wisecarver et al., *Sociocultural Components of Mission Performance: Development of a Taxonomy of Performance Requirements* (Technical Report, Fort Belvoir: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2015).

The qualitative analysis of NATO military doctrines is based on the following aims:

1. To determine the types of military doctrines that include the cultural element.
2. To reveal how the cultural element is manifested in doctrinal documents.
3. To assess and classify NATO military doctrines according to the manifestation of the cultural element.

In the research, the primary analysis period comprised all the documents addressing NATO's involvement in international operations after the Cold War, from August 1990 to January 2022. Since the definition of the cultural element varies depending on the document, all terms, including "culture," "cultural," and "culturally," were examined in the open access military doctrines on the official NATO website (www.nato.int). In total, 79 terms associated with the cultural element were found during the research (see Annex 2). All these keywords were subjected to content analysis in order to distinguish doctrines that contain a cultural element as part of the cultural competencies of military personnel from those that only occasionally mention the word "culture" in all of its forms and are therefore irrelevant to the cultural element as part of the cultural competencies of military personnel. Secondary analysis includes the latest versions (editions) of military doctrines to avoid repeating information from other editions. A total of 45 doctrines (see Annex 1) were selected, which includes the cultural element and covers the term from 2011 to 2022.

1. Soft Interoperability: The Human Dimension of War

Interoperability, which can be defined as "the ability to understand and respond to the intentions and actions of a multinational partner,"[8] or the "measure of the degree to which various organizations or indi-

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8   Steven Paget, "Mind over Matter? Multinational Naval Interoperability during Operation Iraqi Freedom," *Defense and Security Analysis* 36, no. 1 (2020): 65–87, https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2020.1712025.

viduals are able to operate together to achieve a common goal,"[9] has become an essential element for military effectiveness. The human dimensions of interoperability are equally, if not more, vital at each of the strategic, operational, and tactical levels, yet historically, the focus of interoperability has tended to be placed on equipment and technology.[10] Some scholars distinguish organizational, technical, and soft interoperability. Soft interoperability refers to the "dimension of interoperability that is governed by human responses in the form of behaviour patterns (actions) by individuals and groups to their perceptions of the security environment."[11] As stated by John Nisser, "this perspective revolves primarily around interoperability as procedure and culture rather than technology."[12]

The academic debate over soft interoperability can be summarized as focusing on how militaries perceive, understand, and communicate the environment in which they operate and how this influences how they behave.[13] According to Blad and Potts, the traditional NATO understanding of interoperability has been largely based on technical issues, such as common message formats and data presentation protocols.[14] However, as stated in NATO's technical report, such an understanding is not appropriate for multinational actions following the Cold War: "an understanding of interoperability that takes into account dimensions such as doctrine, command and control, rules of engagement, standardized operating procedures, training and logis-

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[9]   Myron Hura et al., *Interoperability: A Continuing Challenge in Coalition Air Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2000), 7 as cited in Steven Paget, *supra note 8,* 42.

[10]   Yves Boyer, "This Way to the Revolution!" *RUSI Journal 144*, no. 2 (April/May 1999): 48 as cited in Steven Paget, *supra note 9*, 42–43.

[11]   Anna Danielsson, *supra note 3*.

[12]   John Nisser, "Integration is the New Black: Thoughts on Future Warfare in Academic and Military Discourses," *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies* 5, no. 1 (2022): 398–411, http://doi.org/10.31374/sjms.169.

[13]   Anna Danielsson, *supra note 3*.

[14]   Tim Blad and David Potts, "Beyond Interoperability: Part 1," in *The Big Issue: Command and Control in the Information Age*, ed. David Potts (Washington DC: Department of Defense Command and Control Research Program, 2004), as cited in Angela R. Febbraro et al. (eds.), *supra note 6,* 1–3.

tics (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."[15] The terminology used to describe soft interoperability is varied, which in some instances reflects cultural features of its use. For example, in the United States, the preferred term is "co-operability," in the United Kingdom – "interoperability of the mind," and in Germany – *einheit im denken* ("unity in thought"). All these terms embody the idea of soft interoperability, also known as human interoperability, cognitive interoperability, intellectual interoperability, and epistemic interoperability, which is essentially a shared understanding.[16] At all levels of implementation, soft interoperability focuses primarily on human characteristics and abilities. It involves partnerships, liaisons, education and training, and linguistic skills and ranges from individualized communication to standardized and executable capabilities that maximize national contributions.[17]

On the one hand, soft interoperability is inseparable from technical interoperability. According to Winslow and Everts, mission success is influenced not only by system interoperability but also by operational and, in particular, cultural interoperability.[18] "Cultural differences 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.'"[19] On the other hand, the cultural element is the main part of soft interopera-

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[15] Montgomery McFate, "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 38 (2005): 42–48, as cited Angela R. Febbraro et al., *supra note 6*, 1–3.

[16] Angela R. Febbraro et al., *supra note 6*, 1–3.

[17] Duane A. Gamble and Michelle M. T. Letcher, "The Three Dimensions of Interoperability for Multinational Training at the JMRC," *Army Sustainment* (September–October 2016): 18.

[18] Angela R. Febbraro et al., *supra note 6*, 1–3.

[19] Holly A. H. Handley et al., *Levels of Interoperability in Coalition Systems* (Fairfax, VA: Lockheed, 2001), as cited in Angela R. Febbraro et al., *supra note 6*, 1–3.

bility. Rita Palaghia presents this relationship as a formula: "Cultural knowledge + Intercultural communication = Cultural harmonization = The increase of the level of interoperability in multinational coalition"[20] and explains that "cultural competence and intercultural communication are representing a key element in building the ratio with other cultures, representing the important abilities of the personnel from NATO and partners' military cultures."[21] Steven Paget agrees with such a statement, and makes an argument based on historical examples that "cultural factors have proven to be a source of friction throughout the history of multinational operations, with the consequences ranging from inconvenience to impediments to cohesion and success <…>. As the composition of multinational operations became more diverse, the problems were exacerbated."[22] The author bases this statement on the fact that during the Second World War, there was apparently "a great deal of friction over perceived cultural sensitivities"[23] among the closest allies, such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

As a result, soft interoperability is a multifaceted and complex concept that can manifest itself on both vertical and horizontal levels. When discussing soft interoperability, it is appropriate to go beyond the importance of cultural challenges in coalition operations, particularly those in different cultural environments like Afghanistan or Iraq. Soft interoperability should be explored both vertically and horizontally. On the one hand, according to Greene et al., deployed troops may encounter a variety of cultural clashes. Examples of these clashes include those between military and civilian cultures, as well as those between the local population and non-military personnel who frequently deploy to operating theatres; additionally – those that

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[20]   Rita Palaghia, "Translate Cultural Harmonization and Knowledge Models Used in Military Training and Operations," International Conference RCIC'20 "Redefining Community in Intercultural Context," Cluj, 7–9 May 2020.

[21]   Ibid.

[22]   Steven Paget, *supra note 8*, 42–43.

[23]   Ibid., 42–43.

include numerous services and military units from different countries during joint and international operations, as well as those that involve private military and security companies.[24] Horizontal Interoperability includes "the way various component organizations collaborate in an Area of Operation <…> in an effort enhance the ability of the agencies, organizations, and people who are part of a mission to work together in an efficient and effective manner."[25] Vertical Interoperability includes "the way that the organizations, agencies and people – both military and civilian – work with local populations."[26] According to Robert Albro, mission members sometimes struggle to reach this degree of interoperability due to cultural differences. Even though providing security to local communities is high on the priority list for missions, what security means to mission planners may not be the same as what it means to local inhabitants.[27] Additionally, "these culture clashes can impact both the mental health and the operational functioning of armed forces personnel."[28]

Soft interoperability, on the other hand, should not be attributed only to multinational operations experience. As stated by Joseph Soeters and Tibor Szvircsev Tresch, numerous case studies have shown that there are considerable distinctions across national armed forces, even within NATO. For example, "differences in the general belief in military solutions, the use of violence (the warrior versus the humanitarian approach) <…> may lead to subtle or not so subtle differences in operational styles that may be fairly consequential."[29] This indicates that soft interoperability also considers military culture as "'intellectual' interoperability becomes the most important

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24 Talya Greene et al., "The Impact of Culture Clash on Deployed Troops," *Military Medicine* 175 (2010): 958–963, 958, https://doi.org/10.7205/milmed-d-10-00146.

25 Robert Albro and Bill Ivey (eds.), *supra note 7,* 60–61.

26 Ibid., 59–60.

27 Ibid., 60–61.

28 Talya Greene et al., *supra note 24*, 958.

29 Joseph Soeters and Tibor Szvircsev Tresch, "Towards Cultural Integration in Multinational Peace Operations," *Defence Studies* 10, no. 1–2 (2010): 272–287, 275, https://doi.org/10.1080/14702430903155175.

feature of a reformed military culture."[30] Soeters and Tresch draw attention to the fact that when national military forces are expected to collaborate on NATO and UN missions, it is evident that these differences will cause issues.[31] However, it is important to note that not all academics agree with the attribution of military culture to soft interoperability. For example, Paget makes the argument that the reference that is sometimes made to a common military culture is "a vague and unsatisfactory benchmark for interoperability. Although a shared culture provides a foundation, significant work is still required to reach a level of cultural interoperability which allows for the full spectrum of operations."[32] Regardless of scholarly debates on how extensively soft interoperability may be understood, it is obvious that soft interoperability is not solely a feature of international operations conducted in culturally diverse regions; it includes multifaceted cooperation between military personnel and civilians.

Despite the growing relevance of soft interoperability in academic circles and NATO reports, Nancy DeViney and Edgar Buckley argue that NATO's traditional behavioral tendencies are no longer compatible with its vocation and mission: "the fundamental cultural problem is that it has not adapted its political approach and military means to match its modern role as an international security organization with responsibilities going beyond simple defense. It remains a bureaucratic organization which prioritizes process over substance, hierarchy over results, and accounting over value-for-money. It is far too inflexible and resistant to changes <…>."[33] Considering the criticism the Alliance has received, it is appropriate to look at how NATO's military doctrines represent the cultural element that forms the basis of soft interoperability. The following analysis will look

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[30] Pierre Jolicoeur, "Defense Education Enhancement Program in Ukraine: The Limits of NATO's Education Program," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 17, no. 3 (2018): 109–119, 109, https://doi.org/10.11610/Connections.17.3.08.

[31] Joseph Soeters and Tibor Szvircsev Tresch, *supra note 29, 275–276.*

[32] Steven Paget, *supra note 8*, 44.

[33] Nancy DeViney and Edgar Buckley, "Change Management and Cultural Transformation in NATO: Lessons from the Public and Private Sectors," Atlantic Council, 2012, 2.

at soft interoperability as a set of cultural competencies of military personnel in NATO military doctrines.

2. The Cultural Element in NATO Military Doctrines

Based on an analysis NATO's military doctrines, which include the cultural competencies of military personnel, these are divided into four major groups (see Annex 1):

1. Doctrines for functional professionals (e.g., doctrines intended for security force assistance, civil-military cooperation, etc.);
2. Doctrines for asymmetrical warfare (e.g., doctrines intended for humanitarian assistance, peace support operations, stability policing, stabilization and reconstruction, urban tactics, etc.);
3. Doctrines for the cultural environment (e.g. doctrines intended for the environmental file during NATO-led activities or the environmental management system in NATO military activities, environmental protection for military camps in NATO operations; environmental protection for sustainability of military training areas, etc.);
4. General military doctrines (e.g., Allied Joint Doctrine, Allied Joint Doctrine for Force Protection, Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations, Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations, Allied Joint Doctrine for the Deployment and Redeployment of Forces, Allied Joint Doctrine for the Planning of Operations, etc.).

The first tendency in NATO military doctrines is to include the cultural element in the doctrines dedicated for functional professionals. NATO integrates cultural competencies into military planning when developing and regulating civil-military cooperation. Namely, the doctrine[34] states that CIMIC analyze the context of the

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[34] NATO Standard AJP-3.4.9(A), *Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2013).

culture in which an international operation takes place and provide support in planning and implementing international operations, conduct cultural training, and ensure effective cooperation between the military and civilian domains. Another military doctrine dedicated to functional specialists is The Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance,[35] which devotes special attention to acquiring knowledge of other cultures, as it states that " <…> NATO will need to interact with different cultures (including those within NATO) and work with those who may have different beliefs, political structures and approaches to operations. <…> NATO must show cultural respect towards their partners."[36]

In addition, the multidimensional nature of cultural competencies is emphasized in this doctrine, both in the co-operation of military personnel within the international forces and in the interactions with the local forces of the country where the international operation takes place. It is also noteworthy to mention that this doctrine reveals in full detail that the cultural element in warfare is important at strategic, operational, and tactical levels: "At the strategic level, it supports decision-making and the development of the best strategy to effectively address the situation. <…> At the operational level, it supports the adoption of the most suitable ways of communicating with the various actors. <…> At the tactical level, it supports the development of awareness and understanding to help mitigate risks <…> and build relationships."[37]

The second trend in NATO doctrines is to include the cultural element in the doctrines for asymmetrical warfare. In these doctrines, asymmetrical warfare is closely linked to winning the hearts and minds of the local population; for example, NATO's Allied Joint Doctrine for Counterinsurgency of 2016 emphasizes the following: "in operations that take place 'among the people,' <…> NATO forces

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[35] NATO Standard AJP-3.16, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance (SFA),* Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016).

[36] Ibid., 1–14, 1–16.

[37] Ibid., 1–14, 16.

must, therefore, be focused on the mission and sensitive to the population by understanding its socio-culture factors, politics and history, while attacking the insurgents' network <...>."[38] The doctrine also stresses that the cultural element remains inevitably a part of such operations: "An effective counter-insurgent force needs to have a (often hard-earned) cultural understanding as well as a more general understanding of the societal, economic and political landscape of the affected country <...>."[39]

Over the last years, the cultural element in NATO has begun to be incorporated into a broader range of military doctrines dedicated to asymmetrical warfare. The importance of the cultural element is highlighted in the Allied Joint Doctrine for Military Contribution to Peace Support,[40] NATO Allied Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations,[41] NATO Allied Joint Doctrine for Force Protection,[42] and Allied Joint Doctrine for the Military Contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction.[43] Given that the cultural element is included in NATO military doctrines dedicated to asymmetrical warfare, there is a clear tendency to associate the cultural element with gaining the support of local people and attribute it to:

  a) Situational awareness, which provides soldiers with (basic) knowledge when navigating a different cultural environment: "The cultural information should identify who the major groups are, what they care about (and potentially fight over),

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38 NATO Standard AJP-3.4.4, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Counterinsurgency (Coin)*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016), 1–4.

39 Ibid., 1–6.

40 NATO Standard AJP-3.4.1, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Peace Support,* Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2014).

41 NATO Standard AJP-3.10.1, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations*, Edition A, Version 1 (NATO Standardization Office. Brussels: NATO Standardization Office), 2014.

42 NATO Standard AJP-3.14, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Force Protection*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2015).

43 NATO Standard AJP-3.4.5, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2015).

how they normally regulate society and solve disputes, the traditional authorities, disruptions to traditional mechanisms/ authorities, and how "bad guys" and "good guys" can or do take advantage of these factors."[44]

b) Influence building, which helps the coalition forces in winning over the people to their cause: "Building influence among the population requires knowledge of the socio-cultural factors, respect for their dignity and human rights, clearly explaining counter-insurgent intentions, and aiming to take advantage of insurgent mistakes in terms of legitimacy and rationality <...>. The battle of the narratives becomes the battle of actions and for effective influence of the relevant populations."[45]

It may be claimed that these doctrines are concentrated on a larger group of troops and include all military personnel engaged in international operations, especially in nations with diverse cultures. Even if the effectiveness of the "hearts and minds" as a counterinsurgency strategy has been questioned,[46] these doctrines clearly indicate that the cultural element is one of, if not the primary component, of this strategy.

The third tendency in NATO military doctrines is to include the cultural element in the doctrines dedicated for the cultural environment. In these doctrines, the cultural element is most closely associated with cultural heritage and cultural property protection. Cultural heritage protection in the context of NATO military doctrines is perceived as a part of cultural competencies: "Understanding and being sensitive to local customs, beliefs, convictions and heritage is crucial to mission success."[47] NATO Standard AASTP-5 also emphasizes the importance of cultural facilities: "An awareness of

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[44] Ibid., A-4.

[45] NATO Standard ATRAINP-1, *Training and Education for Peace Support Operations States*, Edition D, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2019), 1–9.

[46] Jacqueline L. Hazelton, *Bullets not Ballots: Success in Counterinsurgency Warfare* (Cornell University Press, 2021).

[47] NATO Standard AJP-3.19, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation,* Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2018), 1–6.

cultural sites such as graveyards, religious buildings or other cultural sites must be maintained."[48]

Moreover, cultural property protection is closely connected to the implementation of tactical and strategical objectives, e.g., "[d]amage to cultural property will most likely attract negative publicity to the operation and may therefore give rise to tactical problems or even result in conflict escalation" or "[d]amage to cultural property can thus complicate the attainment of the desired strategic end state and thereby undermine mission success."[49] When a cultural element appears in NATO military doctrines as part of cultural competencies, it typically involves rudimentary knowledge of other cultures but does not focus on cultural property protection as part of cultural competencies. Although other NATO doctrines, such as those devoted to asymmetrical warfare, do not explicitly state that cultural property protection comprehends cultural competencies, it can be presumed that NATO regards cultural property protection as part of cultural competencies.

The fourth trend in NATO doctrines is to include the cultural element into the general military doctrines of the Alliance. These NATO military doctrines usually exclusively emphasize the importance of the cultural element, and to be more precise – cultural competencies, without going into further detail. For example: "A key part of understanding the population is having cultural competence and an intimate knowledge of what causes and perpetuates insurgency"[50]; "Cultural understanding will be critical to determining threat motives that drive decisions."[51] These NATO military doctrines stress the im-

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[48] NATO Standard AASTP-5, *NATO Guidelines for the Storage*, Maintenance and Transport of Ammunition on Deployed Missions or Operations, Edition A, Version 3 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016), 2–11.

[49] NATO Standard AJEPP-2, *Environmental Protection Best Practices and Standards for Military Camps in NATO Operations*, Edition A, Version 2 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2018), I-1.

[50] NATO Standard AJP-3, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Conduct of Operations*, Edition C, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2019), 1–29.

[51] NATO Standard AJP-01, *Allied Joint Doctrine* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2017), 3–16.

portance not only of cultural competencies but also of cultural advisors, culturally competent leaders, and the risk of cultural misunderstandings. For example, "[c]ultural misunderstandings can result in grievances that may, particularly if combined with other influences, lead to insider attacks."[52]

It should be mentioned that there are other military doctrines which sporadically incorporate a cultural element (e.g., the Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations, Guidance on Configuration Management, a Psychological Guide for Leaders Across the Deployment Cycle, etc.). However, this cannot be named as a trend; it is more about a sporadic emphasis on the cultural element that cannot be generalized in one category. Aspects related to the cultural element can be found in these doctrines, such as cultural norms,[53] cultural diversity,[54] culturally strange surroundings,[55] and cultural advisors.[56]

3. Nature of the Cultural Element in NATO Military Doctrines

Considering the four categories of military doctrines identified in the preceding chapter, where the cultural competencies of military personnel are emphasized, it is obvious that the cultural element is seen in a very limited context. Most often, in these military doctrines, the cultural element is seen as the knowledge of another (non-alliance state's) cultural environment, especially when interacting with local

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[52] NATO Standard ATP-3.16.1, *Countering Insider Threats (CIT).* Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016), 2–2, 2–3.

[53] NATO Standard AJP-3.20, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2020).

[54] NATO Standard AMEDP-1.18, *Requirements of Group Operational Rations for Military Use*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2019).

[55] NATO Standard AMEDP-8.10, *A Psychological Guide for Leaders Across the Deployment Cycle*, Edition A, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2019).

[56] NATO Standard AJP-3.9, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Joint Targeting*, Edition B, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2021).

forces or local people where the international operation is conducted. If the cultural element in NATO's military doctrines was to be considered within a broader framework, in terms of soft interoperability, greater emphasis would be placed on the cooperation of military branches and cooperation among alliance militaries. It is reasonable to assume that the cultural element in NATO's military doctrines is limited to asymmetric warfare, with no intention of transferring the cultural element to conventional warfare as a means of strengthening soft interoperability.

Even though the cultural element in NATO's military doctrines is considered in a relatively narrow context, other challenges when analyzing the cultural competencies of military personnel in NATO military doctrines emerge. Despite the importance of the cultural element in NATO's doctrines, the highly declarative nature of the cultural element is noticeable in these documents. Many NATO doctrines, especially general ones, emphasize only the importance of the cultural competencies and consequences of cultural failures. Despite numerous attempts to define cultural competencies in NATO doctrines, the vast majority of these doctrines fail to make clear what is meant by cultural competencies or what kind of competencies should be learned. For example: "NATO forces must, therefore, be focused on the mission and sensitive to the population by understanding its socio-culture factors, politics and history, while attacking the insurgents' network"[57] or "cultural understanding will be critical to determining threat motives that drive decisions,"[58] and "a key part of understanding the population is having cultural competence and an intimate knowledge of what causes and perpetuates insurgency."[59]

The cultural element is usually declared in very abstract terms and in some ways is reminiscent of a meaningless idea. The consequenc-

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[57] NATO Standard ATRAINP-1, *Training and Education for Peace Support Operations States*, Edition D, Version 1 (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2019), 1–4.

[58] NATO Standard AJP-01, *Allied Joint Doctrine*, *supra note 51*, 3–16.

[59] NATO Standard AJP-3, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Conduct of Operations*, *supra note 50*, 1–29.

es of cultural failures are quite clearly detailed in NATO doctrines: "Cultural misunderstanding may: 1. damage the legitimacy, credibility and public support of both NATO and the HN; 2. unsettle the political narrative; 3. fuel retaliation; 4. create barriers to interaction with the HN; 5. lead to alienation; and 6. turn benign actors against the mission."[60] Also, "cultural misunderstandings can result in grievances that may, particularly if combined with other influences, lead to insider attacks. To counter this, personnel should be culturally adaptive."[61]

It is noteworthy to mention that one of the fundamental issues, (nuclear) deterrence, is typically addressed by NATO's declaratory policy.[62] "NATO has always had a declaratory policy – defined as a set of public statements about the circumstances in which a state or group of states would consider using nuclear weapons."[63] In addition to supporting the Alliance's commitments to arms control and disarmament, this strategy has been crucial in explaining to internal and external audiences how nuclear weapons contribute to collective deterrence and defense.[64] Applying declarative language to the cultural element creates conditions for mistakenly connecting this element with deterrence but not with the element of strengthening the Alliance's militaries, which would be in line with the Alliance's trend to use declarative policy only for deterrence.

However, it is also important to draw attention to another issue in addition to the declarative nature of the cultural component in NATO

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[60] NATO Standard AJP-3.16, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance (SFA), supra note 35*, 1–12.

[61] Ibid., 2–3.

[62] See Brien M. Mazanec and Bradley A. Thayer, "Developing a Declaratory Policy and Offensive Cyber Weapons," in *Deterring Cyber Warfare: Bolstering Strategic Stability in Cyberspace* (Palgrave Pivot, London, 2015), https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137476180_6; also, Malcolm Chalmers, "Words That Matter? NATO Declaratory Policy and the DDPR," in *Reducing Nuclear Risks in Europe: A Framework for Action*, eds. Steve Andreasen, Isabelle Williams (Washington, D.C.: Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2011).

[63] Chalmers, *supra note 62*.

[64] Ibid.

military doctrines. The profusion of terminology describing cultural competencies in the NATO doctrines renders the usage of these terms speculative. This problem arises primarily from academic debates. In the academic literature, a considerable number of definitions describing cultural competencies are employed. The most frequent are these: cultural adaptability,[65] cultural expertise,[66] cultural capability,[67] cultural intelligence,[68] cultural sensitivity,[69] cultural literacy,[70] cultural awareness,[71] cultural understanding,[72] cultural knowledge,[73] and intercultural competencies or cross-cultural competencies.[74]

An even more complicated situation is noticed in NATO military doctrines where an even wider and more complex range of terminology describing cultural competencies can be seen. In the analyzed

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[65] See Janet L. Sutton and E. Gundling, "Enabling Cultural Adaptability," in *Strategies to Maintain Combat Readiness during Extended Deployments – A Human Systems Approach* (Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, 2005), 12–1, 12–10.

[66] Michelle Wisecarver et al., *Regional Expertise and Culture Proficiency* (Defense Language and National Security Education Office, 2012).

[67] See Alisson Abbe, *Building Cultural Capability for Full-Spectrum Operations*, ARI Study Report (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Science, 2008).

[68] See John P. Coles, "Cultural Intelligence & Joint Intelligence Doctrine," *Joint Operations Review* (Joint Forces Staff College, 2005), 1–14.

[69] See Boas Shamir and Eyal Ben-Ari, "Leadership in an Open Army? Civilian Connections, Interorganizational Frameworks and Changes in Military Leadership," in *Out-Of-The-Box Leadership: Transforming the Twenty-First-Century Army and Other Top-Performing Organizations,* eds. James G. Hunt et al. (Stamford, Conn.: JAI Press, 1999), 15–40.

[70] See Maxie McFarland, "Military Cultural Education," *Military Review* 85 (2005): 62–69.

[71] See William D. Wunderle, *Through the Lens of Cultural Awareness: A Primer for US Armed Forces Deploying to Arab and Middle Eastern Countries* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006).

[72] See Prisco R. Hernandez, "Developing Cultural Understanding in Stability Operations: A Three Step Process," *Field Artillery Journal*, January–February, 2007, 5–10.

[73] See Markus Kienscherf, "Plugging Cultural Knowledge into The U.S. Military Machine: The Neo-Orientalist Logic of Counterinsurgency," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 23–24, (2010): 121–143, https://doi.org/10.3138/topia.23-24.121.

[74] Allison Abbe and Stanley H. Halpin, "The Cultural Imperative for Professional Military Education and Leader Development," *Parameters* 39, no. 4 (2010): 21–31.

103

NATO doctrines, the concepts found that are related to cultural competencies are: cultural and religious affiliation and understanding, cultural awareness, cultural capability(-ies), cultural competence, cultural expertise, cultural sensitivity(-ies), situational awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural experience, cultural understanding, cultural identity, cultural sensibilities, and culturally adaptive. It is noteworthy that there are no trends indicating that some terminologies were more popular during one era than another in terms of when they were employed. In various military doctrines, all the terms are employed simultaneously, and occasionally, different terms are used in the same doctrine.

Despite a wide profusion of terminology used in NATO doctrinal documents, only definitions of cultural awareness, cultural understanding, cultural adaptability, and cultural capability can be found. Interestingly, the definitions of all these four terms are almost indistinguishable; therefore, it is unclear whether cultural awareness, cultural understanding, cultural adaptability, and cultural capability are used in military doctrines as synonyms or not. NATO Standards AJP-3.19[75] and AJP-3.4.5[76] provide a definition of cultural awareness; however, the definitions of the same term are different in these doctrines. In NATO Standard AJP-3.19, cultural awareness is defined as "understanding and being sensitive to local customs, beliefs, convictions and heritage is crucial to mission success. A violation of local laws, traditions or customs may inadvertently create a highly unfavourable situation and seriously undermine the mission."[77] In NATO Standard AJP-3.4.5, cultural awareness is defined as "understanding and being sensitive to local customs, mores, culture and ways of life is crucial for mission success. In a politically sensitive environment,

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[75] NATO Standard AJP-3.19, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation Edition*, *supra note 47*.

[76] NATO Standard AJP-3.4.5, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction*, *supra note 43*.

[77] NATO Standard AJP-3.19, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation Edition*, *supra note 47*, 1–6.

a violation of a local law or custom can create a highly unfavourable news event and seriously undermine the mission."[78] The first definition emphasizes local convictions and heritage, while the second one focuses on local ways of life. The question arises as to what is a bigger priority for culturally "aware" military personnel – knowing local convictions and heritage or the local ways of life? It is conceivable to suppose that there is no emphasis on a specific definition of cultural awareness and that the maxim "understanding something about another culture, no matter what" is applied.

The definition of cultural understanding is presented only in NATO Standard AJP-3.16: "understanding different cultures demands knowing: <…> 1. How people and their societies are organized; 2. What their beliefs and values are; and 3. The ways in which they interact with each other and outsiders."[79] The definition of cultural capability states that "personnel to be deployed should receive adequate training in cultural capability, covering among other aspects: society; social interaction; food; table manners; gender issues; religion; customs; history; geography; politics; and institutions."[80] This type of definition assumes that cultural awareness, cultural understanding, and cultural capability are focused on the acquisition of culture-specific knowledge but not culture-general knowledge.

Culture-specific knowledge covers the knowledge of military personnel of what to know (the facts). Culture-specific competencies in most cases comprise knowledge on the economic, religious, and historical environment, social infrastructure, local population, politics, national and religious holidays, geographical, and the climatic and topographical state of the country where the operation is conducted. Culture-general competence usually incorporates knowledge on how

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[78] NATO Standard AJP-3.4.5, *Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction*, *supra note 43,* D-3.

[79] NATO Standard AJP-3.16, *Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance (SFA)* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2016), 1–11.

[80] NATO Standard Alingp-1, *Linguistic Support for Operations* (Brussels: NATO Standardization Office, 2011), 4–5.

to think: communicating with representatives of another culture, interpreting situations from a different cultural perspective, adjusting one's behavior to seek the desired results.[81] In other words, cultural competencies are perceived within a very narrow framework in NATO doctrines. The predominating opinion in academic research is that cultural competencies, which exclusively cover a culture-specific element as factual knowledge about a country where the international operation is planned or is being carried out, are insufficient for the activities of military during international operations. The culture-specific element is applied exclusively at the tactical-operational level.[82]

The most questionable in NATO military doctrines is the definition of cultural adaptability. The NATO Standard ATP-3.16.1 states that "the key characteristics of good cultural adaptability are cultural awareness, interaction, skilful rapport-building, respectfulness, self-reflection, and self-control."[83] Cultural adaptability is explained through the concept of cultural awareness, although a definition of cultural awareness is not given in the document. It can be assumed that cultural adaptability represents a more comprehensive term than cultural awareness, as it includes culture-general knowledge like self-reflection or respectfulness. However, such assumptions cannot be confirmed because NATO military doctrines does not provide a hierarchical structure of definitions used to describe cultural competencies. It can be argued that most of the terms used to describe cultural competencies within NATO military doctrines are used without precision and responsibility; this is the main reason why confusion arises in trying to understand how cultural competencies should be perceived at the NATO level. Therefore, it can be said that the lack

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[81] Agnietė Žotkevičiūtė-Banevičienė, "Modern Practice of Military Cultural Awareness: Lithuania among the Great Powers," *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review* 16, no. 1 (2018): 87–119, https://doi.org/10.2478/lasr-2018-0005.

[82] See Allison Abbe, "The Historical Development of Cross-Cultural Competence," in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military,* eds. Robert R. Greene-Sands, Allison Greene-Sands (New York: Lexington), 33 (31–42).

[83] NATO Standard ATP-3.16.1, *Countering Insider Threats (CIT)*, *supra note 52*, 2–3.

of a hierarchy of terms and, in general, the cultural element's culture-specific nature obscure the concept of the cultural element itself and therefore makes it difficult to realize in practice.

Conclusions

Faced with the challenges of conventional warfare, the need for the cultural element can often be underestimated in the modern security environment, as the cultural element is frequently associated with international operations, particularly in culturally diverse environments where military personnel must cooperate with local forces or local people. However, the cultural element must not be limited to the narrow understanding that it is needed exclusively in asymmetrical warfare. When viewed through the lens of interoperability, and more specifically, soft interoperability, it becomes obvious that the cultural element in warfare must be understood more broadly, first and foremost as communication between military branches and communication within coalition forces, both of which are important in both asymmetric and conventional warfare.

NATO is criticized for not having adapted its political strategy and military capabilities to reflect its current position as an international security organization with obligations that extend beyond simple defence, and research has found that this criticism is to some extent accurate. It can be debated whether, despite NATO's declarative rhetoric of the importance of the cultural element in warfare, the visible profusion of terminology describing the cultural element in NATO military doctrines promotes irresponsible and speculative use of it. Most of the terms used to describe cultural competencies in NATO doctrines cause confusion in trying to understand how cultural competencies should be perceived at the NATO level. Even the importance of soft interoperability in NATO is undeniable; therefore, its exclusively declarative usage of the cultural element in NATO military doctrines forms a practice of considering the cultural element an important but, in a sense, unrealizable element in warfare, with no

107

ambition to transfer the cultural element to conventional warfare in order to increase soft interoperability. Given this, it is now necessary to determine whether the Alliance can go beyond simple defence and pay more attention to soft interoperability, the most important aspect of which is the cultural element, by focusing on how the cultural element is operationalized at the NATO level rather than simply reiterating its significance in various military doctrines.

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Annex 1. NATO military doctrines covering the cultural element

Doctrines for asymmetric warfare	NATO Standard ATRAINP-1 Training and Education for Peace Support Operations (2014; 2019)
	NATO Standard ATP-99 Urban Tactics (2017)
	NATO Standard ATP-3.16.1 Countering Insider Threats (CIT) (2016)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.4.1 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Peace Support (2014)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.4.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Non- Combatant Evacuation Operations (2013)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.4.3 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Humanitarian Assistance (2015)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.4.4 Allied Joint Doctrine for Counter-insurgency (COIN) (2011; 2016)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.4.5 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Military Contribution to Stabilization and Reconstruction (2015)
	NATO Standard ATP-03.4.1.2 Multinational Maritime Support of Humanitarian Operations (2013; 2015)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.22 Allied Joint Doctrine for Stability Policing (2016)
Doctrines for Functional Professionals	NATO Standard AJP-3.15 Allied Joint Doctrine for Countering Improvised Explosive Devices (2008; 2018)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.16 Allied Joint Doctrine for Security Force Assistance (SFA) (2016)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.19 Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation (2018)
Doctrines for the cultural environment	NATO Standard AASTP-5 NATO Guidelines for The Storage, Maintenance and Transport of Ammunition on Deployed Missions or Operations, (2012; 2016)
	NATO Standard AJEPP-2 Environmental Protection Best Practices and Standards for Military Camps in NATO Operations (2011; 2018)
	NATO Standard AJEPP-3 Environmental Management System in NATO Military Activities (2017)
	NATO Standard AJEPP-4 Joint NATO Doctrine for Environmental Protection During NATO-Led Military Activities (2006; 2018)
	NATO Standard AJEPP-6 NATO Environmental File During NATO-Led Activities (2014; 2019)
	NATO Standard AJEPP-7 Best Environmental Protection Practices for Sustainability of Military Training Areas (2014; 2020)
	NATO Standard Ajp-3.9 Allied Joint Doctrine For Joint Targeting, Edition B, Version 1. Brussels: NATO Standardization Office (2021)

General military doctrines	Linguistic Support for Operations Alingp-1 (2011)
	NATO Standard AJP-5 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Planning of Operations (2019)
	NATO Standard AJP-01Allied Joint Doctrine (2017)
	NATO Standard AJP-3 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Conduct of Operations (2002; 2019)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.10.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Operations Security and Deception (2020)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.13 Allied Joint Doctrine for The Deployment and Redeployment of Forces (2021)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.14 Allied Joint Doctrine for Force Protection (2015)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations (2016)
	NATO Standard ATRAINP-2 Training in The Law of Armed Conflict (2004; 2019)
Other military doctrines	NATO Standard ACMP-2009 Guidance on Configuration Management, (2017)
	NATO Standard AJP-3.20 Allied Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations, (2020)
	NATO Standard ALP-4.6.1 Tactical Joint Logistic Support Group, (2021)
	NATO Standard AMEDP-1.18 Requirements of Group Operational Rations for Military Use (2019)
	NATO Standard AMEDP-8.10 A Psychological Guide for Leaders Across the Deployment Cycle, (2019)

Annex 2. Terms associated with the cultural element in NATO military doctrines

Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.
Adversary's Culture	3	Cultural Competence	3	Cultural Insensitivities	1	Cultural Significance	1	Foreign Culture	2
Cooperative Culture	2	Cultural Conflict	1	Cultural Institutions	2	Cultural Sites	3	Host Culture	1
Cross-Cultural Conflict	1	Cultural Context	5	Cultural Knowledge	2	Cultural Training	1	Local Culture	6
Cultural Advisor	8	Cultural Differences	5	Cultural Landscape	1	Cultural Understanding	4	Military Culture	3
Cultural Affairs	1	Cultural Drivers of the Conflict	1	Cultural Misunderstandings	2	Cultural and Religious Differences	1	Operations Culture	1
Cultural Affiliations	1	Cultural Dynamics	1	Cultural Music	1	Culturally Appropriate	7	Organizatio-nal Culture	3
Cultural and Political Characteris-tics	1	Cultural Environment	2	Cultural Needs	4	Culturally Attuned Messages	1	Recipients' Culture	1
Cultural and Religious Affiliation	1	Cultural Expertise	1	Cultural Norms	7	Culturally Strange Surroundings	1	Socio-Cultural Differences	1
Cultural Appropriate-ness	1	Cultural Facilities	1	Cultural or Religious Biases	1	Culture of Information Sharing	1	Socio-Cultural Factors	1

Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.	Term	No of Doc.
Cultural Aspects	5	Cultural Factors	2	Cultural Particularities	1	Culture of Success	1	Socio-Cultural Transgres-sion	1
Cultural Assets	1	Cultural Friction	2	Cultural Perspectives	3	Culture of the Population	1	Culture of the Nation	1
Cultural Attitudes and Beliefs	1	Cultural Groups/-ings	2	Cultural Property Protection	11	Culture-Specific Notions of Gender	1	Through a Lens of Culture	1
Cultural Awareness	12	Cultural Heritage	6	Cultural Reasons	2	Differences in Culture	2	Topics of Cultural or Religious Interest	1
Cultural Background	2	Cultural Implications	1	Cultural Resources	3	Different Cultures Approach	1	Understan-ding the Cultural Norms	1
Cultural Capability/-ies	2	Cultural Influences	2	Cultural Sensibilities	1	Different Cultures	2	Understan-ding The Host- Nation's Culture	1
Cultural Characteris-tics	1	Cultural Information	1	Cultural Sensitivities/ Culturally Sensitive	3	Distinctive Cultures	1		